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Town of Aurora

General Committee Report

No. OPS22-015

Subject: Tree Removal Permit Application - 72 Harrison Avenue

Prepared by: Sara Tienkamp, Manager of Parks and Fleet

Department: Operational Services

Date: July 5, 2022

Recommendation

1. That Report No. OPS22-015 be received; and
2. That the Tree Removal Application for 72 Harrison Avenue be approved.

Executive Summary

This report is to provide Council with information and recommendations associated with the removal of trees at 72 Harrison Avenue:

- Town forestry staff assessment confirms information in application for removal.
- Applicant is proposing planting two (2) native Sugar Maple trees as compensation for the removal.

Background

The subject property is listed on the Town of Aurora's Register of Properties of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest under Tree Protection By-law 5850-16. Section 9 (1) (b) states:

If a tree subject to an application is found by the Director to be a Heritage Tree, the Director shall not issue a permit unless the injury, destruction or removal is approved by Council following a review by the Town's Heritage Advisory Committee.

On April 18, 2022, Parks Division received a formal Tree Removal Application and supporting documentation for the removal of one (1), White Spruce tree on a lean from the rear yard of the property.

The Heritage Advisory Committee's comments on this application should focus on the impact on the heritage character of the neighbourhood, not the physical condition of the tree.

Analysis

Town forestry staff assessment confirms information in application for removal.

Staff attended the site and met with the applicant to assess the Spruce tree. The resident has concerns about the lean of the tree towards the house and future impacts as it continues to grow. In addition, the tree is not aesthetically pleasing, and the owner would prefer to have trees along the perimeter of the property to maximize useable space in the yard.

It was confirmed that a 15-metre-high Spruce tree, with a DBH of 44 cm, was growing on an approximate 20 degree lean towards the house. The tree has a health and structural integrity rating of fair. The crown is open and somewhat sparse, and the root plate does not appear to have shifted as the ground is level around the tree. It is unknown if the tree was not planted straight originally or if winds have impacted the tree causing it to move towards house when it was younger in age, as the main leader has self corrected over time.

Applicant is proposing planting two (2) native Sugar Maple trees as compensation for the removal.

The owner is proposing planting two (2) Sugar Maple trees along the western property line to restore the canopy loss as the result from the removal of the Spruce tree.

As per the Town's Tree Removal Compensation Policy, the value of this tree \$1,616.22. Should the removal be approved staff will work with the applicant to fulfill the requirements of the compensation policy.

Advisory Committee Review

The Tree Permit Application for this property was reviewed by the Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC) at its June 6, 2022 meeting. The Minutes include the following comments from the committee:

The Committee commented on the future state of the tree, what impact it could potentially have as the tree matures and how it could become a threat to the home should it fail, considering the lean. It was also expressed that taking into

account the recent severe storm over the Victoria Day weekend and the significant damage to the urban forest, they too would share the homeowner's concerns.

Legal Considerations

As the trees are located on a listed property, only Council has the authority to approve the removal of the trees, after a review by HAC. Council may approve the removal subject to certain conditions, which includes financial compensation or replanting of trees.

Financial Implications

As the trees in question are located on private property, their removal will be solely at the property owner's expense should Council approve their associated tree removal permit applications. The Town has also collected the appropriate fees and security deposits relating to this application.

Communications Considerations

Not applicable.

Climate Change Considerations

Removal of live trees increases GHG emissions; however, the Town's Tree Compensation Policy allows for the re-planting of trees to compensate for the loss of canopy associated with any removals.

Link to Strategic Plan

Tree removals support the Strategic Plan goal of Supporting Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability for all through its accomplishment in satisfying requirements in the following key objectives within this goal statement:

Encouraging the stewardship of Aurora's natural resources: Assess the merits of measuring the Town's natural capital assets.

Alternative(s) to the Recommendation

1. Council could decide not to approve the Tree Removal Application for 72 Harrison Avenue.
2. As directed by Council.

Conclusions

The landscape planting presented to date satisfies the requirements of the Town Tree Compensation Policy and staff will work to finalize details of replanting, tree removal permit and associated securities with applicant. Staff recommend the Tree Removal Application for 72 Harrison Avenue be approved.

Attachments

Attachment 1 – Tree Removal Permit Application, April 18, 2022

Attachment 2 – Spruce Tree Photo

Previous Reports

None.

Pre-submission Review

Agenda Management Team review on June 16, 2022.

Approvals

Approved by Allan D. Downey, Director, Operational Services

Approved by Doug Nadorozny, Chief Administrative Officer