

Application to Remove a Private Tree – 19 Disan Court

Date: April 24, 2023

To: Etobicoke York Community Council

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

Wards: Etobicoke North - 1

SUMMARY

This report requests that Etobicoke York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 19 Disan Court. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is due to the proximity of the tree's branches to the house, as well as concern over potential property damage as a result of extreme weather.

The Colorado blue spruce tree, *Picea pungens*, in question measures 44 cm in diameter. The City's Tree By-laws do not support the removal of this tree as it is healthy and maintainable. Community Council has delegated authority from City Council to make a final decision as to whether a permit may be issued when an applicant wishes to appeal the City's decision to deny a tree permit.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director of Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation recommends that:

1. Etobicoke York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 19 Disan Court.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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

DECISION HISTORY

There is no decision history related to this tree removal permit application.

COMMENTS

Parks, Forestry and Recreation received an application for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located in the front yard at 19 Disan Court. The Colorado blue spruce tree in question measures 44 cm in diameter. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is due to the proximity of the tree's branches to the house, as well as concern over potential property damage as a result of extreme weather.

The arborist report that accompanied the application described the tree to be in good condition. This report noted that the tree is situated close to the home where the branches extend onto the roof and is also within striking distance of the subject home, driveway, and neighbouring home.

City staff inspected the tree and at the time of inspection determined that it is healthy and maintainable. During the inspection staff noted that the tree was stable. The trunk did not exhibit any obvious signs of decay that would make it more prone to failure. A common indication of potential failure due to strong winds can be a heaving root plate. The root system appeared structurally sound, without any heaving. The tree's branches extending onto the roof of the house can be managed through pruning in accordance with good arboricultural practices and the performance of routine tree maintenance.

The City's Tree By-laws do not support the removal of this tree as it is healthy and maintainable. Through the inspection and review of the arborist report, a permit to remove the tree was denied by Parks, Forestry and Recreation. Community Council has delegated authority from City Council to make a final decision as to whether a permit may be issued when an applicant wishes to appeal the City's decision to deny a tree permit.

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 support nor in opposition of the application to remove the tree in question.

Protecting the urban forest is critical in building climate resilience as urban centres continue to face challenges such as increasing development, impacts due to climate change in the form of extreme weather events, and other natural threats such as invasive pests. The City has reaffirmed its canopy target of 40 per cent by 2050. One approach to support achieving this target is to protect healthy trees from injury and removal whenever possible. A sustainable and expanding urban forest also supports the City of Toronto's goals to improve quality of life and well-being of its residents.

Toronto's urban forest provides \$55 million in ecosystem services and benefits annually. Services such as air pollution removal, reduction of storm water runoff, and carbon sequestration all contribute to climate resilience. Protecting and expanding tree cover helps to mitigate exposure to extreme heat events through shade and transpiration. A higher density of trees in a neighbourhood has been shown to significantly improve

physical and mental well-being by reducing blood pressure, decreasing stress levels and by promoting physical activity. Economic benefits include enhancements to property values, increased tourism and consumer spending.

In keeping with the City's Strategic Forest Management Plan, Toronto's Official Plan, Toronto's Biodiversity Strategy, and the Tree Protection By-laws, the Colorado blue spruce tree at 19 Disan Court is a valuable part of the urban forest, providing numerous aesthetic, social and economic benefits to the property owner and the local community and therefore should not be removed.

Parks, Forestry and Recreation recommends Etobicoke York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 19 Disan Court. 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 approve the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 19 Disan Court, 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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SIGNATURE

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

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Figure 1: Staff photograph of the Colorado blue spruce tree at 19 Disan Court; November 22, 2022

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