

In cities where tree protection bylaws are in place, private trees are seen as a community benefit. In London in 2012 after public outcry about the forest city not protecting its forest it was decided to create tree protection bylaws. The city was losing its tree cover due to development, disease and old age. By 2016 the city of London had written Tree Protection bylaws. It is said that a healthy tree canopy should cover 30%. At the time there was a 23.7% tree canopy and the city decided on a 35% goal. In 5 years the tree canopy is now 26.8%. An increase of 2.6%

This has been accomplished by passing strong bylaws to protect private property trees and by protection of private development trees. Also by planting native trees on seldom used London park land.

It would be desired that our municipality set a tree canopy goal of 30%. That is step number 1. So how do we get there?

By creating bylaws, procedures and policies designed to protect and expand tree cover.

Of all the bylaws our group looked at the city of Oakville has the strongest and most clearly defined bylaws for tree preservation. Bylaw 2017-038. Every thing is clearly laid out and every term relating to trees is defined.

I urge you to study their bylaws and make the Oakville bylaws ours rather than try to reinvent the wheel. I am just glossing over some key points for you here. Mary Beth has sent all the information links and references to the clerk for distribution to you.

In their bylaw you will find definitions and clearly laid out procedures for private landowners and developers to follow. For instance a tree is defined as having a 15 cm diameter. Permits are required to cut a tree down on private property of any tree greater than 15 cm. There are trees considered endangered which can't be cut down if healthy. There is a cost to get the permit which is refundable if the tree is diseased or is deemed by a city arborist to be a hazard such as is leaning over a building or is dead or falling over. The property owner must post the permit visible from the street 5 days prior to the trees being cut down. Failure to comply results in loss of the permit and possible fines if trees were cut. If a healthy tree must be cut down to put in a pool, garage, house reno etc., then the land owner must replant native trees approved by the designated official of a specified size somewhere on the property within a prescribed period as agreed to with the designated official.

Must replant 1 tree for 15 cm tree removed. 15 to 24 cm = 2 trees. 25 to 34 cm = 3 trees etc... And so on up to 12 trees for a 115 cm or greater tree. If there is no room on the property then the landowner must pay a 350 dollars for each tree required and the city will plant a native tree on city land. Failure to get a tree permit and have a city arborist inspect the tree or failure to replant the required trees will result in a fine to the land owner. The designated official will inspect the property to ensure that replanting occurred and correct number of trees were cut. Need to specify that all trees planted will be native trees to the area from a list of town approved trees as this is good for local ecology.

Step 4 Private land for development. Where possible the existing trees and natural heritage of the development shall be preserved. In some centres developers are required to donate a portion of all land developed to be set aside as a green space. We believe the donated land should be as natural as possible. In the site plan a town arborist would do a tree count and at the same calculate the ratio of trees to be planted again the number of trees per diameter of trees slated for removal. The developer may decide to keep more trees to avoid paying extra fees for tree planting. Ideally the developer will donate a portion of an intact forest as park land to the town. Clear cutting shall be banned and in some developments tree cover that will be saved must be protected from the machinery of construction.

Failure to comply with the agreement will result in fines and holding the development deposit. Some developers may not want to come here because of these restrictions and some profit loss but in the end it will be a development that we can all be proud of and our natural heritage will continue on..