

## **Application to Remove a City Tree – 21 Murrie Street**

**Date:** March 14, 2024

**To:** Etobicoke York Community Council

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

**Wards:** Etobicoke-Lakeshore - 3

### **SUMMARY**

---

This report requests that Etobicoke York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one City-owned tree located at 21 Murrie Street. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is to allow for proposed construction of a new detached dwelling.

The silver maple tree (*Acer saccharinum*) measures 141 cm in diameter. The City's Tree By-laws do not support the removal of this tree as it is viable to maintain. The permit was denied, and the applicant is appealing the decision. 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 denial of a permit of a tree protected under the By-laws.

### **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 City-owned tree located at 21 Murrie 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 City-owned tree located on right-of-way fronting 21 Murrie Street. The silver maple tree (*Acer saccharinum*) in question measures 141 cm in diameter. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is to allow for proposed construction approved by the Committee of Adjustment.

The arborist report that accompanied the application described the tree to be in fair condition. This report noted that the tree has one cavity with decay inside at the main branch union but was otherwise in good health with a fair structure.

City staff inspected the tree and, at the time of inspection, determined that it is viable to maintain. The structural defects noted in the arborist report do not compromise the tree's viability.

Based on a review of plans for the proposed new dwelling, City staff assessed the demolition of the existing house, construction of the new house, and excavation of a new driveway and determined that it would result in critical loss of tree roots and branches that the tree would not survive.

Although the building plans are compliant with the minor zoning variances approved at Committee of Adjustment, the as-of-right zoning footprint for the new dwelling does not include City-owned property. There is no provision in the City's Tree By-laws that requires the City to issue a permit for the removal of City-owned trees to accommodate zoning-compliant building plans.

The City's Tree By-laws do not support the removal of this tree as it is viable to maintain. Through the inspection and review of the arborist report, a permit to remove the tree was denied by Parks, Forestry and Recreation. The applicant is appealing this decision. 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.

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 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 also 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 silver maple tree at 21 Murrie 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 Etobicoke York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one City-owned tree located at 21 Murrie Street. 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 City-owned tree located at 21 Murrie Street, conditional upon the applicant:
  - providing payment of the appraised value of the tree (\$16,667.00) to be removed;
  - agreeing to have the tree removed at their expense;
  - providing five replacement tree 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, and;
  - providing a tree planting security deposit to cover the cost of planting and warranty for a period of two years for all trees to be planted on City property.

## **CONTACT**

---

Max Dida, Supervisor Tree Protection and Plan Review, Urban Forestry  
Tel: 416-394-8551, Email: Max.Dida@toronto.ca

## **SIGNATURE**

---

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

## **ATTACHMENTS**

---

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the silver maple tree at 21 Murrie Street; October 21, 2022

Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Staff photograph of the silver maple tree at 21 Murrie Street; December 5, 2023

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the silver maple tree at 21 Murrie Street; October 21 2022



Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Staff photograph of the silver maple tree at 21 Murrie Street; December 5, 2023

