My name is Al Crosby and I am a resident of Ward 13 where there is a large development on the former CFB Rockcliffe Airbase and where many distinctive trees are currently being removed. Anomalies and concerns with the Urban Tree Conservation Bylaw reporting mechanism has brought me here today.

I participated on 9 Public Advisory Group meetings on behalf of the Greenspace Alliance organization to help identify distinctive trees that could be retained on the former Rockcliffe site. Because this was an area greater than 1 hectare, it fell under the Planning and Growth Management jurisdiction.

Our understanding based on our input to the Community Design Plan, the Official Plan Amendment and the Secondary Policy Plan was that certain perimeter areas of the site that contained many distinctive trees would be retained. We found out almost too late that the Urban Tree Conservation Bylaw has systemic flaws, one of which is the lack of reporting information on Tree Permits. To design a proper report, the requirements must be gathered first. It appears that only a few requirements were used to create the report being discussed today.

The proposed amendment of the report does not address the reporting requirements of the public. The public needs to get information on large scale or specific tree removal permits in real-time. In our case a physical tree removal boundary was created with red stakes on a Friday (8 April 2016) for tree cutting to begin on the following Monday (11 April 2016). We were shocked by this tactic and we had no way of knowing if the developer had a valid Tree Permit for this area, or not. It turned out that they did not! There is a genuine requirement for a more timely reporting mechanism on the issuance and content of a Tree Permit issued by the City of Ottawa.

The after-the-fact reporting mechanism being proposed is of absolutely no use to Council, Forestry Services and it certainly serves no purpose to the public as a tool for reviewing or monitoring the successful operation of the Bylaw.

I understand that the Forestry Services has routinely recorded the issuance of Tree Permits electronically since 2012 and on paper prior to that date. If the electronic data on Tree Permits is available then I would recommend a more progressive and modern on-line reporting mechanism that not only meets councillors requirements but also members of the public.

I suggest an objective of making a real-time report that lists all the Tree Permit Applications and the Tree Permit Numbers issued by the City of Ottawa within an on-line table that allows real-time access by Councillors, Public Works, the Planning Growth Department and also the public. This type of up-to-date on-line reporting would be much more useful.

Have Forestry Services provide a report with daily or weekly updates of their existing list of Tree Applications sortable by ward, with the city address in another column. Indicate whether the area is <1 hectare and if >1 hectare report the size of the total area. Indicate the date of the application plus the date and permit # of the approval, or the date of the rejection. Indicate the reasons for approval, rejection or an exemption. When approved, indicate the expected start date and the expected end date of the tree cutting. Indicate the approximate number of distinctive trees (>50cm Dbh) that will be affected by the application. Also indicate who should be contacted to obtain further information on the scope of the tree cutting such as the location of trees, the species, the condition and sizes of the distinctive trees on the property, the trees to be removed and the trees to be retained.

A summary total by each month would not be required but the yearly totals could easily be summarized in separate standalone tables and stored for each year or season. The tables should be kept on-line for a period of 20 years to assess trends. The key point is that this reporting mechanism must be accurate and up-to-date, not 12 months old.

To be more modern with respect to information management on a real-time basis the City must provide an on-line report that can actually provide meaningful information on Tree Permits to everyone such as:

Ward   Application Date   Permit #   Issued Date   Denied Date   Exempt Date   Reasons for Issued/Not Issued   Area (ha)   # Distinctive trees   Start Date   End Date   TCR Report link   (For more information contact:)

I hope this information is helpful in your deliberations.

Thank you,

Al Crosby, PEng, MBA (613) 741-6083