

PAC's public meeting hears new details of Prince Albert/de Mais. plan

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The meeting June 28 was historic: it was the first time the city's Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) is believed to have heard any preliminary presentation of a major development project in public.

And addressing some 30 citizens in the packed council chamber at 8:30 am, PAC chair Julia Gersovitz also called it "an interesting day." It was to be the first time the city was to begin consideration of a non-conforming project under a by-law process

for "Specific Construction, Alteration or Occupancy Proposal of an Immovable" (SCAOPI/PPCMOI).

The proposal to convert the four-storey commercial building at 4898 de Maisonneuve (at Prince Albert) and its parking lot into a six-storey multi-family residential building was outlined by co-developer Peter Smale and architect Philip Hazan. It showed two levels of underground parking.

Some questioners voiced concern for a loss of light and the neighbourhood profile that *continued on p. 14*

'Share the pool' protests schedule



"Share the Pool" protesters stand on the deck beside the pool at the Westmount recreation centre on June 28. See p. 3.
Photo: Martin C. Barry

Letters p. 6

Social Notes by V. REDGRAVE p. 13

Bought & Sold by A. DODGE p. 11

City projects \$1M surplus for '16 after first 4 months

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

After the first four months of the year, the city was projecting a year-end operating surplus of close to \$1 million, according to financial statements tabled June 6 by Finance commissioner Victor Drury. At this point, however, the surplus was listed as being "appropriated to infrastructure."

While this surplus appears on the total budget of \$101 million, the operating surplus actually arises from the municipal portion of \$49 million in the budget rather than the \$52 million paid to the agglomeration and the Montreal Metropolitan Commission for island-wide and regional contributions.

"It's proportional to the \$50-million size

of the operation," said Mayor Peter Trent, who has been asking for more accurate budgeting.

The actual surplus forecast of \$983,517 results from projected revenues of \$1,203,520 over budget. These were offset by an increase of \$220,003 in miscellaneous departmental spending.

The increase in revenues was expected to arise mainly from \$750,000 more in welcome tax than forecast and an increase of \$723,465 in general property tax. Both of these are difficult to predict since they depend on the real estate market and on new construction coming on to the property valuation roll, Trent said. Court fines could be reduced by \$313,400.

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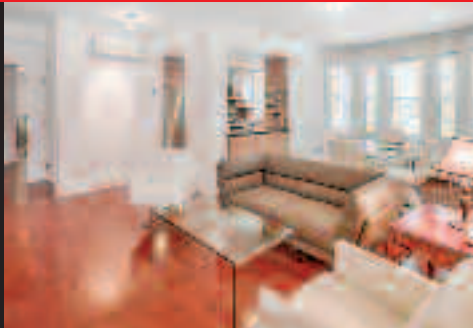


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Westmount – 1636 Seaforth
\$5,500/mth

Parents, kids gather for 'swim-in' to decry no-kids-on-deck rule

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

An ongoing debate over what some regard as excessive adult-only swim times at Westmount's public pool came to a head on June 28 when several dozen adults and children held a peaceful demonstration on the deck next to the pool.

Under the current rules, no one under 18 years of age is allowed in or around the pool for periods of three to five hours daily for a total of 17 occasions every week, according to Westmounter Angela Lehrer Vineberg, who organized the protest.

The participants stayed on the pool deck past 6:30 pm when an adult swim began – and when children were supposed to exit both the pool and deck – to show their disagreement with the schedule.

According to Vineberg, the turnout would have been even larger had there not been an imminent threat of rain. "I had about 36 to 40 more people that would

have come," she said in an interview with the *Independent*.

Vineberg said that when a lifeguard told them it was time for the children to leave so the adult swim period could begin, most of the participants decided to stand their ground and linger for another 10 minutes on the deck.

"We stayed, I would say, until about 6:40 hanging out, but it was very peaceful. The lifeguards were cool about it. It was very nice and friendly. 'Share the pool' is our campaign slogan, and we were just showing support for that."

"I think the city got the message, and hopefully they will realize that things need to change," she added.

The group wants the adult-only swim times replaced with a policy that would include children but that would also see adult-only swim lanes implemented.

See photo, p. 1.

