

TO: CITY MANAGER

DATE: 1998 07 08

FROM: DIRECTOR PARKS,
RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

FILE:

DIRECTOR ENGINEERING

SUBJECT: PETITION FOR TREE REMOVAL AT 3800 - 4000 BLOCK FIR STREET

PURPOSE: To provide Council with information regarding the request for removal of trees on Fir Street.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT a copy of this report be sent to Frieda Braun, 3835 Fir Street, Burnaby BC.

REPORT

INTRODUCTION

During 1997, staff received several requests from Frieda Braun, 3835 Fir Street, Burnaby BC, to resolve maintenance issues related to the American Linden tree growing on the front boulevard of this address. Staff attended to these concerns within the context of current tree management policies governing the maintenance of trees on public lands. Subsequently, in 1997 December, Council received a petition from Frieda Braun on behalf of various residents of Fir Street calling for the removal and/or replacement of the boulevard trees fronting their homes. The petition cited "excessive leaf fall, dropping flower bracts and honeydew secretions from aphid insects ..." as reasons for the request. Staff have again been recently contacted by Frieda Braun seeking resolution to her concerns.

BACKGROUND:

Nineteen (19) *Tilia americana* REDMOND trees were planted on Fir Street between Smith Avenue and Carleton Avenue as a component of a 1986 City local improvement project.

This deciduous species is a member of a genus (*Tilia*) widely planted as a street tree in Europe and North America due to its ability to withstand harsh urban conditions. Burnaby's street tree inventory contains in excess of 500 trees of this genus (*Tilia*) which represents about 3.0% of the total

inventory. The trees have grown well on Fir Street and are generally healthy and attractive. No trees have been removed from the original planting. All trees have been routinely maintained on a two to three year cycle within the guidelines of the current City Tree Management Policy guiding the maintenance of trees on public land.

Over the past year or so, the concerns from Frieda Braun regarding the boulevard tree fronting her home at 3835 Fir Street have been attended by staff through the provision of an explanation of the Tree Management Policy and minor pruning additional to that received during systematic maintenance.

Tree Management Policy for Public Lands:

In 1989 March, Council adopted a Tree Management Policy for public lands. The purpose of this policy is to provide clear and consistent tree management guidelines on public lands. The policy recognizes trees as an important environmental resource and as such the policy strives to maintain and improve the health of this resource while being responsive to all tree management issues. The policy recognizes that under special circumstances tree removal may be necessary. The policy acknowledges the need to consider the removal of hazardous and dead trees, trees severely encroaching private property and trees causing exceptional damage to public or private property. The policy specifically notes that leaf litter is not considered as damage and therefore is not a basis for tree removal. All tree removals are considered a last resort following consideration of all other options.

Integrated Pest Management Policy For Public Lands:

In 1994 March, Council adopted an integrated pest management (IPM) policy. Integrated pest management is an ecological approach to vegetation and pest management employing a variety of techniques including mechanical, biological, cultural, physical and chemical to reduce and maintain pest populations to acceptable levels. Where feasible urban IPM includes the implementation of site changes to create conditions that may reduce or eliminate pest problems thereby permitting easier and more cost effective pest management. A focus of IPM is to minimize the use of pesticides and the consequent risks to human health and the environment.

DISCUSSION:

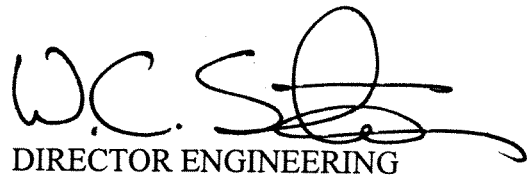
The petition and subsequent requests for boulevard tree removal and replacement on Fir Street are presented to eliminate, for some residents, maintenance tasks associated with the trees including Fall leaf litter, Summer flower bract litter and sticky honeydew secretion. In terms of the Tree Management Policy these are considered as normal maintenance tasks associated with deciduous trees and although a nuisance to some residents they are not considered a basis for the removal of healthy trees. Aphid insects are a normal component of plant systems. Their presence fluctuates annually in response to environmental factors.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION:

The nineteen American Linden trees growing on the boulevard in the 3800 to 4000 block of Fir Street are generally healthy and attractive trees. Staff are unaware of any exceptional deficiencies or problems with these trees and consequently are unable to recommend removal of the trees. The trees are well maintained and represent an amenity to the community.



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