

Dépanneur owner/tenant vows to continue fight

St. Catherine site near Atwater okayed for demo, building

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

City council gave its blessing February 19 for the demolition of an almost vacant three-storey commercial building at 4014-4022 St. Catherine and its replacement by one of seven to 10 storeys high of mixed use. The site is just west of Atwater and directly south of Alexis Nihon.

The new \$21-million project consists of retail at street level, two storeys of offices, topped by two recessed apartment sections and common rooftop areas, architect Marc Rasmussen of FRW architects ex-

plained at the demolition hearing. There is also underground parking for 89 cars.

"Obviously, it's a very large project," Mayor Christina Smith said. "We don't see many of these in Westmount,"

The remaining tenant of the existing building was the lone legally recognized opponent.

"I strongly object to the demolition," stated Xiaobing Fan, owner of the 7 Jours dépanneur. His lease in the building was "good" until 2020, he said. The business supports his entire family and offers 24-hour service to the neighbourhood.

He asked how the city could consider such a request when he had obtained a court injunction against the demolition.

Smith, however, explained the injunction

continued on p. 16

New Westmount High team wins first game



Westmount High, in red, had an opportunity to score in front of the St George's net with a bouncing puck at an exhibition hockey game at the Westmount recreation centre February 23. It was the first game of a re-launched program at the school and a 6-1 victory for the players. See p. 15 for more.

Photo: Ralph Thompson.

City's DG Hurtubise speaks to Independent about his first six months at top post, p. 8

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Delay Mt. Royal road closure: Smith

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Westmount won't support Montreal's controversial pilot project to close off Remembrance Rd./Camillien Houde over Mount Royal to through-car access, Mayor Christina Smith said last week. At least not for now, that is.

She said that at the agglomeration council meeting February 22 she asked why Westmount – once again – had not been consulted about a major initiative. In the absence of Mayor Valérie Plante and execu-

tive committee chairman Craig Sauvé, Outremont borough mayor Philippe Tomlinson, also of Projet Montréal, apologized and said other stakeholders had not been told.

Smith said if Montreal is not willing to back down, would it delay the plan until completion of the Turcot work when more of a traffic baseline could be established?

When Tomlinson said Montreal was counting on the support of Westmount as one of the three peaks comprising Mount Royal, Smith said, "I told him I will not support it."

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Leith pays tribute to Gallant at Atwater Library



At the Atwater Library Lunchtime Series on February 15, writer and publisher Linda Leith marked the fourth anniversary of Canadian writer Mavis Gallant's death with a screening of the film *Paris Stories: The Writing of Mavis Gallant*. Leith, who founded and for many years led the Blue Metropolis Montreal International Literary Festival, appears briefly in the film. Gallant, although originally from Montreal, where she started her writing career, spent most of her life in Paris. The film was followed by an optional writing workshop led by Leith.

Photo: Martin C. Barry

Di Ioia, Serrao celebrate BeaverTails' 40th

BeaverTails, which is majority owned by Westmounters Pino Di Ioia and Tina Serrao and Pino's brother Anthony, celebrated its 40th anniversary on February 20.

Pam and Grant Hooker began serving BeaverTails pastries at the Killaloe Fair near Ottawa in 1978. Pino joined the enterprise as a university student in 1987 at its La Ronde location, "I've been here for

30 of the last 40 years!" he said in a press release. He later became a franchisee.

The current team took over the business' management in 2002, moved the head office to Montreal and became majority owners in 2009.

BeaverTails has 120 locations in Canada, nine locations in the US and six internationally.

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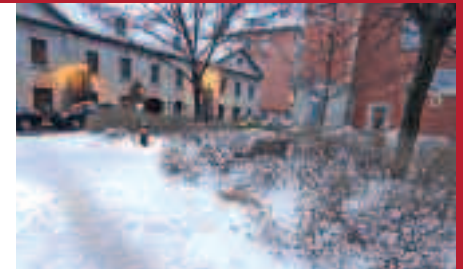
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What to do with churches?

Hanna reviews the options in Westmount, elsewhere

By RALPH THOMPSON

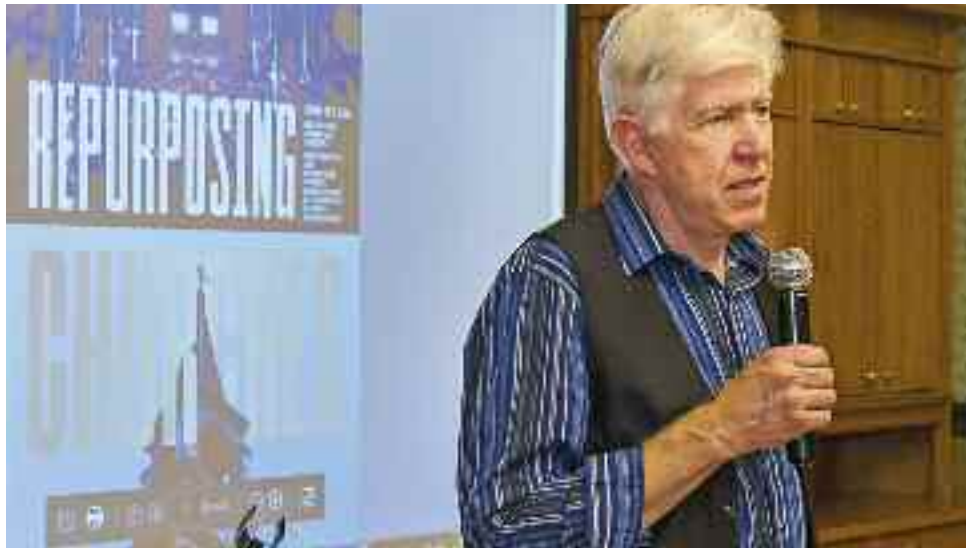
The Westmount Historical Association's winter 2018 lecture series continued February 15 on the theme of "shaping the future" at the Westmount Public Library, with guest speaker David Hanna, UQAM associate professor of urban studies, talking about repurposing churches.

It was a full house with an enthusiastic and knowledgeable audience posing lots of questions and sharing experiences. Hanna is a member of the Conseil du patrimoine religieux du Québec, whose mission is to support and promote the conservation and enhancement of Quebec's religious heritage. Hanna is also a member of Westmount's Local Heritage Council.