SPCA picks up ailing raccoon

A raccoon needing attention was reported June 25 from a property on Renfrew, Public Security officials said. It was moving very slowly and believed to be sick or injured. After patrollers initially answered the call at 3:53 pm, the SPCA was called to catch it but was reported to have decided it should be left at the scene. At 11 pm, the SPCA was told the raccoon was still in the area and a second request was made. When officers called back at 12:45 am, they left a message and received a call at 1:20 am saying the raccoon had already been picked up.

Party time: 8 hosts warned, music lowered

Residents hosting at least eight noisy parties throughout Westmount between June 21 and 26 were given verbal warnings from public safety officers, Public Security officials said.

The calls for noise complaints came from neighbours.

All those warned were described as cooperative and lowered the volume of music or moved guests inside from backyards.

The parties were found in progress on Belmont, Kensington, Sunnyside, Irvine, Upper Belmont, Aberdeen, Lexington and Victoria.

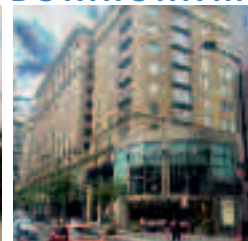
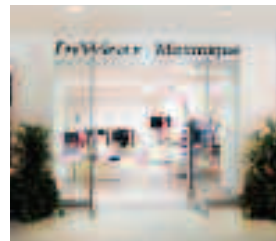
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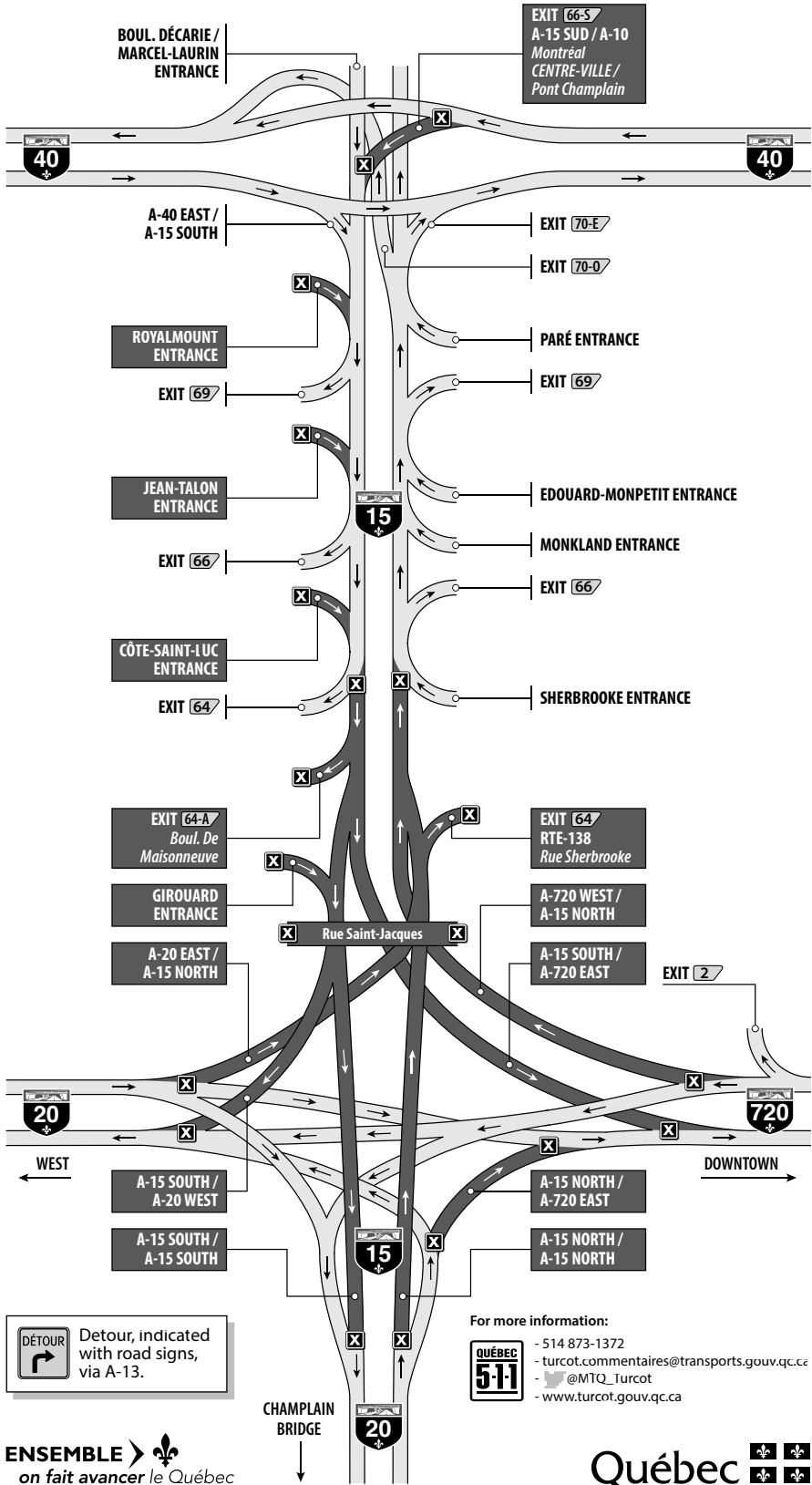
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Bike rack prototype customized from Dawson model

