

Oshawa Environmental Advisory Committee (OEAC) Weeds By-law - Native Plant Working Group Report

Goal/Objective:

Define “weeds” in the current bylaws and include invasive species.

Recommendations Implications:

That the City of Oshawa adopt the following changes to the City of Oshawa by-laws.

Budget Implications:

None

Overview:

The City of Oshawa’s bylaw where “weeds” is mentioned is outdated in their definition. “Weeds” is a very subjective term and is open to too much interpretation for the general citizens, as well as from bylaw officers. There are many plants that are sold in nurseries and nurtured in gardens that are known invasive species – causing thousands of dollars in damages and destroying the environment by smothering out native plants essential for the food chain.

The environment is an important topic and the city of Oshawa has a responsibility to update their bylaws to reflect the changing attitudes in the community and as an integral participant in the world’s environment. Without a proper definition of “weeds”, beneficial native plants that support a large diversity of insects could be targeted for removal, thus causing a catastrophic effect on the local food chain. Adding a list of common invasive plants found in gardens will make it easier for the average citizen to recognize that they have an issue on their property that they might otherwise have been oblivious to.

Defining “weeds” and invasive plants in current bylaws will help to achieve one of the strategic goals of the city of Oshawa under proactive environmental management.

Proposal:

- 1) In any current or future bylaws to change the wording from “weeds” to instead read “noxious weeds as defined by the government of Ontario and Canada”.
- 2) In any current or future bylaws where vegetation is discussed (ie. weeds) to also include that no invasive plants as defined by the government of Ontario and Canada, the Ontario Invasive plant council, and the Invasive species Centre may be sold by businesses and/or privately, traded, planted, or nurtured within city limits.
- 3) To specifically include/add into the bylaws when vegetation is discussed that *Aegopodium podagraria* and variations (goutweed), *Convallaria majalis* (lily of the

valley), *Hemerocallis fulva* (orange daylily/ditch lily/common daylily), *Hemerocallis lilioasphodelus* (yellow daylily), *Vinca minor* and variations (periwinkle), *Hedera helix* and variations (English ivy), *Campanula rapunculoides* (creeping bell flower) – this list is not limiting. This can be added in the same location that ragweed and poison ivy is stated as not being allowed.