

Application to Remove a Private Tree – 71 Kentland Crescent

Date: May 29, 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 one privately owned tree located at 71 Kentland Crescent. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is to address hazards created by tree roots cracking and lifting the concrete patio pavers and a lateral limb overhanging an adjacent property.

The honey locust tree, *Gleditsia triacanthos*, in question measures 74 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 71 Kentland Crescent.

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 71 Kentland Crescent. The honey locust tree in question measures 74 cm in diameter. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is to address hazards created by tree roots cracking and lifting the concrete patio pavers and a lateral limb overhanging an adjacent property.

The arborist report that accompanied the application described the tree to be in fair condition. This report noted that there is some major deadwood in the canopy and multiple epicormics shoots are growing around the main unions as a reaction to previous clearance pruning. The report also indicated that the tree has a large lateral limb, about 4 m above ground that is growing towards the east side, over a school yard and that there is a cankerous burl at the union.

City staff inspected the tree and at the time of inspection determined that it is healthy and maintainable. The defects outlined in the arborist report were minor.

The removal of deadwood can be addressed through pruning in accordance with good arboricultural practices and the performance of routine tree maintenance will prevent and reduce the risk from falling deadwood respectively. There is a large branch with a non-critical weak branch union hanging over their east property line that may be removed through routine maintenance. The removal of this large branch will address concern for safety.

Heavy structures such as concrete patios are generally impervious to damage by tree roots. Over many years, deficient construction, inadequate maintenance, and weathering can wear down these structures, deteriorating them and eventually leading to minor defects. Without proper drainage, heaving or cracking may occur as a result of water freezing and thawing, creating spaces that fine roots of nearby trees may grow into, which can accelerate the rate of deterioration. However, this type of age-related deterioration would also occur in the absence of trees and their roots, so trees are not unilaterally responsible for the damage.

The damage to the patio pavers described here 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-related tree permit and submit the relevant construction plans and arborist report showing how the tree will be impacted and protected during construction for review.

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 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 honey locust tree at 71 Kentland Crescent 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 71 Kentland Crescent. 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 71 Kentland Crescent, 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 honey locust tree at 71 Kentland Crescent; December 6, 2022.

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