A prototype of the two types of bicycle racks to be installed in the city's commercial districts was received by Public Works last week.

To be painted black, the racks of high-resistance galvanized steel are similar to those used at Dawson College as well as in Montreal, explained road superintendent Allen Idle. "We saw them at Dawson and had them tailored to our needs." That means widening them slightly to fit over some of the deheaded parking meter poles. "The great thing these days is that it did-



Traffic specialist Jonathan Auger demonstrates how a bike can be attached to the prototype bike racks received last week at Public Works.

Cyclist injured on Belvedere

A 41-year-old woman suffered a cut over the left eye after falling from her bicycle at 49 Belvedere Rd., June 23 at 4:15 pm, Public Security officials said. Patrollers gave her an ice pack while awaiting the arrival of Urgences Santé. When the ambulance arrived at 5:20 pm, the Lachine resident refused transportation to hospital and was picked up by her boyfriend. No mention was made of a helmet.

n't cost us any more to have them customized," said Public Works director Patrick Raggo.

The city has ordered 85 in total, some to be fastened into a concrete base, others to be screwed into the meter pole once they are slid over it like a sleeve. They are scheduled to arrive for installation by the end of the month (see story June 21, p. 3). — LS

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Annual camp-out in Westmount Park marks Canada Day



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It was a perfect summer evening to camp in Westmount Park with a blazing log fire carefully tended by George Deare and gentle harmonies in the background from musicians Emily Gamble, left, Jacquelyn Sundberg on ukulele and Brittany Williams on guitar.

By RALPH THOMPSON

A city-run camp-out was held June 30 in Westmount Park. Participants could enjoy barbequed hot dogs and marshmallows roasted over a blazing log fire, folk music and very few mosquitoes. All 50 camping spots were taken. Between 5 and 7 pm, campers pitched their tents and set up camp. Several children were seen taking a paddle in the lagoon.



After a night in camping in Westmount Park, 23-month-old Lou Azeff has a big smile as she chases bubbles.

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Existing drop sites (municipal buildings, Metro grocery store, Tabagie Westmount Square etc.), the emailed newspaper list and the website will be maintained as is, but with more newspapers in some cases.

Please call me if you have any suggestions. As usual, we will take a break in July.

Our last issue is July 12. Our first issue back is August 9. Thank you for your help and patience at this time.

We wish management and labour at Canada Post good luck in their negotiations.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LIGHTS ON EVERY CORNER

The experiment represented by the new bike paths needs either to be re-thought or have lights put on every street corner that approaches Côte St. Antoine from the north.

Anyone approaching Côte Rd. from the north, after having come to a stop, will have the instinct to always look left (eastward) down the one-way street to look for approaching vehicles, and bicycles (since the arrow in the bike lane clearly points west), most specially if that is what they have done for the last many years, even before the bike path.

A man who had his child in the back child-seat of his bicycle has no idea how close he came to smacking into my vehicle as he quickly sailed downhill; right through the intersection eastward against the arrows, continuing on completely oblivious as to what had just happened, as I hit the brakes hard after leaving my stop sign to turn right on Côte St. Antoine.

