

Application to Remove Two City Trees – 82 Buttonwood Avenue

Date: December 15, 2022

To: Etobicoke York Community Council

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

Wards: 5 -York South Weston

SUMMARY

This report requests that Etobicoke York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove two City-owned trees located at 82 Buttonwood Avenue. The applicant is seeking permission to remove the trees in order to install a hospital direction sign.

The subject trees are little leaf linden trees (*Tilia cordata*), measuring 27 and 24 cm in diameter. The Tree By-laws do not support the removal of these trees as they are healthy and maintainable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Acting Director of Urban Forestry recommends that:

1. Etobicoke York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove two City-owned trees located at 82 Buttonwood Avenue.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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

DECISION HISTORY

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

COMMENTS

Urban Forestry received an application for a permit to remove two City-owned trees located at 82 Buttonwood Avenue on the City-owned right-of-way situated along the northwest side of Emmet Avenue. The subject trees are little leaf lindens measuring 24 and 27 cm in diameter. The request to remove these trees has been made to install a hospital sign.

The arborist report that accompanied the application described the trees to be in fair condition and blocking the sightline for the proposed West Park Healthcare Centre signage.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the trees and at the time of inspection determined that they are healthy and maintainable. Urban Forestry staff requested that the sign be relocated elsewhere in order to maintain the existing trees.

Sightline issues are only considered a concern when existing trees grow to create a visual barrier for existing signs. As this sign is not yet installed, Urban Forestry is requesting that an alternative location for the sign be determined so that the existing trees can be retained. These trees are healthy, in a maintainable condition and can grow for years provided that routine maintenance using good arboricultural practices is carried out.

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.

The two little leaf Linden trees at 82 Buttonwood Avenue are 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 by 2050, it is imperative that the City protect healthy trees from unnecessary 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 two little leaf linden trees at 82 Buttonwood Avenue as a valuable part of the urban forest, should not be removed.

The Acting Director of Urban Forestry recommends Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove two City-owned trees located at 82 Buttonwood Avenue. Should Etobicoke 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) Etobicoke York Community Council approves the request for a permit to remove two City-owned trees located at 82 Buttonwood Avenue, conditional upon the applicant:
 - providing payment of the appraised value of the trees to be removed;
 - agreeing to have the trees removed at their expense;
 - providing 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, and;
 - Providing a tree planting security deposit to cover the cost of planting and warranty for a period of two years for all trees to be planted on City property.

CONTACT

Max Dida, Supervisor, Tree Protection and Plan Review, Urban Forestry
Tel: 416-394-8551, Email: Max.Dida@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

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

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph showing the little leaf linden tree measuring 27 cm in diameter, situated along the north west side of Emmett Avenue; July 19th, 2022

Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Staff photograph showing the little leaf linden tree measuring 24 cm in diameter, situated along the north west side of Emmett Avenue; July 19th, 2022

Attachment 3 – Figure 3: Staff photograph showing the two trees and the entrance to the West Park Healthcare Centre, situated along the northwest side of Emmett Avenue; July 19th, 2022

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph showing the little leaf linden tree measuring 27 cm in diameter, situated along the north west side of Emmett Avenue; July 19th, 2022



Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Staff photograph showing little leaf linden tree measuring 24 cm in diameter, situated along the northwest side of Emmett Avenue; July 19th, 2022



Attachment 3 – Figure 3: Staff photograph showing the two trees and the entrance to the West Park Healthcare Centre, situated along the northwest side of Emmett Avenue; July 19th, 2022