Westmount has 13 houses of worship ranging from the earliest construction, the traditional Anglican-designed church of the Advent on de Maisonneuve Blvd. built in 1892 to the most recent construction, the bright and spacious Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom built in 1958 on Sherbrooke St. at Wood, still in use by its builder.

"Repurposing religious establishments has always been difficult," said Hanna. "Residents will passionately protect their neighbourhood church, but when asked if they attend services, will often say they never go to church, but point out that since churches are tax exempt, then they are supporting the institution. Developers are not interested anymore," said Hanna because of these and other issues.

He stated that the challenges are greater now because of Montreal agglomeration by-laws, which apply to demerged



cities on the island of Montreal, that protect both the exterior and interior elements of religious buildings that have significant heritage value. Most were built with much larger assemblies in mind. With diminishing congregations, high operating costs, zoning restrictions, heritage by-laws and neighbourhood resistance, repurposing of a church requires innovative thinking and public accommodation.

Westmount currently faces two such challenges, namely St. Stephen's Church on the corner of Atwater and Dorchester and the very large Mountainside United Church at the corner of Lansdowne and The Boulevard.

St. Stephen's has reportedly been sold, although on February 22 the Montreal agglomeration's Role d'évaluation foncière still showed "St. Stephen's Church" as the

owner. The Open Door drop-in centre for homeless people was still using the building on February 26 when the *Independent* went by. (For more coverage, see "Study

moves into viability of houses of worship," July 4, 2017, p. 3).

Mountainside is for sale (see "Mountainside United going up for sale after 100 years," April 5, 2016, p. 1).

Solutions can include partial repurposing of the building together with a community activity (such as daycares) but the church continues to operate; a complete replacement of the religious endeavour by community functions but including religious functions; or a complete sale of the property for private use.

But faced with the numerous obstacles, it's unlikely that residential condominiums would be an attractive proposition today, he said.

Councillor Cynthia Lulham participated in the discussions after the presentation pointing out that Councillor Conrad Peart and she are on the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) and that she sits on the Local Heritage Council.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SOME CELEBRATION, SOME COVERAGE

Some celebration at Victoria Hall on February 10! ("Boicel, Lord celebrate Black History Month at Vic Hall," February 20, p. 1).

Marie-Josée Lord never performed. Apparently she came to the hall, but then left without explanation, without apology, without excuse! Some diva!

It would have been a good story for the *Independent*, but the paper missed out. Too bad. No word from anyone about the whole debacle, although I am assured that we will be getting our money refunded.

NICHOLAS HANLON, SHERBROOKE ST.

Editor's note: You are right. I am tempted to argue that our story was correct. We used two verbs to describe Lord's activities at Victoria Hall. She may well have "celebrated" before she left and was "featured" on the promotional material, but I have to confess it was misleading, and that we missed her non-performance. Thanks for keeping us on our toes. – DP

LAST WORD ON PARKING (FOR A WHILE)

Maybe Matthew Cope ("Parking app is free...", February 20, p. 4) can afford a smart phone, but I doubt if the majority of Westmount citizens can, so the pay-by-plate parking system remains a daunting challenge for most. The unnecessary in-

crease of one-dollar is very simply another tax grab by the city along with the unjustified increase in the "welcome tax."

When will it ever end?

TIM CARSLEY, BARAT RD.

DAMN THE POOP

For God's sake, if you own a dog, have the basic decency to pick up his poop. Damn it!

LUCILLE LAPERRIÈRE ROBITAILLE,
DE MAISONNEUVE

MAYOR, COUNCIL SHOW FINE LEADERSHIP

Letter writer David Black of Sydenham Ave (February 13, p. 6) speaks for many of us in applauding the mayor and council for fine leadership in banning gas-operated leaf blowers. Now the truly hard part of leadership begins: making NIMBY culture work for everyone. Not In My Back Yard for leaf blowers. Dust, dirt and noise, odours and exhaust, are bad for the community and those who work in it. We have to police ourselves. Let us find new ways and styles of making our lovely homes presentable. Speak with your contractors too, and persuade them to adapt, as it saves their hearing and health. Also let Public Works lead the way in following this by-law and ensure its subcontractors do so also.

VICTOR YELVERTON HAINES II,
DE MAISONNEUVE

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The big reveal as school mascot, Rossi, presents 30 shiny new Lenovo laptops.

Roslyn gets \$10,000 award for laptops

By RALPH THOMPSON

Roslyn Elementary School students had a surprise February 20 at 2 pm. Pupils crowded into the gymnasium and, after welcoming guests and a few introductory speeches, the secret was unveiled: 30 sleek new Lenovo laptop computers.

Roslyn, along with seven other schools in North America, was granted \$10,000 worth of laptop computers (convertible to tablets) in the Softchoice Power Up program. The excitement was palpable and

principal Nicholas Katalifos had to ask the children several times to quieten down.

Two years ago, Softchoice, together with partners Lenovo and VMware, established the program to “level the playing field” for students with limited access to technology.

Although Roslyn is in Westmount, “50 percent of our students come from many parts of Montreal including the Point,” said Katalifos.

“Some students have no access to computers outside the technology classroom,”

said Julie Marcus, Roslyn’s technology teacher. So she took the initiative and applied for the grant, along with 15 other schools in the Montreal area. Roslyn was the only successful applicant, one of only two in Canada, the other being in Toronto.

“The laptops will be kept in their charging stations overnight and used by students during the day. Teachers will request use of the computers for their classes,” said Marcus “They are light and robust, and can be converted into tablets.”



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City's director general a 'fix-it' person

Six months of challenges recounted by Hurtubise

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

It's gone by so fast you could call it a whirlwind or maybe a blink of the eye.

But in the six months since Benoit Hurtubise took over the reins of Westmount's administration as the city's director general, there's been a hot election campaign, a new council sworn in and the city's operating budget for 2018 to be re-worked in a week.

And it came on the heels of a period of uncertainty. Long-time mayor Peter Trent had resigned. Christina Smith took over as interim mayor and then Mike Deegan retired unexpectedly as director general. Hurtubise, as assistant DG, took over.

"There's never a dull moment," he said last week. "Every day is a new day that takes me out of my comfort zone."

