

Application to Remove a Private Tree – 422 Lytton Boulevard

Date: August 21, 2023

To: North York Community Council

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

Wards: Eglinton-Lawrence - 8

SUMMARY

This report requests that North York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 422 Lytton Boulevard. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is due to concerns that a complete or partial failure of the tree may result in personal injury or property damage.

The Austrian pine tree, *Pinus nigra*, in question measures 57 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 422 Lytton Boulevard.

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 422 Lytton Boulevard. The Austrian pine tree in question measures 57 cm in diameter. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is due to concerns that a complete or partial failure of the tree may result in personal injury or property damage.

The arborist report that accompanied the application described the tree to be in fair condition. This report noted that the tree has a bent trunk, codominant stems at the upper crown with included bark, is growing close to the house, and branches are overhanging the roof of the house.

City staff inspected the tree and at the time of inspection determined that it is healthy and maintainable.

The tree is exhibiting a bend in the main trunk which may be due to a phototropic growth pattern. Phototropism is a natural growth pattern whereby plants grow toward available light. The bend observed is not impacting the structural integrity of the tree and is likely a response to competition from the house and nearby trees. There is no evidence of heaving or other root damage that would be indicative of potential tree failure. The tree's root system appears healthy and has grown to support the bend.

Concerns regarding codominant stems and included bark were not observed at the time of inspection, nor in the photos provided by the applicant.

This tree is situated approximately two 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.

Concerns regarding branches overhanging the roof and potential falling branches may be addressed through pruning in accordance with good arboricultural practices and the performance of routine tree maintenance. These will also reduce the likelihood of future limb failure. Routine tree maintenance is considered part of performing routine property maintenance and is a responsibility of all property owners within the City of Toronto.

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 to the application to remove the tree in question.

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.

Protecting the urban forest is also 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. 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 sustainable and expanding urban forest supports the City of Toronto's goals to improve quality of life and well-being of its residents. 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 Austrian pine tree at 422 Lytton Boulevard 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 422 Lytton Boulevard. 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 422 Lytton Boulevard, 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

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 Austrian pine tree at 422 Lytton Boulevard; March 16, 2023

Attachment 1: Figure 1 - Staff photograph of the Austrian pine tree at 422 Lytton Boulevard; March 16, 2023

