

SHADE TREE RESEARCH LABORATORY

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, TORONTO 5, CANADA / TELEPHONE 928-3559

22 September, 1971

Mr. George S. Atkins,
Radio Commentator,
Woodlands,
R. R. 2,
Oakville, Ontario.

Dear George:

Two years ago you invited me on a tour of the Oakville area where we, among other things, inspected a beautiful oak tree in front of your property. During this visit we attempted to establish its age, but were not successful in getting the increment borer to the centre of the tree. The sample taken was approximately thirteen inches long, and contained 99 annual rings.

This, in my estimation, indicated that the tree is well over 200 years old. It is a most beautiful and valuable tree which no doubt if given the opportunity can provide amenity values for hundreds of years to come.

The Province of Ontario has very few old trees in its southern part, due to the past logging history and the current urbanization. In my opinion, this is a very sad state of affairs, and extreme efforts should be made to save and conserve the remaining few valuable trees present. Yours is one of those. For this reason, it is of grave concern to me that you inform me of the planned highway expansion which will place the highway property line within four feet of the trunk of the tree. I realize that this does not necessarily mean that severe damage will be done to the root system of the tree but, on the other hand, construction activity could readily put the life of the tree in jeopardy.

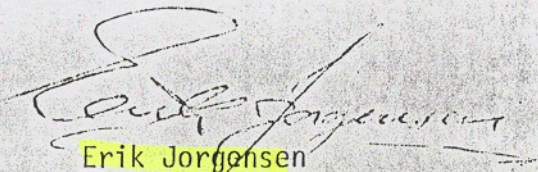
I certainly hope that you will obtain the cooperation of the people in charge of the highway widening, so that your tree and its entire root system can be left intact. Fencing off the root area would be the first step in this direction, in that many trees are severely damaged during construction due to soil compaction caused by heavy equipment and even temporary storage of excess materials such as gravel, soil and the like.

(cont....p.2.)

I am pleased that you are aware of the value of the tree and will attempt to do what needs to be done to preserve it for future generations, and it is my hope that the people in charge of the construction will appreciate your point of view and do what best can be done to preserve it. If I can be of assistance to them or you in this regard I shall be pleased again to pay a visit to the site.

Kindest regards and best wishes.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Erik Jorgensen', written in dark ink on a light-colored, textured paper background.

Erik Jorgensen
Professor of Forestry in charge of
The Shade Tree Research Laboratory

EJ:db