Only a couple of weeks ago, he found himself in front of TV cameras at city hall when neither the mayor nor the city clerk was available to speak about the city's sound barrier case in court against the provincial ministry of Transport.

"That *really* took me out of my comfort zone!" Hurtubise said with a laugh. But that was another challenge met.

'Gray zones'

While he has a passion for management, he said, "You learn you have to deal with a lot of gray zones."

And these challenges are actually the reason he decided in 2013 to apply to an ad for a new director of Hydro Westmount. After a 25-year career in the private sector's electrical industry, "I thought running an electric utility might be interesting," he said.

"Did I ever think I would end up as director general of the city? It never came to my mind."

At age 52, however, it comes at a good

time in his life, he points out. Married, with three children in CEGEP or university, Hurtubise has a lot of experience on which to draw.

In his earlier days at Nortel/Emerson, he worked as a quality and application engineer before migrating into management there and at Schneider Electric, he explained. "I've always enjoyed things that needed fixing." That meant coming up with the right resources to do the job.

Hurtubise holds a degree in electrical engineering from École Polytechnique de Montréal and an MBA from École des Hautes Études Commerciales, obtained in 1988 and 1996 respectively (see story April 9, 2013, p. 3).

And while his road to the top job in municipal government within five years could be considered a leap, it was actually a "logical progression," he points out.

While managing and restructuring Hydro Westmount, Hurtubise soon found himself simultaneously heading Public Works when its director, Marianne Zalzal, left on sick leave. "I was an electrical engineer, not a civil engineer," he mused, "but I used common sense."

With this added experience, Hurtubise was the city's choice to help the council realize a new priority: substantially increasing its spending to renew the city's neglected infrastructure. With this appointment, he became assistant director general for infrastructure.

"The money was there," he recalled,



Benoit Hurtubise in his office at city hall February 17.

"but I had to put together an organization and capital works budget for 2016 that showed we had to invest \$15 million a year over 20 years, excluding special projects such as restoration of the greenhouses."

This is "a long-term financial plan," he emphasized, "but it does not specifically name, in what order, specific streets and utilities will be redone. You can't list the order of streets, for example, until you know the condition of what's under them." While

the city has already obtained an evaluation of roads, the condition of water mains and other networks is now under way.

New ideas

Since last November's elections, his key focus has been to support the new council and help its six new councillors become oriented into the municipal and political world. "Like other Westmount councils, they're committed and dedicated to the city, but they have new ideas," he explained.

Once the council has determined its goals, it will be for Hurtubise and his team of department heads to find ways to translate them into action.

While these five years have been the first for Hurtubise working in the public sector, he points out he has been no stranger to public "service."

A West Islander, he had worked as a lifeguard and then manager at a pool in Dollard des Ormeaux. He was also a ski instructor at Mont St. Sauveur, where he met his wife. It wasn't until he was in his forties that he took up hockey, which he now plays on an Old Timers C team. But he soon became director and president of the Dorval Old Timers Hockey League of 235 members and, as a father, was an assistant coach for Hockey West Island.

Along with managing the city, he says, he sees his role in Westmount as being there "to serve" residents. "I always try to be fair and equitable," he said. And he considers himself lucky: "I've always had a strong team to work with."

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Totally Red

By RALPH THOMPSON

The senior tour group (actors aged 14 to 18) of the Teen Tour Theatre Group presented *Totally RED!* in the Lodge room at Victoria Hall February 18 between 2 pm and 3 pm to an audience of about 100 children and their parents. *Totally RED!* is a new twist on the classic European fairy tale “Little Red Riding Hood.”

Dinah Toups wrote the script with musical notes, and Barbara Walker wrote the lyrics and music.

The director, Aviva Wolman-Wener, runs the Teen Tour Theatre school in NDG. She said, “My theatre school is not for profit. Any money we earn goes to charity. We perform for free at schools around Montreal and the aim is to give



In an interactive segment, the young audience gets involved with a little hip-hop dancing.

teens the opportunity to act in front an audience.”

Totally RED! presents multiple theatre styles, beginning with a humorous story-book version of the story. It continues by restating sections in melodrama, Elizabethan, hip-hop, American musical and avant-garde styles.

Seemingly a little sophisticated for audience members as young as 4, Wolman-Wener explained that, “It’s arranged to entertain both kids and their parents. For example, the young kids laugh at the big bad wolf’s nose poking over the blanket when it pretends to be grandma and it is interactive. They dance and answer questions.”

Red (left) talks to the big bad wolf, Lou (as in loup or wolf), who is looking forward to a nice meal.



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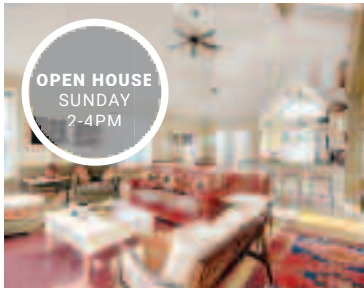
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Sicotte, Bigras bring Scandinavia to Quebec with micro 'Chic Shacks'



Dan Bigras and Marie Sicotte, seen here at their home in Westmount Square, are developing a new concept for country living involving "micro" houses such as the one seen in the poster.

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

Westmounters Marie Sicotte and Dan Bigras are offering a twist on the typical country house by developing a community of "micro" houses set in the midst of the Laurentian wilderness near Mont Tremblant.

Located seven kilometres from Mont Tremblant, the Chic Shack micro-loft project offers modern architecture rendered with respect for the environment in order to preserve the visual and ecological harmony of the surroundings, says Sicotte.

There are five or six models to choose from and they come pre-fabricated. Bonneville Industries is building the houses. Depending on clients' choices and their

needs, the homes can vary from 800 to 1,200 square feet, with one to three bedrooms.

Scattered in the woods surrounding the community will be cross-country ski, snowshoeing and mountain bike trails, which can be easily accessed.

According to Sicotte, phase one of the project, in a lakefront setting, is almost sold out, with a second phase due to be launched this spring. Future phases of development are also planned.

As the project is positioned near a body of water that is on crown territory, there is no question of development ever taking place there, although members of the Chic Shack community will have access and be able to enjoy the lake.

