

Application to Remove a City Tree – 47 Melbourne Avenue

Date: March 12, 2024

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

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

Wards: Parkdale-High Park - 4

SUMMARY

This report requests that Toronto and East York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one City-owned tree located at 47 Melbourne Avenue. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is due to concerns about the tree's health, prior damage to a fence, and potential for tree failure that may impact the house and utility lines.

The white mulberry tree (*Morus alba*) measures 17 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. Toronto and East York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one City-owned tree located at 47 Melbourne Avenue.

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 in the side yard at 47 Melbourne Avenue. The white mulberry tree (*Morus alba*) in question measures 17 cm in diameter. The applicant indicates the reason for requesting removal of the tree is due to concerns about the tree's health, prior damage to a fence, and potential for tree failure that may impact the house and utility lines.

The arborist report that accompanied the application described the tree to be in fair condition. This report noted that the multi-stem tree had a large section that was previously removed, and the remaining open wound will continue to decay as the tree grows, weakening the main trunk and root flare.

City staff inspected the tree and, at the time of inspection, determined that it is healthy and maintainable. City staff found no visual indication that the tree was structurally compromised by decay. The City of Toronto maintains trees located on the City-owned right-of-way, including proactive inspection and maintenance. However, should the applicant be of the opinion that this tree requires additional maintenance or removal in the future, beyond proactive maintenance, they may submit a service request through Customer Service - 311 Toronto to have the tree inspected for appropriate action taken by Parks, Forestry and Recreation.

The damaged fence has already been repaired without requiring tree removal. In the future, the applicant may apply for a tree injury permit if it is required to complete any repairs.

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.

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, and 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 mulberry tree at 47 Melbourne Avenue 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 Toronto and East York Community Council deny the request for a permit to remove one City-owned tree located at 47 Melbourne Avenue. Should Toronto and East 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) Toronto and East York Community Council approve the request for a permit to remove one City-owned tree located at 47 Melbourne Avenue, conditional upon the applicant:
 - providing payment of the appraised value of the tree (\$583.00) to be removed;
 - agreeing to have the tree removed at their expense;
 - providing 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, 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

Melanie Dubroy, Acting Supervisor Tree Protection and Plan Review, Urban Forestry
Tel: 416-392-7390, Email: Melanie.Dubroy@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

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

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the white mulberry tree at 47 Melbourne Avenue, December 11, 2023

Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Staff photograph showing a stem of the white mulberry tree that was previously removed at 47 Melbourne Avenue, December 11, 2023

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of the white mulberry tree at 47 Melbourne Avenue, December 11, 2023



Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Staff photograph showing a stem of the white mulberry tree that was previously removed at 47 Melbourne Avenue, December 11, 2023

