

**Delegation to Development and Infrastructure Committee, September 9, 2013**

Chair Craven, Mayor Goldring, Members of Council, staff & citizens of Burlington, Committee

On behalf of BurlingtonGreen we thank you for the opportunity to address you this evening in support of Councilor Meed Ward's August 23, 2013 proposal for a Private Tree By Law. With your permission, I would like to co-present with Colin Brock so that you may call upon him if you so choose with questions you may have following my comments.

BurlingtonGreen is dedicated to helping protect and enhance our urban tree cover and as you know we have previously delegated, provided extensive evidence, sent you research and even brought in representatives from Oakville to share with you firsthand how a private property tree protection bylaw can work, giving you the tools you need to help prevent the unnecessary removal of trees.

The City's public consultation process clearly demonstrated the Public desire for a private tree bylaw documented in the report as follows:

*Responsibility for the protection and preservation of trees clearly rests with City Officials, who in the words of respondents, should "oversee development to ensure trees are protected," "maintain and inspect trees," and "pass bylaws protecting trees."*

Over the summer we contacted each of you to invite further discussion on what your individual concerns and outstanding questions were in regards to this issue so that we could address them for you. It is unfortunate that we received limited interest in this request.

We maintain our position that the trees of Burlington should be afforded the same rights as trees in the numerous other cities that have adopted an enforceable bylaw. We are confident that this City has the ability to create a 'made in Burlington' tree protection bylaw that provides reasonable allowances for homeowners while protecting trees from unnecessarily being cut down.

Our city's current canopy coverage is lower than the 30 to 50% minimum requirement to support a sustainable environment as per Environment Canada standards. The issue before you today provides you with the opportunity to protect the forest canopy we have.

The City has enacted a variety of bylaws to ensure important interests are safeguarded. For example: You established an anti-idling bylaw because you care about unnecessary air pollution.

You have the opportunity to be proactive now and enact a bylaw to help prevent more trees from being unnecessarily being cut down OR you can wait, witness trees coming down as we know they will with more infill intensification and possibly react later.

It's not too late to reconsider your earlier position. It demonstrates courage and leadership to do so.

However, if we and the evidence cannot convince you to direct staff to draft a "made in Burlington" tree protection bylaw, we ask that you please vote in support of Councilor Meed Ward's proposal. While it may not include the measures or "tools" that an enforceable bylaw would provide, the

proposal at least offers some protection against tree removal and more than we have at present and accordingly we ask you to support this motion.

Thank you.

Ken Woodruff

President

&

Colin Brock

Board of Directors

BurlingtonGreen Environmental Association

Citizen for a **greener** community