Sicotte and Bigras say they were inspired by a way of life that is quite common in Scandinavia, where cross-country trails are found almost everywhere and a large number of people use the trails to get around for everyday tasks.

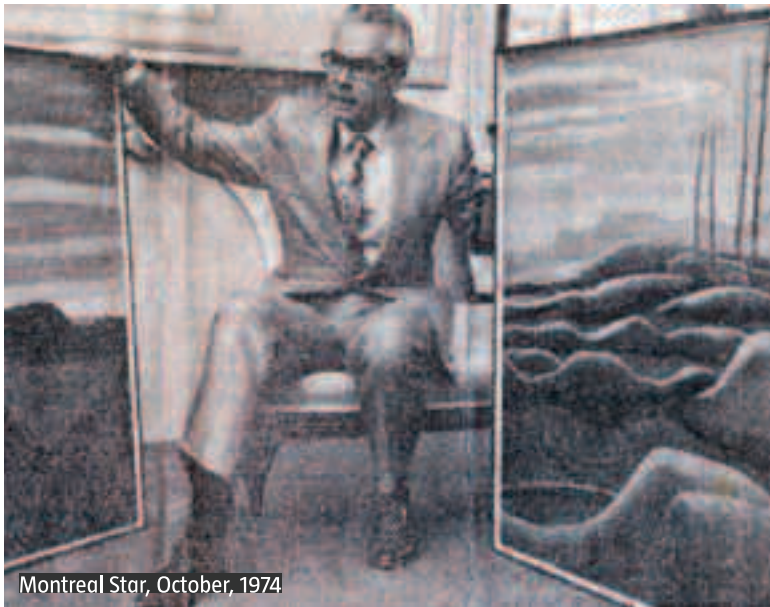
"You don't have to use your car," she says. "You just get on your skis and hit the trails, which are right there at your doorstep." Prices for the houses start at \$245,000.

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Montreal Star, October, 1974



March, 1986



Circa, 1990



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2018.02.27 • Vol. 6/04
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BIBLIOTHÈQUE

Bibliothèque de semences : lancement du printemps

Semences gratuites pour les membres de la Bibliothèque : choisissez parmi plus de 50 variétés de plantes - fines herbes, fleurs, légumes, plantes patrimoniales. Les semences sont classées dans les tiroirs des anciens meubles du catalogue sur fiches près du comptoir du prêt. 514 989-5530.

Club de lecture en anglais

Le mardi 27 février, 19 h, Bibliothèque. *Commonwealth* par Anne Patchett. Animé par Carly Vandergrindt. 514 989-5299.

Conférences de 14 heures : Gregory B. Gallagher

Le mercredi 28 février, 14 h, Bibliothèque. Film : *Legends of Magdalen*. Billets requis. 514 989-5299.

Série Récits de voyage

Le vendredi 2 mars, 13 h à 15 h, Bibliothèque. Une activité pour les individus atteints de la maladie d'Alzheimer ou d'une autre forme de démence. Inscription requise; le nombre de places est limité. 514 989-5530 ou dmiguez@westmount.org.

Atelier de poésie avec Ann Lloyd

Le mercredi 7 mars, 10 h 15, Bibliothèque. Le Groupe de poésie de Westmount compose des poèmes à partir de thèmes proposés par les membres. Bienvenue à tous. 514 989-5299.

Club de films documentaires

Le mercredi 7 mars, 19 h, Bibliothèque. *Eat That Question: Frank Zappa in His Own Words* (2016). Billets requis. 514 989-5299.

Relâche scolaire : films en après-midi

Les 5 et 6 mars, 14 h, Bibliothèque. Le lundi 5 mars : *Coco* (2017) - 5 ans et plus; Le mardi 6 mars : *Wonder* (2017) - 7 ans et plus. Projections en anglais. Inscription requise. 514 989-5229.

Prochaine séance du conseil le lundi 5 mars

ÉVÉNEMENTS COMMUNAUTAIRES

Galerie du Victoria Hall : appel de dossiers
Période d'inscription annuelle : du 15 février au 15 avril. La galerie du Victoria Hall lance un appel de dossiers pour sa programmation de la saison 2018-2019 (septembre 2018 à août 2019). Ce concours s'adresse aux artistes émergents ou professionnels qui habitent Westmount. Consultez le westmount.org pour plus de détails. 514 989-5521.

Collecte de sang d'Héma-Québec

Le mercredi 7 mars, 14 h 30 à 19 h 30, Victoria Hall. Donnez du sang. Donnez la vie. 514 989-5226.



Galerie du Victoria Hall : exposition

Du 8 au 29 mars. La galerie du Victoria Hall est fière de présenter des œuvres de Sara Colby. Rencontrez l'artiste le 14 mars à 19 h. Horaire : lundi au vendredi 10 h à 21 h, samedi/dimanche 10 h à 17 h. 514 989-5521.

Conférence : Parlons opéra!

Le dimanche 18 mars, 10 h 30, Victoria Hall. *Svadba*. Présenté (en anglais) par L'Opéra de Montréal. 514 989-5226.

Journée familiale du film

Le dimanche 18 mars, 14 h, Victoria Hall. Joignez-vous à nous pour la projection d'*Oddball* (2015), un film amusant pour toute la famille. Billets requis. 514 989-5226.

Conférence : L'importance de vos yeux

Le mardi 20 mars, 19 h, Bibliothèque. Le Dr Miguel N. Bernier Jr. parlera de la prévention et du traitement de troubles oculaires, ainsi que de la recherche et des nouvelles technologies. Gratuit. Présenté par le Projet ville en santé de Westmount en partenariat avec la Fondation du Centre universitaire de santé McGill. Inscriptions : fondationcuscsm.com/whc.

Une heure pour la terre édition 2018

Le samedi 24 mars, 16 h 30 à 21 h 30, Victoria Hall. Éteignez vos lumières! Venez vous joindre à nous au Victoria Hall pour une soirée d'activités soulignant la lutte aux changements climatiques. Le thème de cette année est *Zéro déchet, zéro émission : les Westmontais réduisent leur impact sur le changement climatique*. Présenté par le Projet ville en santé de Westmount. 514 989-5226.

