

## **Application to Remove a Private Tree – 11 Earnbridge Street**

**Date:** May 31, 2022

**To:** Toronto and East York Community Council

**From:** Acting Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation

**Wards:** Ward 4 – Parkdale-High Park

### **SUMMARY**

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This staff report is about a matter that Community Council has delegated authority from City Council to make a final decision.

This report requests that Toronto and East York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 11 Earnbridge Street. The application indicates the reason for removal is due to a conflict with the proposed construction of a swimming pool.

The subject tree is a honey locust tree (*Gleditsia triacanthos*), measuring 38 cm in diameter. The Tree By-laws do not support the removal of this tree as it is healthy and maintainable.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Acting Director of Urban Forestry recommends that:

1. Toronto and East York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 11 Earnbridge Street.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

### **DECISION HISTORY**

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There is no decision history regarding this tree removal permit application.

## COMMENTS

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Urban Forestry received an application for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 11 Earnbridge Street. The subject tree is a honey locust tree measuring 38 cm in diameter. The request to remove this tree has been made due to a conflict with the proposed construction of a swimming pool in the rear yard.

The arborist report that accompanied the application described the tree to be in fair condition. The report further indicates the tree has a poor union, deadwood, and is unbalanced.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and at the time of inspection determined that it is healthy and maintainable. While the tree has a codominant leader, it appears to be a sound union and only minor deadwood is present. The deadwood can be addressed by pruning following good arboricultural practices. The tree is structurally healthy and exhibits a slight lean, which is a non-critical defect.

Urban Forestry staff requested that the proposed construction plans be altered to retain the tree. The applicant noted that due to the available space in the rear yard, alternate site plans are not an option.

Through this inspection and review of the arborist report, staff have concluded that the removal of the subject tree is not permissible under the Tree By-law, City of Toronto *Municipal Code Chapter 813*. As a result of the above noted findings and in support of protecting and growing the city's urban forest, a permit to remove the tree was denied by Urban Forestry. The applicant is appealing this decision.

As required under *Section 813-19, of City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 813, Trees, Article III*, a notice of application sign was posted on the subject property for the minimum 14-day period in order to provide an opportunity for comment by the community. No comments were received in response to the application to remove the tree in question.

The honey locust tree at 11 Earnbridge Street is a valuable part of the urban forest that provides numerous aesthetic, social and economic benefits to the property owner and local community. Toronto's urban forest provides \$55 million in environmental benefits every year including improved air quality through pollution removal, lower storm water management costs by reducing runoff, and carbon sequestration that lessens the impacts of climate change. Through shade and transpiration, increasing urban tree cover can mitigate exposure to extreme heat events. A higher density of trees in a neighbourhood has been shown to significantly improve physical and mental health, such as reducing blood pressure and stress levels and promoting physical activity. Trees also make urban environments aesthetically more pleasing which raises property values.

Protecting the urban forest is a key strategy for building resilience, as it continues to face increasing natural pressures such as storms and invasive pests. The 2013 ice storm resulted in the removal of over 3000 City-owned trees. The emerald ash borer

beetle has killed approximately 860,000 ash trees across the city. As a result, if the City aims to reach its canopy target of 40 per cent, it is imperative that the City protect healthy trees from injury and removal whenever possible. The improved condition and size of the urban forest will support the City of Toronto's goals to improve quality of life and well-being that enables a diverse, sustainable, innovative, growing and thriving city.

In accordance with the City Council-approved Strategic Forest Management Plan, Toronto's Official Plan, Toronto's Biodiversity Strategy, and the Private Tree By-law, the honey locust tree at 11 Earnbridge Street as a valuable part of the urban forest, should not be removed.

The Acting Director of Urban Forestry recommends Toronto and East York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 11 Earnbridge Street. Should Toronto and East York Community Council grant this request for tree removal, the following recommendation may be adopted, in accordance with the City's Tree By-law permit requirements:

- 1) Toronto and East York Community Council approve the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 11 Earnbridge Street, and require the applicant to provide five replacement trees which can be achieved in a combination of on-site planting and cash-in-lieu of planting to the satisfaction of the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation.

## **CONTACT**

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Xin Zhou, Acting Supervisor, Tree Protection and Plan Review, Urban Forestry  
Tel: 416-392-7390, Email: [Xin.Zhou@toronto.ca](mailto:Xin.Zhou@toronto.ca)

## **SIGNATURE**

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Kim Statham  
Acting Director, Urban Forestry  
Parks, Forestry and Recreation

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Arborist report photograph showing crown of honey locust tree in rear yard of 11 Earnbridge Street; January 3, 2022

Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Staff photograph showing trunk of honey locust tree at 11 Earnbridge Street; February 23, 2022

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Arborist report photograph showing crown of honey locust tree in rear yard of 11 Earnbridge Street; January 3, 2022



Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Staff photograph showing trunk of honey locust at 11 Earnbridge Street; February 23, 2022

