

Application to Remove Two Private Trees – 25 Janus Court

Date: March 9, 2023

To: North York Community Council

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

Wards: Don Valley North - 17

SUMMARY

This report requests that North York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove two privately owned trees located at 25 Janus Court. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the trees is due to their proximity to surrounding structures if the tree should fail, and site limitations which may impede growth.

The Colorado blue spruce tree, *Picea pungens*, in question measures 40 cm in diameter and the honey locust tree, *Gleditsia triacanthos*, in question measures 62 cm in diameter. The City's Tree By-laws do not support the removal of these trees as they are 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. North York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove two privately owned trees located at 25 Janus 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 two privately owned trees located in the front yard at 25 Janus Court. The Colorado blue spruce tree in question measures 40 cm in diameter and the honey locust tree in question measures 62 cm in diameter. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal is due to their proximity to surrounding structures if the tree should fail, and site limitations which may impede growth.

The arborist report that accompanied the application described the Colorado blue spruce tree to be in fair condition and the honey locust to be in good condition. This report noted that both of the trees have an unbalanced canopy and limited soil volume for root development.

City staff inspected the trees and at the time of inspection determined that they are healthy and maintainable. Both trees are growing in a raised soil area at the front of the house, surrounded by the dwelling foundation, and a curving stone retaining wall. Although the future health and growth of these trees may be impaired by limited soil volume, at this time the trees are healthy and can continue to be maintained.

Hard landscape features such as a retaining wall may be prone to damage by tree roots, if they have not been properly designed, built or maintained. When built to accommodate future root growth and expansion, and when properly maintained over time, any conflict with trees or their roots can be planned for and managed without tree removal. Concerns about potential damage, can typically be repaired without requiring tree removal. If an injury to the tree is required in order to complete the repairs, the applicant may apply for a construction permit and submit the relevant construction plans and arborist report showing how the tree will be impacted and protected during construction.

Through the inspection and review of the arborist report, a permit to remove the trees was denied by Parks, Forestry and Recreation. 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.

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 trees in question.

Protecting the urban forest is critical in building climate resilience as urban centres continue to face 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 and honey locust tree at 25 Janus Court are 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 North York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove two privately owned trees located at 25 Janus Court. Should North 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) North York Community Council approve the request for a permit to remove two privately owned trees located at 25 Janus Court, and require the applicant to provide ten 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

David Bostock, Supervisor Tree Protection and Plan Review, Urban Forestry
Tel: 416-395-6134, Email: David.Bostock@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

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

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the Colorado blue spruce, measuring 40 cm in diameter and honey locust tree measuring 62 cm in diameter, at 25 Janus Court; May 5, 2022.

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the Colorado blue spruce, measuring 40 cm in diameter and honey locust tree measuring 62 cm in diameter, at 25 Janus Court; May 5, 2022