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LIBRARY

Seed Lending Library: spring launch

Free seeds for Library members: choose from more than 50 varieties of seeds - herbs, flowers, vegetables, fruit, and heirloom plants. The seeds are filed in the drawers of the former card catalogue cabinets near the main circulation desk. 514 989-5530.

English Book Club

Tuesday, February 27, 7 p.m., Library. Anne Patchett's *Commonwealth*. Led by Carly Vandergrindt. 514 989-5299.

2 O'Clock Conferences Series:

Gregory B. Gallagher
Wednesday, February 28, 2 p.m., Library. Film: *Legends of Magdalen*. Tickets required. 514 989-5299.

Tales and Travels Series

Friday, March 2, 1-3 p.m., Library. An activity for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. Registration is required and spaces are limited. 514 989-5530 or dmiguez@westmount.org.

Poetry Workshop with Ann Lloyd

Wednesday, March 7, 10:15 a.m., Library. The Westmount Poetry Group meets to compose poetry together working with themes proposed by members. Welcome to all. 514 989-5299.

Documentary Film Club

Wednesday, March 7, 7 p.m., Library. *Eat That Question: Frank Zappa in His Own Words* (2016). Tickets required. 514 989-5299.

March Break Film Afternoons

March 5 & 6, 2 p.m., Library. Monday, March 5: *Coco* (2017) - 5 years and up; Tuesday, March 6: *Wonder* (2017) - 7 years and up. Screenings in English. Registration required. 514 989-5229.

Next Council Meeting Monday, March 5

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Gallery at Victoria Hall: call for projects

Annual registration period: February 15 to April 15. The Gallery at Victoria Hall announces a call for projects for its 2018-2019 exhibition season (September 2018 to August 2019). Emerging or professional artists who are residents of Westmount are invited to apply. Consult westmount.org for full details. 514 989-5521.

Héma-Québec Blood Donor Clinic

Wednesday, March 7, 2:30 to 7:30 p.m., Victoria Hall. Give the gift of life. 514 989-5226.

Gallery at Victoria Hall: exhibition

March 8 to 29. The Gallery at Victoria Hall is pleased to present an exhibition featuring artist Sara Colby. Come meet the artist on March 14 at 7 p.m. Hours: Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., weekends 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. 514 989-5521.

Lecture: Let's Talk Opera!

Sunday, March 18, 10:30 a.m., Victoria Hall. *Svadba*. Presented in English by L'Opéra de Montréal. 514 989-5226.

Family Film Day

Sunday, March 18, 2 p.m., Victoria Hall. The whole family is invited to a screening of *Oddball* (2015). Tickets required. 514 989-5226.

Lecture: The Importance of Your Eyes

Tuesday, March 20, 7 p.m., Library. Dr. Miguel N. Bernier Jr. will talk about the prevention and treatment of several ocular conditions, as well as research and new technologies. Presented by the Westmount Healthy City Project and by the McGill University Health Centre Foundation. Please register for the talk at fondationcuscsm.com/whc.

Earth Hour 2018

Saturday, March 24, 4:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., Victoria Hall. Turn off your lights! Join us for an evening of activities as part of Earth Hour, an event to raise awareness on climate change. This year's theme is *Zero Waste, Zero Emissions: Westmounters reducing their impact on climate change*. Presented by the Westmount Healthy City Project. 514 989-5226.





History by the House

ANDY DODGE

703 Grosvenor: John Hand in upper Westmount



703 Grosvenor Ave. on February 8.

Westmount worked its way through the first two decades of its existence as a sort of “end-of-the-line” community on the outskirts of Montreal, concentrating on the development of what is now the south-eastern area around Clarke and Rosemount avenues, while the area to the north of Côte St. Antoine Rd. remained as orchards and forests, dotted with mansions like the Murray and Raines estates.

All this changed in 1895 with the creation of the Westmount Land Company, among the first of several “project developers” who set their sights on the mountain and land that, by dint of the expanding downtown core, was becoming more and more attractive to investors. William and David Yuile were born in Scotland and came to Canada with their parents in 1857, finally settling in Montreal in 1869. They took over an ailing St. Jean sur Richelieu glassworks in 1878 and moved it to Montreal, bought other glass companies and expanded operation to the point that they became, under the name Diamond Flint Glass Company Limited, the largest glass manufacturer in Canada.

Westmount Land formed

Along with George Arthur Grier, who describes himself as a lumber merchant, but who also served as president of the St. Lawrence Flour Mill, they formed the Westmount Land Company largely to look after land originally owned by Charles Phillips, a Montreal businessman who had, years earlier, purchased a strip of farmland stretching from St. Henri to the top of (and over) Westmount mountain along what are now Roslyn and Grosvenor avenues. In 1896, the town approved the Westmount Land Company’s proposals for subdivision, with at least the top of the mountain divided neatly into 50-foot lots along the proposed streets.

At the time there were no strict building requirements, so the development company established its own rules, that any construction “shall be first-class dwellings detached or semi-detached with stone or solid brick fronts on stone foundations only, and the value of not less than four thousand dollars each, and no saloon, restaurant, shop or livery stable, and no slaughter house, tannery, factory, hospital, medical school, soap or oil factory, or buildings for the purpose of carrying on any trade or manufacture which may be deemed a nuisance by the vendor, to be erected, established or carried on any part

of said land.” The rules also stipulated 17-foot setbacks from the street as well as 7-foot sidelines, “and any stable or outhouse that may be built shall be placed at least 70 feet from the street.”

Legal wrangling about the Phillips estate and preparation of Grosvenor and Roslyn avenues held up construction for a decade, but by 1905 Westmount was expanding on both sides of the “Phillips strip,” that is, on Victoria and Lansdowne avenues. It took a while for development to make its way up the hill, but in 1912 Thomas Williamson, vice-president of St. Lawrence Mills Co., who lived at the corner of The Boulevard and Argyle Ave., paid \$9,990 (or 30 cents per square foot) for six lots on Grosvenor above The Boulevard, immediately selling three of them to Frederick Whitley, a downtown leather merchant, for \$11,655 (70 cents per square foot). Unfortunately, Whitley died in June 1914, and his widow quickly sold off half the land (1½ lots) to a well-known Westmount builder, John Hand, for \$7,600 (89.5 cents per square foot).

