

## **Application to Remove a Private Tree – 2 Hawksdale Road**

**Date:** March 12, 2024

**To:** North York Community Council

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

**Wards:** York Centre - 6

### **SUMMARY**

---

This report requests that North York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 2 Hawksdale Road. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is due to a conflict with a proposal to construct a driveway; as well as an allergic reaction suffered by the owner that was suspected to be caused by the tree.

The Colorado blue spruce tree (*Picea pungens*) measures 47 cm in diameter. The City's Tree By-laws do not support the removal of this tree as it is healthy and maintainable. 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. North York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 2 Hawksdale Road.

### **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 2 Hawksdale Road. The Colorado blue spruce tree (*Picea pungens*) in question measures 47 cm in diameter. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is due to a conflict with a proposal to construct a driveway, as well as an allergic reaction suffered by the owner that was suspected to be caused by the tree.

The arborist report that accompanied the application described the tree to be in good condition. This report noted that the tree was located where a new driveway is proposed.

City staff inspected the tree and, at the time of inspection, determined that it is healthy and maintainable. Existing zoning for this address does not permit a non-flanking driveway and the applicant has been recommended to seek a zoning variance through the Committee of Adjustment for the proposed driveway construction. Should the variance be considered by the Committee of Adjustment, Parks, Forestry and Recreation would seek to protect the tree by recommending against the variance. However, should the Committee recommend approval, the tree would then be permitted for removal by Parks, Forestry and Recreation, under *section 813-18 B(5)* of the Private Tree Bylaw, once all permit conditions are met.

The City's Tree Bylaws do not support the removal of this tree as it is healthy and maintainable; nor do they support tree removal to mitigate the risk of an allergic response. Following 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.

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 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 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 increased 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 2 Hawksdale Road 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 2 Hawksdale Road. 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 2 Hawksdale Road 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 Colorado blue spruce tree at 2 Hawksdale Road; February 2024

Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Detail of Tree Protection Plan showing the Colorado blue spruce tree (tree #4) in conflict with the proposed driveway at 2 Hawksdale Road. Red box shows tree protection hoarding for a separate tree that will be retained (tree #3).

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the Colorado blue spruce tree at 2 Hawksdale Road; February 2024



[illegible]