

## **Application to Remove a Private Tree – 72 Bobmar Road**

**Date:** May 24, 2024

**To:** Scarborough Community Council

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

**Wards:** Scarborough-Rouge Park - 25

### **SUMMARY**

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This report requests that Scarborough Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 72 Bobmar Road. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is due to concerns about the tree's lean and its potential for failure and property damage.

The white pine tree (*Pinus strobus*) measures 55 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**

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The Director of Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation recommends that:

1. Scarborough Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 72 Bobmar Road.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

## DECISION HISTORY

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There is no decision history related to this tree removal permit application.

## COMMENTS

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Parks, Forestry and Recreation received an application for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located in the front yard at 72 Bobmar Road. The white pine tree (*Pinus strobus*) in question measures 55 cm in diameter. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is due to concerns about the tree's lean and its potential for failure and 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 significant lean making it a potentially high risk for damage to the home and electrical service line. The report also noted that the tree has previous damage from ice and snow events. Further, the report noted that the lean is heavily weighted to one side due to another white pine in the front yard crowding this tree and causing all its growth over the years to increase heavily towards the house.

City staff inspected the tree and at the time of inspection determined that it is healthy and maintainable. Staff noted that the tree had deep green foliage and good crown density.

The tree is exhibiting a lean due to a phototropic growth pattern. Phototropism is a natural growth pattern whereby plants grow toward available light. The lean observed is not impacting the structural integrity of the tree and is a response to competition from nearby trees. The tree's root system and root flare appear healthy and have grown to support the lean. There are no exposed roots or shift in the ground that would be indicative of potential tree failure.

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. 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 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 white pine tree at 72 Bobmar 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 Scarborough Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 72 Bobmar Road. Should Scarborough 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) Scarborough Community Council approve the request for a permit to remove one privately owned tree located at 72 Bobmar 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**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the white pine tree at 72 Bobmar Road;  
January 23, 2024

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the white pine tree (Tree 1) at 72 Bobmar Road; January 23, 2024