With Grosvenor and Roslyn reaching north, it appears Hand convinced the city to extend Sunnyside Ave. – which previously had only extended from Belvedere Rd. to Bellevue Ave. – through to Victoria Ave. Hand’s two houses at the corner of Grosvenor were numbered 703 and 705 Grosvenor, though eventually 705 was given the address of 110 Sunnyside.

The first buyer of 703 Grosvenor, in October 1916, was Sarah Dorothy Brown, wife of Carl Meincke, who ran a store on St. Nicholas St. downtown. The price paid was “\$1 and other good and valuable considerations,” though included in the “other considerations” was paying off the \$4,000 loan which Hand used for construction of the house.

According to Lovell’s Directory, Carl Meincke lived there until his death in the mid-1930s and Sarah stayed there with Jack Meincke (according to Lovell’s Directory), until her own death in 1940. It was left to Ernest Rudolf Brown to sell the property in 1943, to Phyllis Baker, wife of Beverly Hall Steeves, an electrical engineer with Northern Electric.

The Steeves’ stayed there only four years before selling the house to Arthur Christian Jensen, assistant general manager of the Bank of Montreal, almost doubling the price to \$15,200 in November, 1947. The new family stayed there for 38 years until Jensen’s death in April of 1985; his wife, Gwendoline Payne, sold the house a year later for \$360,000.

The buyers, Jane Elizabeth Woolcombe and Robert Coppenrath, renovated the kitchen, built a deck and redecorated the house before reselling it in August 1990, for \$530,000. The Coppenraths still work together as management and human resources consultants in Montreal.

They sold the house to Michael and

Shirley Kieran: it appears he worked at the time for CN Rail, then as transportation consulting principal for IBI Group, and most recently as a private transportation consultant. She started working in operations research and planning for Canada Post, but quickly moved to Montreal software company Best-Seller Inc., which grew tremendously under her guidance and leadership. Since June of 2014 she has been affiliated with i4i Inc., dealing in information management.

Referendum looms

Unfortunately, the Westmount real estate market turned south in the 1990s as Quebec moved toward a second referendum, and the Kierans sold it in September 1996, for only \$341,000 – less than its 1986 price – as they moved to Calgary.

Robert Baird, an executive with Shell Canada at the time, and his wife, Marie Racicot, who has been variously an editor, university lecturer and translator, sold the house in 1999 to Angeline Fournier, but she never moved in, reselling to J. Hartland McKeown and Michèle Belzile, who moved here from the United States and apparently moved back there after five years, selling to Samuel Blatchford and Anne-Marie Dutil in 2004. He was president of Canam Steel Co. and now is president of American Steel and Aluminum, LLC, in Boston, where she is an interior designer and a specialist in gift-boxes.

They sold the stately John Hand house to Hooman Taravati and Cristina Rossi. He is a “a strategic operations optimization and transformation advisor.” They paid \$1,400,000 in September 2012; the municipal valuation for 2017 is \$1,590,200.

HISTORY OF 703 GROSVENOR (since construction)

Date	Buyer	Price
Oct. 3 1916	Sarah Dorothy Brown	\$1*
Apr. 24 1943	Phyllis Baker	\$8,000
Nov. 20 1947	Arthur Christian Jensen	\$15,200
Oct. 31 1986	Jane Elizabeth Woolcombe	\$360,000
Aug. 2 1990	Michael E. Kieran & Shirley Kieran	\$530,000
Sep. 30 1996	Robert Ian Baird & Marie F. Racicot	\$341,000
Jun. 23 1999	Angeline Fournier	\$450,000
Nov. 16 1999	J. Hartland McKeown & Michèle Belzile	\$495,000
Jun. 16 2004	Samuel Blatchford & Anne-Marie Dutil	\$835,000
Sep. 18 2012	Hooman Taravati & Cristina Rossi	\$1,400,000

*Includes \$4,000 paydown of vendor’s mortgage.

What’s up at Westmount Square? Repairs



Work was being done to the northeast corner of Westmount Square on February 6 (left) and February 23 (right) at Wood and de Maisonneuve. A respondent to a telephone call to the head office of its owner, Creccal Investments, told the Independent to send an email, two of which were not returned by press time. A different source said on February 23 that the work was to repair a leak and everything would be put back as it had been.

Photos: Independent.

Greene still closed at tracks

Greene Ave. between Dorchester Blvd. and St. Antoine St. was closed to pedestrians and vehicles when the *Independent* visited on February 23 and was scheduled to be “re-opened to pedestrians in the upcoming weeks,” provincial ministry of Transport spokesperson Sarah Bensadoun communicated by email February 26. “The closure of Greene Ave. [to vehicles] was extended at the city of Westmount’s request.

“As of now, discussions are ongoing regarding the timeline, since it was originally planned to re-open January 28.”

The confusing sign on the western sidewalk directing pedestrians to the also closed eastern sidewalk, noticed by the *Independent* on February 9 (“Turcot impact felt from east to west,” February 13, p. 17), has been removed.

Just south of the CP train tracks, the old, raised 720 above the road surface of Greene Ave. has been dismantled and the deck of a temporary bridge for vehicles has been removed. The temporary bridge’s abutments are being removed this week, but no date has been set for dismantling its retaining wall, Bensadoun said.

What’s up at Centre Greene? Heated wheelchair ramp coming



These workers were photographed in front of Centre Greene on Greene on February 23. “This [preliminary work] is the delivery and installation of the long-awaited ramp to enter Centre Greene (for wheelchairs, baby-strollers etc ...),” board member Willem Westenberg told the Independent by email the same day. Westmounts owns the Centre Greene building and, at the city council meeting February 5, Mayor Christina Smith told a questioner on heated sidewalks that the city would be heating the new ramp as “a test” of the concept.

Photo: Independent.

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Hockey returns to Westmount High

Westmount High's #14 (in red) deflects the puck into the St George's net for the second goal of the game.

By RALPH THOMPSON

Westmount High School has been without a formal hockey program for 10 years, but on February 23 at 4 pm at the Westmount recreation centre, its newly formed exhibition team took to the ice against St. George's High School. The Westmount High Knights hockey program – for girls and boys, beginners and advanced players, ages 13 to 16 years – aims to develop accessible, affordable, professionally coached hockey training at the same standard as a private school.

