



To: letters@burlingtonpost.com

Cc: Tim Kelly, Rob Ford, Jill Davis

Re: <http://www.insidehalton.com/opinion/editorial/article/1456563--protecting-trees>

August 17, 2012

BurlingtonGreen is pleased that residents and the *Burlington Post* have brought back the dialogue on private tree protection in Burlington. It is apparent to many residents that decisions made by former City Councils to stop an effective tree by-law have resulted in too many mature trees being lost. We must ensure city resources are in place to properly manage an effective private property tree by-law. Trees are a huge part of Burlington's "architecture" and contribute greatly to our air quality in a time of problematic air pollution. It should be our common priority to invest in trees and to protect them.

We acknowledge that private land by-laws can be contentious, but we have to look at it in context. Burlington already has many by-laws in place that restrict actions on private property to ensure consistent neighbourhood appeal, and to protect the greater community against environmental degradation and financial harm. We argue that if *effective* tree protection is enacted by Council, it will be one of the most significant by-laws we have that offers protection for the environment and property values.

Any reasonable citizen acknowledges that the environmental value of trees is extremely significant. We would add that the economic benefit of creating this by-law would also be substantial. Statistics show that neighbourhoods with mature trees garner higher selling prices. One homeowner cutting down a large tree can have a direct adverse financial impact on 6 or more neighbouring homes, not to mention the overall appeal of the neighbourhood. Privacy is another feature that increases home values and large trees can provide 60% more privacy compared to a fence alone.

We urge you to join the dialogue about preserving trees in our City. Please let your Councillor know that you care about effectively protecting our urban canopy and/or respond to this letter. Property owners are stewards of Burlington's mature trees. No one truly owns them, they really belong to the community and to our future generations.

Ken Woodruff
President, BurlingtonGreen
www.burlingtongreen.org