Just how many people will look down the wrong way of a one-way street to check for bicycles coming from that direction? My guess is very few. I will certainly try from now on!

Does this apply as well to Westmount Ave., which is a two-way? Probably not so much, but time will tell. This is a serious accident waiting to happen.

CARY KITNER, FORDEN AVE.

NARY A CYCLIST ON THE PATH

I drive on Westmount Ave. and Côte St. Antoine periodically. I have only seen one cyclist on one occasion using a part of Westmount Ave. that was not dug up.

Has anyone else seen any cyclists using these cycle paths? If my experience is typical, it would seem that they serve no useful purpose and only contribute to the “let’s make life miserable for the motorist” movement.

If so, may we have these markings and the hindrance they represent removed?

RICHARD BAYLIS, THE BOULEVARD

A SUSTAINABLE DORCHESTER?

The first attempt at describing what might occur with the parking lots and the excessively wide roadways of Dorchester west of Atwater was instructive (re: “Narrowing of Dorchester, building heights proposed – minus bike path,” June 21, p. 1).

One supposes that Westmount’s intention is to densify the area, somehow enliven Greene’s shopping street, and bring back a quality of life to an area that suffered greatly because of the mid-20th century approach to urbanism that prioritized

the private vehicle.

But being well into the 21st century with a federal government engaged in keeping climate change at 1.5 degrees C, the defining elements of the presentation should have been centred on sustainability.

How will it become a 21st century project? What are the elements in the fields of energy, building envelope, transportation, carbon dioxide reduction, water use, urban agriculture, etc. that will make this new neighbourhood Westmount’s first sustainable neighbourhood?

Unfortunately, I have a sense that what has been presented is but a tweaking of last century’s approach to planning.

ROGER JOCHYM, LEWIS AVE.

TRAILERS NOT THE SOLUTION

The article in the issue of June 28 issue (“Trent, Samiotis meet with Coderre on St. Léon solution,” p. 4), reporting on the measures now being contemplated to relieve the shortage of classroom space at St. Léon is very disturbing.

The feasibility of installing temporary structures, termed trailers, in the schoolyard of the school, for some three to five years, is reportedly under study, so as to respond to requests of parents, mostly from outside Westmount, for admission of their children to the school, in the absence of any other French school in this city. Expanding St. Léon using trailers will only increase traffic congestion, eliminate parking spaces on adjacent streets, reduce playground space, and result in visual, atmospheric and noise pollution.

It is also conceivable that property values of dwellings located near the school on Clarke and Kitchener avenues will decline due to the proximity of these trailers, as they are likely to be unsightly.

That Westmount’s elected officials should be so concerned to resolve a problem that relates primarily to non-West-mounters seems a strange inversion of proper priorities. In addition, the proposed term of three to five years, is hardly a “temporary” measure, and could easily end up being further extended or even permanent.

Other school buildings may be available in Montreal right now, which could be used to accommodate the expected spike in numbers of francophone students or which could be altered to meet those needs in far less than three to five years, without any need for a project that threatens to damage the quality of life in an already busy area of our city.

Let us hope that the project, as reported, will be found unfeasible.

MAURA McKEON, CLARKE AVE.

United church's June 'café' focusses on permaculture



On June 17, the Westmount Park United Church hosted its monthly "climate café." The event featured two talks relating to environmental sustainability. The first discussed climate change as presented by Shelagh McNally, a trained presenter for Al Gore's Climate Reality movement. The second delved into the idea of permaculture and was given by Mat Madison and Étienne Le Corff, environmental management masters students. The aim of the café, driven by Reverend Neil Whitehouse, is to bring people together who share a common concern for the state of the environment and to provide ideas to make a positive difference. From left: Madison, Le Corff, McNally and Whitehouse. Photo: Matt Faigan

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March transfers: Volume higher, prices lower



Real estate

ANDY DODGE, CRA

The following article relates to the registration of deeds of sale for Westmount property in March 2016, gleaned from non-city sources. A list of sales can be found on p. 11.

Prices moved down but volume was extremely high among sales registered in March of this year, with the average mark-up for the month just about the same as it has been for the rest of the year, but with none of the \$3-million-plus sales seen in January and February.