“It’s complicated to create a comprehensive hockey program” said parent vol-

unteer Neil Chazin, “but we’ve had a lot of support from a core group teachers [and] dedicated parents, and professional coaching from math teacher and qualified coach Donald Chan. The city [of Westmount] has also been very supportive.”

Hockey camp SISU HockeyTek has provided help on a voluntary basis under the direction of technical director Matthew Robins. The program includes a commitment by students to academic achievement together with a healthy lifestyle and diet.

The Knights won 6-1, but Chazin pointed out that the objective is to have fun and enjoy the game of hockey.

See p. 1 for another photo.

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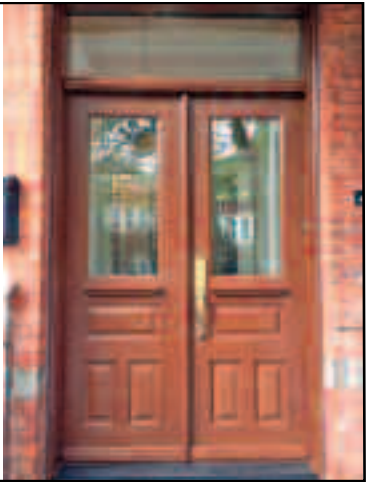
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Project, cont'd. from p. 1

continued until March 9 and called the issue a civil matter.

Offered money

Property owner and project developer Ron Basal of BSR Group took over the mic explaining: “When we bought the building, we negotiated to buy the (dépanneur) business. We offered a substantial sum for him to walk away [but] his prices went up and up.”

Fan rose again to the mic. “It’s not true,” he said of the increases. “He tried to force us out.”

“This is not a court room,” Smith interjected. “So now we will take some time to deliberate.” With this the council, whose members form the city’s demolition committee, adjourned.

They returned after a few minutes to announce their decision in favour of the demolition application and “the preliminary replacement plan as recommended by the city’s Planning Advisory Committee.”

Lengthy resolution

Conrad Peart, the Urban Planning commissioner for permits and architec-

ture, read a lengthy resolution of approval that included conditions related to the city’s standard construction management and traffic protocols as well as the requirement for monetary guarantees.

“Notwithstanding the comments from the retailer” and sympathies for him, Peart said, that issue was a civil matter “beyond the purview of our control.” He said the city would be taking a series of steps to mitigate risks and that the project was one the city was “looking forward to.”

Councillor Cynthia Lulham, commissioner of Urban Planning for zoning, parks and economic development, recounted how the city had upzoned the south side of St. Catherine near Atwater at the end of 2014 to provide for revitalization of an entrance to Westmount and make the street “livable” by introducing residential occupancy to the commercial zone.

Fits into the vision

As a result, the current development project “fits into our vision,” she explained. The street’s design, repaving and replacement of the water main also needed attention. She also pointed out that it fits with the current regional planning program for densification around transit hubs.



Developer Ron Basal, left, beside architect Marc Rasmussen, speaks at the hearing February 19, at which they presented the plan for the new building seen on the screen behind.

After the vote and conclusion of a question period, the meeting ended with developer Basal being asked when work would start.

“As soon as we solve the issue with the dépanneur,” he replied. It is understood he



Xiaobing Fan, owner of the 7 Jours dépanneur, opposes the demolition.

and the tenant were to be discussing the matter February 28.

But Fan immediately interjected the last word: “My lease is to 2020 and, before that, no one will demolish that building.”

Demo questions concern noise, sustainability, ‘cohesive’ vision

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

During a question period that followed the vote on the new development project, Melanie Richards of HappyTree Yoga at 4010 St. Catherine, just east of the building targeted for demolition, voiced concerns about the effect on her business of noise pollution from the construction and asked if the city would provide compensation.

Smith told her the city had put control measures in place and offered to meet with her.

asked why the city was so “hell bent” on approving the project without public consultation or before adopting a vision for St. Catherine. She also asked how the three-plus levels of parking fit in with the building’s sustainability.

She was told no consultation was required for this conforming project, but was reminded one had taken place when the street was upzoned after a year-long zoning freeze of the area (see story December 9, 2014, p. 1).

She was also told sustainability was provided by the new project’s residential component and that the underground

parking conformed to the city’s requirements. “Maybe we should reconsider the parking by-law,” Dumais replied.

Former city councillor Theodora Samiotis, who had led the upzoning as Urban Planning commissioner, spoke at length during the question period as a resident of Dorchester.

She read out sections of the city’s planning program for the area, underlining the need for an updated cohesive plan rather than consideration of projects “as they come to us.”

Smith thanked her for her “commentary.”



Former city councillor Theodora Samiotis speaks at the question period February 19.

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St. Mary's Hospital gala gorgeous

owner/CEO/president of Le Club de hockey Canadien, the Bell Centre and Evenko, with his wife **Kate Molson**.

Noted amidst the Olympian guest list were Quebec's premier **Philippe Couillard** and his wife **Suzanne Pilot**; ministers **Gaétan Barrette**, **Hélène David**; provincial legislator **Kathleen Weil**, there with husband **Michael Novak**, and provincial legislator **Rita de Santis** and husband **Jean-Marcel de Magistris**.

Local res enjoying the delicious four-course meal by Ristorante Beatrice included foundation board president **Anne-**

Marie Boucher and her husband **Cirque** chair **Mitch Garber**; **Claire** and **Peter Kruyt**, vp Power Corp and chair MUHC board; **Angie** and **Tony Loffreda**, vice chair RBC; **Sophie** and **Scott Jones**, pres Nova Steel; **Vanessa** and **Guy Laframboise**, pres Les Restaurants Subway Québec Ltée, and foundation board member; **Josée Noiseux**, CEO/pres Montreal Heart Institute Foundation; **Arielle Meloul-Wechsler**, senior vp Air Canada and hubby **Arthur Wechsler**, ball committee chair and managing partner Kugler Kandestin; **Diane Dunlop-Hébert** and **Norman Hébert**, Sylvie and

Jean Chagnon, **Colleen** and **Mirko Wicha**, **Véronique Pourcelet** and hubby **Martin Szpiro**, **Joan Vogeslesang** and **Fred Heese**, **Cynthia** and **Jean Aucoin** and doctors **Tammy** and **Ron Dimentberg** and **Gisele** and **Robert Hemmings**.

