

## **Application to Remove a Tree in a Ravine-Protected Area – 124 Sandringham Drive**

**Date:** September 3, 2024

**To:** North York Community Council

**From:** Acting 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 in a Ravine-protected area, located at 124 Sandringham Drive. The tree is protected under the Ravine and Natural Feature Protection bylaw as this property is located within the West Don River Valley. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is because the tree is showing signs of decline; and to address an uneven walkway allegedly caused by the tree's roots.

The honey locust tree (*Gleditsia triacanthos*) measures 63 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 Acting Director of Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation recommends that:

1. North York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one tree in a Ravine-protected area, located at 124 Sandringham Drive.

### **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 in a Ravine-protected area, located in the front yard at 124 Sandringham Drive. The tree is protected under the *City of Toronto, Municipal Code, Chapter 658, Ravine and Natural Feature Protection*, as this property is located within the West Don River Valley. The honey locust tree (*Gleditsia triacanthos*) in question measures 63 cm in diameter. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is because the tree is showing signs of decline; and to address an uneven walkway allegedly caused by the tree's roots.

The arborist report that accompanied the application described the tree to be in fair to poor condition. This report described several defects in the tree that may indicate that the tree is experiencing stress or decline, including epicormic shoot growth; moderate amounts of deadwood in the crown; and bark loss with underlying decay exposed on the south side of its trunk.

City staff inspected the tree and at the time of inspection determined that it is healthy and maintainable. Staff noted that the tree had a healthy bud set, indicating that the tree is in good health. Staff did not observe some of the indicators of stress and decline noted in the arborist report, namely the epicormic sprouting and moderate deadwood. There is a wound on the trunk that appeared to be superficial and not indicative of extensive decay.

Hard landscape features such as pavers may be prone to damage by tree roots if they have not been properly designed, built, or maintained. When built to accommodate future root growth and expansion, and when properly maintained over time, any conflict with trees or their roots can be planned for and managed without tree removal.

The damage 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 permit and submit the relevant construction plans and arborist report showing how the tree will be impacted and protected during construction.

The City's Ravine By-law does 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. 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, Ravine Strategy and the Ravine and Natural Feature Protection By-law, the honey locust tree at 124 Sandringham Drive is a valuable part of the urban forest, providing numerous ecological, 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 in a Ravine-Protected area located at 124 Sandringham Drive. 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 Council approve the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree in a Ravine-Protected area located at 124 Sandringham Drive and require the applicant to provide six 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**

---

Yaroslav Medwidsky, Project Manager, Ravine & Natural Feature Protection, Urban Forestry

Tel: 416-392-0343, Email: [Yaroslav.Medwidsky@toronto.ca](mailto:Yaroslav.Medwidsky@toronto.ca)

## **SIGNATURE**

---

Raymond Vendrig  
Acting Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation

## **ATTACHMENTS**

---

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the honey locust tree at 124 Sandringham Drive; May 14, 2024

Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Staff photograph of the flagstone pavers at the base of the honey locust tree at 124 Sandringham Drive; May 14, 2024

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the honey locust tree at 124 Sandringham Drive; May 14, 2024





Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Staff photograph of the flagstone pavers at the base of the honey locust tree at 124 Sandringham Drive; May 14, 2024

