



## ***York Mills Valley Association***

**SENT BY EMAIL**

Jan. 21, 2026

**FROM:** York Mills Valley Association  
c/o Stephen Morson and Daniel Mida, Co-Chairs of  
YMVA Development Committee

**RE:** PH27.1 Growing Space for Trees: Protecting and  
Enhancing Tree Canopy, While Supporting Infill Housing  
and Addressing Concerns with Iceberg Homes

This is to advise of our strong support for the staff recommendations in the Recommendation Report (dated November 18, 2025), including the definition of soft landscaping, and the recommended Policy changes to Chapter 4 of the Official Plan that will strengthen tree protection and their growing space.

The above noted staff report recommends updating the definition of "soft landscaping" in the Zoning By-laws to state that it **DOES NOT** include artificial turf or permeable pavement, so should not be considered as soft landscaping. Soft landscape must provide growing space for trees and other vegetation, help absorb stormwater, reduce the urban heat island effect and provide refuge, habitat and foraging areas for birds, small mammals, and insects. As well as provide health benefits to residents.

In addition, pools should also not be soft landscaping and it should be stipulated that ponds have a specific minimum amount of natural living vegetation to qualify.

The Supplementary Report "Growing Space for Trees and Minor Variance Requests for Soft Landscaping for Multiplexes", dated January 6, 2026, indicates that while permeable pavement may be better than asphalt driveways when it comes to allowing some water to percolate through, it is not even close to being comparable, and should NOT be a substitute for true soft landscaping.

Supporting the staff recommendation to require building setbacks below ground for all low-rise residential buildings (i.e. except apartment buildings) to apply below-ground consistent with above-ground minimum setbacks in the Residential Zone category

We also have concerns regarding the lack of compliance with, and enforcement of, existing urban forestry policies and tree

bylaws. Enforcement needs to be a major priority when implementing new policies, procedures and by laws.

Respectfully,

Development Committee members.

Signed,



Stephen Morson  
Co-Chair, Development Committee, York Mills Valley Association



Daniel Mida  
Co-Chair, Development Committee, York Mills Valley Association