Highest price of the month was \$2,100,000, for 48 Holton Ave., a totally renovated semi-detached home in eastern Westmount, closely followed by the \$2,050,000 price for 800 Lexington Ave., north of Shorncliffe, also nicely renovated but detached.

Lowest price on Prince Albert

The lowest price, just under \$461,000, went for 212 Prince Albert Ave., believed to be one of the smallest houses in Westmount, which was the lowest price for a



212 Prince Albert Ave., photographed June 29.

single-family dwelling in Westmount since December 2011.

With the range so low, the average of 20 sales registered in the month went down to \$1,272,248, while the “typical” Westmount home with an evaluation of \$1,466,404 would have sold for some \$1,581,000. That is because the average mark-up in March came to 7.8 percent, in a range from -15.25 percent (490 Argyle Ave.) to 40.22 percent (4363 Montrose Ave.). The volume of 20 one- and two-family dwellings is the most registered in a March since 1979, and in fact the most registered in any month since last June, which is normally the highest volume month of the year. Whether this higher volume continues into the summer months remains

to be seen.

Condo activity

Four condominiums, including one apartment and three flats in duplexes and triplexes, brought the total for the first quarter of 2016 to six sales ranging from \$295,000 to \$2,000,000 with an average mark-up of 4.42 percent, only slightly lower than the average for one- and two-family dwellings.

Old Double Hook bookstore

The only other sale in the *Independent's* list for March involves the former Double Hook Bookstore building at 1235 Greene Ave., which sold for \$1,150,000, having been listed at \$1,749,000 last August.

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.....
continued on p. 12



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Subban adds star power to MCH gala



Social Notes from Westmount and Beyond

VERONICA REDGRAVE

The 2016 Ball for the Children's (Montreal Children's Hospital or MCH) on May 19 had huge celebrity sizzle. Popular P.K. Subban, former Canadiens star defenceman, MCH Foundation spokesperson and board member, attracted masses of media and paparazzi to the sold-out gala.

Amazing what star power can do. And in his case, a lot: He committed \$10 million to the MCH. Subban attended with his parents **Maria** and **Karl**.

Waiting TV cameras caught Quebec actress **Mahée Paiement**, wearing a red-carpet-worthy crimson ruffled gown. Patron of honour was **Pierre Dandoy**, senior vp, Provigo, Loblaw Companies Ltd., attending with his wife **Josée St-Laurent**.

Ball committee chair **Élyse Léger**, vp Fiera Capital, worked with an amazing organizing committee. Themed "A Night to Remember in Argentina," guests were greeted with the music of tango guitar. The ambiance was continued by the cuisine from the homeland of Argentinian native and Chopped Canada judge **Antonio Park**.

Westmounters noted amidst the gorgeous glamour included Mayor **Peter Trent** and his wife **Kathryn Stephenson**, **Paul Desmarais III** and his wife **Mary**; **John Leopold**, board vice chair, MCH, senior partner Stikeman Elliott; **Aaron Rand** with **Valerie Wise**, **Helena** and **Eddie Wiltzer** as well as the MCH's **Marie-Josée Gariépy**, president MCH Foundation, with **Robert Davis**; **Jonathan Amiel**, foundation board chair, with his wife **Heather**; and **Martine Alfonso**, associate executive director MCH, with **Philippe Bertrand**.

Noted in the packed room were **Guy Crevier**, president/editor, *La Presse*; **Angie** and **Ross Bayus**, president Valero Energy; **Martin Spalding**, vp Bell Media, with **Joanne Walford**; NDG-Côte des Neiges borough mayor **Russell Copeman**; **Audrey Vallière** and **Eric Boyko**, CEO Stingray Digital; **Nadia Saputo**, **Jessica** and **Mark Pathy**, **Josianne Poirier** and Octane chief **François Dumontier** (getting ready for Grand Prix!), **Nathalie** and **David Miller**; as well as Quebec personalities **Eric Salvail**, **Julie DuPage** (with hubby **Andrew Lapierre**), **Cindy Sherman** (with **John Gould**), **Sébastien Benoit** (with **Karine Dumont**), **Jean René Dufort** (Infoman) and his son **Arnaud**, **Anne-Marie Wittenshaw**, **Herby Moreau** and evening emcee **Isabelle Racicot**.

