



DON MILLS RESIDENTS INC.

December 2, 2025

Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
Attention: Ms Nancy Martins

RE: PHC26.2 – Growing Space for Trees – Recommendation Report

Dear Chair Gord Perks and Members of Planning and Housing Committee:

Don Mills Residents Inc. (DMRI) represents residents from the area roughly bounded by Eglinton Avenue and York Mills Road, with the west boundary along Wilket Creek and the east along the Don River. This area is undergoing rapid development especially along Eglinton Avenue and west of Don Valley Parkway. Our residential areas with rather generous lots, mature trees and green spaces are important to the City's goals to preserve and enhance the tree canopy.

Proposed Amendments to OPA 857

DMRI strongly supports the City's proposed changes to protect and enhance growing spaces for trees and contiguous soft landscaping for developments in established residential neighbourhoods.

Proposed Amendments to By-Law 569-2013

DMRI supports the changes to the City-wide Zoning By-law which clarifies the definition of soft landscaping and deals with the impact of Iceberg Basements. We approve of the elimination of the man-made landscaping objects from the definition of soft landscaping. These do not support biodiversity of neighbourhood, mitigate urban heat island, nor do they support the tree canopy. They also significantly increase GHG from landscaping. Limiting of low-rise residential buildings footprint below grade to the regulated one above grade should limit the size of excavation and preserve trees and shrubs on the property and minimize the damage to tree roots on adjacent ones. There are many other collateral benefits such as storm water management and impact on adjacent neighbours and the amount of GHG associated with an infill development.

Enhancing Existing Tree By-laws (p. 13 -15 of Report from the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning and the Executive Director, Environment, Climate and Forestry on Growing Space for Trees: Protecting and Enhancing the Tree Canopy While Supporting Infill Housing and Addressing Concerns with Iceberg Homes - Recommendation Report)

Below is our response:

- In North York, our frustration comes from our inability to save mature trees from being cut from rear private property without a permit. Easier to notice are tree removals from the front yard before future development is planned or just a day after neighbours were solicited to support COA application. These infractions happen often off season and early in the morning or at dusk during the winter. There is no support from the Urban Forestry to verify these infractions and follow up on them and charge the offenders. Even if successful, penalty violations charges are not significant to deter the compliance. We believe that these charges should be increased with a plan on how this revenue is going to be spent. Only too often we see a new infill site to be cleared of any trees, shrubs and vegetation. Perhaps the demolition permit should protect existing trees on the site.
- We strongly believe that trees smaller than 61 cm on private property should require a permit; this of course depends on a type of tree and its expected growth.
- The rear patios are also areas of concern as recent trends are indicating their increased in size. Also, we have been seeing large patios at basement level which of course require retaining walls and reduction of the rear yard available for soft landscaping.
- We are supporting introduction of fees and charges for removing or injuring trees in ravine-protected areas.

There is a lot of work to be done to preserve the mature trees and support newly planted to their maturity. DMRI will be happy to participate in future developments which will secure existing trees and facilitate planting more trees.

Sincerely,

Vera Straka
 Developments, Don Mills Residents Inc.
vera.straka@gmail.com

Cc: Jason Thorne, Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning
 Valesa Faria, Executive Director, Development Review
 James Nowlan, Executive Director, Environment, Climate and Forestry
 Liora Zion Burton, Planner, Strategic Initiatives, Policy and Analysis, City Planning
 Trevor Swann, Planner, Policy and Research (Zoning), City Planning,
 Nicholas Trevisan, Manager, Tree Protection Strategic Projects, Environment, Climate and Forestry
 Jon Burnside, Councillor Ward 16
 Rachel Chernos Lin, Councillor Ward 15