

TO: CITY MANAGER 1993 AUGUST 18

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING & BUILDING

SUBJECT: RECENT TREE CUTTING INCIDENTS IN BURNABY

PURPOSE: To provide Council with information on tree cutting at several locations in the City.

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. THAT this report be received for information.

**REPORT**

At the regular meeting of Council on 1993 August 09, a request was made for staff to provide information regarding the removal of trees at four sites in Burnaby. Staff have visited each site and reviewed information currently on file. The results of this review are summarized here:

**1.0 7636 GOVERNMENT STREET**

The city arborist/horticulture foreman authorized the removal of a row of four Douglas firs from the side of the property that faces Lozells Avenue by the property owner. The arborist reports that the trees were planted within about one foot of the property line on city property by a previous owner of 7637 Government Street, probably 20 or more years ago. The trees were directly underneath a high voltage power line which is about 15 feet above the ground at its lowest point. B. C. Hydro has been pruning the fir trees for approximately 15 years to prevent interference with their wires.

As a consequence of the poor pruning practices for line clearance, the trees were found to be in poor condition. The majority of each tree had been forced to grow sideways, out over the private property creating a hazardous condition. This condition could not be corrected by pruning without further damage to the trees.

**2.0 8236 GOVERNMENT STREET**

A number of mature trees have been removed from this private residential property. Trees were removed from the edge of the driveway along the west property line, the front yard and an embankment adjacent to a creek along the east property line. Staff from this department visited the site and spoke with the owner on 1993 August 18. The owner reported that the trees on the embankment had all been leaning towards the creek and that a limb from a tree on the embankment had recently broken and fallen onto the neighbour's driveway. The owner, concerned that other trees might fall and knowing that he could be liable for any resulting damage, removed the trees from his property.

The owner pointed out rot in some of the remaining stumps. Some new shrubs and small cedars have been planted on the property, and the owner indicated he plans to do more planting on the bank to help control erosion.

3.0 **2250 BOUNDARY ROAD (BOUNDARY & LOUGHEED)**

Improvements to the intersection of Boundary Road and Lougheed Highway are being undertaken as conditions of the rezoning and subdivision of the Bridge Business Park site on Lougheed. The project manager representing Bridge Business Park indicated that road improvements and sidewalk construction at the intersection resulted in the removal of the chestnut tree at the northwest corner of the property at 2250 Boundary Road. Pruning and root pruning of the tree were required for sidewalk construction and the installation of new traffic signals. The project manager was concerned that the extensive pruning of the tree and its roots would make it unstable and a potential hazard at the intersection. He authorized the removal of the tree with the understanding of the property owner.

4.0 **MAYFIELD SUBDIVISION**

Appearing elsewhere on the agenda is a report from the Approving Officer which deals with the landscape buffer in the Mayfield Subdivision. This report also responds to a letter submitted to Council from Mrs. Hillstrom regarding the subject of tree cutting.

5.0 **8088 GOVERNMENT STREET**

During the preparation of this report, a resident of the 8100-block Government Street telephoned the Planning Department on 1993 August 18 to report that tree cutting was occurring on a property in the 8000-block Government Street. Staff went to 8088 Government Street and talked with the tree contractor who was at the site to remove some trees prior to the demolition of the house. The tree contractor had been instructed by the owner to remove 1 birch tree, 1 maple, 4 cypresses (diseased), and perhaps 2 firs from the front yard. Two hemlocks and 1 fir will remain in the front yard. The tree contractor pointed out that the property has a deep backyard with some coniferous and deciduous trees which will be retained.

This additional information is provided for the information of Council.

6.0 **CONCLUSION**

It is the view of staff that complete retention of the trees in question would probably not have been achievable even if a tree preservation bylaw was currently in effect given considerations of safety, disease, site servicing and allowable building envelopes. Notwithstanding this, staff will endeavour to monitor whether the incidence of tree cutting increases during the preparation of the proposed tree preservation bylaw. If an inordinate number of tree cutting incidents are noted, a further report will be submitted to Council.

  
D.G. Stenson, Director  
for PLANNING AND BUILDING

  
SG/cb