Noted in the crowd was Sophie Grégoire-Trudeau's stylist **Vanessa Mulroney** (with hubby **Mark**) in from Toronto.

Stefano Ruvo, a 6-year-old MCH patient, was the winner of the TD Nicolas W. Matossian Junior Community Award of Excellence.

Other Awards of Excellence recipients were **Gail Auerbach**, **Patrizia Ciocca**, doctors **Robert Platt** and **Chantal Poulin** and **Ann Hébert**.

The magical night raised \$1.2 million.

Also seen and heard

Westmount businessman and philanthropist **Stephen Jarislowsky** and his wife **Gail** have established a \$2-million endowment through the Jarislowsky Foundation. It will support the chief curator position at the Audain Art Museum in Whistler, BC. The curator, **Darrin Martens**, will now be known as the **Gail and Stephen A. Jarislowsky Chief Curator**. The couple has endowed numerous university and cultural organization chairs in Canada. Jarislowsky is founder, chair and CEO of the investment management firm Jarislowsky Fraser.



Josée St-Laurent and Pierre Dandoy.



Antonio Park and P.K. Subban



Kathryn Stephenson and Mayor Peter Trent.



Mahée Paiement



Helena and Eddie Wiltzer.



Valerie Wiseman and Aaron Rand.

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Condo project presented under PPCMOI process

cont'd. from p. 1

might result from the preliminary design.

While many questions from PAC members and citizens related to deviations from current zoning for occupancy, heights, setbacks, or site coverage, Gersovitz said it was important "for all of us to understand" that variances were to be expected.

If a project had no variances, "we wouldn't be here," she said. "When you are embarked on a PPCMOI project, essentially you are using this tool to get the best possible results."

That means, she said, once conformity to existing zoning is abandoned, "all options are possible as long as they meet the city's planning program" whatever type of building a person is advocating for. Other regulations might not apply. A larger building, for example, might require larger setbacks.

After this initial presentation, she said, it would be up to Urban Planning, the PAC and city council to deliberate on how the benefits of the project outweigh the variances, a process outlined at the start of the meeting by Tom Flies, assistant director, Urban Planning.

But when the meeting concluded, architect Ken London of Prince Albert Ave. told the *Independent* the meeting had still not provided him with answers to why the project should be given "special consideration" or what "benefits to the community" it offered as a trade-off to zoning variances.

The area in question, R3-27-01, is currently zoned for one- and two-family dwellings of three storeys or less. The building at 4898 de Maisonneuve has vested rights for commercial or medical use unless demolished.

PAC leads off questions

The meeting format proceeded from the initial presentation to questions from PAC

members – many seeking more technical information.

How did the architect and developer arrive at the height, the setbacks and site coverage? Why the use of limestone? What would be the average size of a proposed unit and had they looked at building triplexes instead? Who currently used the adjacent parking lot?

In response to these and a number of questions from citizens expressing concerns over the impact of the proposed building on light and the neighbourhood's profile, Smale and Hazan provided many new details about the evolution of the project.

Options considered

Smale said a number of development alternatives had been researched but found to be not economically feasible. To upgrade the commercial building, he said relatively low commercial rents in the area and high taxes did not justify the cost.

In another option, the cost of building six or seven single-family dwellings or duplexes on the maximum allowable six or seven lots would price them at \$1.5 million to \$2 million. He deemed these would be too large and too expensive for the current market in the area.

On the other hand, he explained, building 21 condo units according to the proposed design would likely price them in the range of \$700,000 to \$900,000 for an average size unit of 1,100 square feet. This, he said, would meet objectives of the city's 2014 planning program and the current market need for smaller, more affordable housing.

They would take an estimated 14 months of construction. As well, limestone was chosen, he said, as a "high-end material" used in many Westmount buildings.

While some of the parking lot is rented out, he explained, most is used by the businesses in the existing building.

Concerns voiced

While the project would follow the "principles of LEED" (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), the cost of building it to actual certification would not be feasible, Smale told questioner Paul Marriott, president of the Westmount Municipal Association.

