

Application to Remove a Private Tree – 14 Granite Street

Date: April 26, 2023

To: North York Community Council

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

Wards: York Center - 6

SUMMARY

This report requests that North York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 14 Granite Street. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is due to the proximity of the tree to the house and the risk of tree failure that could result in personal injury or property damage.

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. North York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 14 Granite Street.

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 rear yard at 14 Granite Street. 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 to the house and the risk of tree failure that could result in personal injury or property damage.

The arborist report that accompanied the application described the tree to be in good-to-fair condition. The report noted that the tree has good health and structure, with moderate defects such as exuding resin from pruning wounds and previous pruning stubs. It describes the tree as having very shallow rooting and exposed surface roots. The report states that there is a low risk of stem or large branch failure during normal or extreme weather conditions.

City staff inspected the tree and at the time of inspection determined that it is healthy and maintainable. The tree is situated approximately three metres from the house. At the time of inspection there was no evidence that the tree was impacting the house. The tree is located such that routine maintenance of the tree and house can be performed.

Through the inspection and review of the arborist report, a permit to remove the tree 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 tree 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 at 14 Granite Street 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 North York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 14 Granite Street. 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 one privately owned tree located at 14 Granite 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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SIGNATURE

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

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the Colorado blue spruce tree at 14 Granite Street; October 6, 2022

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