Westmount city councillor **Mary Galery**, a great grand-daughter of the founder of St. Mary's Hospital, **Dr. Donald Hings-ton**, attended with **Tom Godber**. Talented **Terry Mosher** (Aislin), there with his wife **Mary Hughson**, presented the *frères* Molson with a personalized cartoon.

Also noted amidst the swings and



Peter and Claire Kruyt, and Gaétan Barrette.




Geoff and Andrew Molson with Cynda Heward.



Arielle Meloul-Wechsler and Arthur Wechsler, Josée Noiseux.

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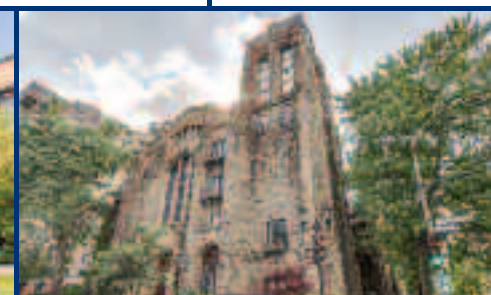
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\$1,099,000



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Suzanne Pilot and Philippe Couillard.



Rachel Renaud and Anne-Marie Boucher.

shrubby were **Carolyn** and **Richard Renaud**, CEO/chair TNG Corp, and Richard's sister **Rachel Renaud**, member of the executive, St. Mary's board of governors and the foundation board, there with hubby **Jim Hare**; **Jeanne-Marie** and **Luc Bertrand**, vice chair National Bank; **Liliane Vineberg** and **Morris Goodman**, board chair Pharmascience; CIUSSS West-Central board pres **Alan Maislin**, attending with his daughter **Jojo** and wife **Gloria**; **Jane** and **James Cherry**, MUHC board member; and **Jenny** and **Terry Didus**, partner, Dentons Canada LLP, president SMH

board of governors.
A myriad of volunteers were stylish in forest green dresses from Dynamite. Radiant in red, **Cynda Heward**, CEO/pres of the foundation, announced the event raised \$1,060,250 (net) to benefit St. Mary's maternal/child department and the McGill chair in family and community medicine and research.
The night ended with a rainbow-coloured candy table: sweet!
Please send information for the Indie's Spring Social Calendar to redgrave@videotron.ca.

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Landscape architects HETA awarded Grand Prix du Design

Westmount-based HETA, also known as Hodgens et associés paysagistes, was awarded the Prix Terrasse et Aménagement paysager résidentiel de maison privée on February 13 at the 11th edition of the Gala des Grands prix du design, where prizes in several other categories were awarded.
The winning project is situated at the Glen Villa estate in St. Catherine de Hatley owned by Westmounters Norman and Pat Webster. The design took advantage of a stream leading to Lake Massawippi, a

slope and an old stone foundation.
Founder and Westmounter Myke Hodgens said in a press release, "I am proud of the whole HETA team, Éric Fleury, the lead architect of the project [and] François Bérout, the designer of the steel structure ... It takes a great team to build great projects!"
HETA recently celebrated its 30th anniversary. At first, it mainly specialized in residential landscape designs, but is widening its areas of work to municipal and real estate projects.

Comin' Up

- THURSDAY, MARCH 1**
Atwater Library Lunchtime Series: Academy Award-winning filmmaker Torill Kove presents her short, *Threads*. Free, donations requested. Atwater Library, 1200 Atwater Ave. 12:30 to 1:30 pm.
- WEDNESDAY, MARCH 7**
Film Club presents *Eat That Question: Frank Zappa in His Own Words* (2016). Westmount Public Library. 7 pm
- MONDAY, MARCH 12**
St. Patrick's Day crafts (4+ years). Westmount Public Library. 4 pm
- TUESDAY, MARCH 13**
Westmount Horticultural Society presents Stéphanie Boucher of McGill's Lyman Entomological Museum on "Garden Insects – Friend or Foe?" \$5. Westmount Public Library. 7 pm.

- The Women's Art Society of Montreal presents sculptor Shelley Miller. \$10. Unitarian Church of Montreal, 5035 de Maisonneuve Blvd. West. 1:30 to 2:30 pm.
- MONDAY, MARCH 19**
City council meeting, Westmount city hall, 7:30 pm.
- SATURDAY, MARCH 24**
Earth Hour evening at Victoria Hall. The Westmount Healthy City Project presents exhibits and program related to climate change. Victoria Hall. 4:30 to 9:30 pm.
- TUESDAY, MARCH 27**
PhD candidate in English studies Marie Leconte on "What is Anglo-Québécois Literature?" \$10. Unitarian Church of Montreal, 5035 de Maisonneuve Blvd. West. 1:30 to 2:30 pm.

To BE LISTED IN Comin' Up

Please send your Westmount event,
to: CU@WESTMOUNTINDEPENDENT.COM

Be sure to write by Friday at 10 am for inclusion the next week.



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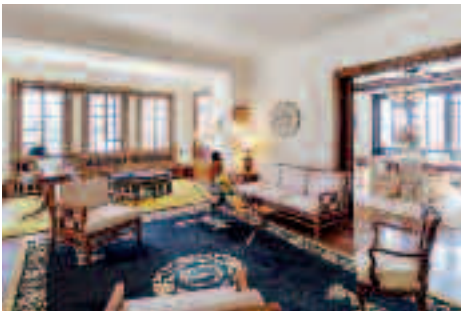
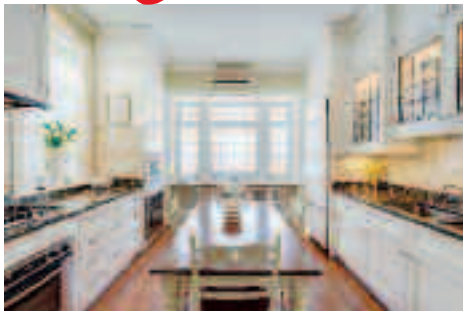
A full-page photograph of a woman with her hair in a high ponytail, wearing a black one-piece swimsuit with a ruffled detail on the right shoulder. She is standing against a wall made of vertical wooden planks. The lighting is bright, creating strong shadows. The brand name 'ERES' is overlaid in large yellow letters on the left side of the image.

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