Michele MacDougall, another questioner, said the current commercial building was not an "eyesore" and had never bothered her family in 42 years living on Prince Albert. It added a mix of activity in Victoria village.

Denis Biro of Burton said he believed the project did not conform to the objectives of the city's planning program mentioning "appropriate low- or mid-density" developments suitable for young families. He submitted a petition of 31 signatures he had collected from residents of the concerned zone asking the city to reject the current proposal.

John Fretz of Lansdowne noted an absence of ventilation units ("25 heat pumps") in all renderings presented. He pointed out problems of noise emissions that had arisen from the super-hospital's systems. Smale said that the renderings presented were only preliminary.



Philip Hazan, right, architect of the proposed redevelopment for de Maisonneuve and Prince Albert, answers a question at the PAC meeting June 28. At left is Peter Smale, co-developer with property owner Guy Laframboise.

continued on p. 15

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Barrie Howells of York St. said the proposed building was too close to adjacent Château Westmount and would block light to its windows. The building's height would also block light to homes on York St. while its large windows would overlook those homes.

Laurel Bossen of York expressed concern over how the size of the large underground garage would affect the foundations of neighbouring houses. She asked about the height of the building.

Gersovitz stated that height should be described in feet rather than storeys since a commercial storey is higher than a residential one. Therefore, with this project, "one of the confusing issues is the reference to height."

Architect Hazan said the current commercial building is 40 feet high. The new



The panel from the city's Planning Advisory Committee are, from left: Councillor Cynthia Lulham and architects Andrea Wolff, Eric Marosi and Julia Gersovitz, chair.

Comments on new project 'articulately argued': Trent

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Residents have until Tuesday, July 12 to submit comments on the proposed development for 4898 de Maisonneuve, Councillor Cynthia Lulham reminded the audience at the public meeting June 28. Many comments were known to have already been received.

"I commend you on your emails," she said.

Mayor Peter Trent in replying to those addressed to him told citizens that "as well as making a case against the proposed project, these letters have something else in common: they are forcefully and articulately argued."

A few also expressed support for West-

mount's new process for this kind of zoning change request, he explained. This is when the proposed development is explained to the city's Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) and the public at the same time.

While Trent did not attend the presentation, he told the *Independent* the new system seemed to be working and was "a huge stride in the right direction."

"It's much better to start off publicly," he said, rather than having the PAC review a project for months to improve it and the public being the last to view it. Now, he explained, the council, the PAC and public will all know about it at the same time.

Other than Lulham, council members attending the meeting were Christina Smith, who represents District 5 where the site is located, Rosalind Davis and Nicole Forbes respectively from adjacent districts 4 and 6.

sioner Theodora Samiotis on the PAC panel. Along with Lulham and Gersovitz, the others were Andrea Wolff and Eric Marosi.

Other than Lulham, council members attending the meeting were Christina Smith, who represents District 5 where the site is located, Rosalind Davis and Nicole Forbes respectively from adjacent districts 4 and 6.



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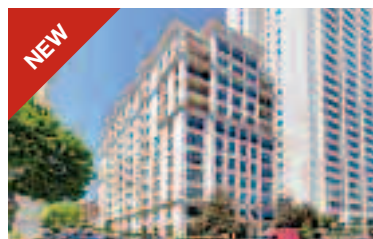
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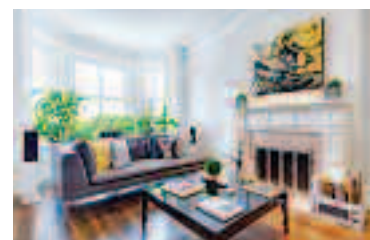
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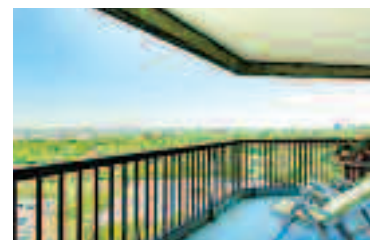
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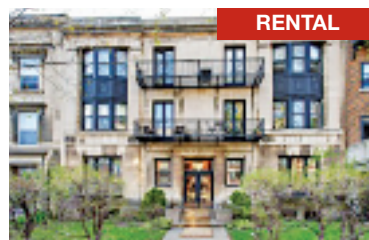
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