

Quebec grants, 4300's welcome tax had major impact

City projects \$8.5M surplus despite COVID uncertainty

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The city forecasts ending this uncertain "COVID year" with a surprise surplus of \$8.5 million in the operating budget that had been adopted at \$114 million, Councillor Kathleen Kez announced November 16 at the virtual council meeting. That is, if all the figures hold true.

"This is only a projection," she said presenting the forecast for the year ending December 31, 2020. Results could change after receipt of the audited statement in

Holiday schedule

This issue is the *Independent's* third-to-last one before our usual Christmas break

April or May.

The surplus is a combination of \$4.9 million more in projected revenues totaling \$118.9 million and a decrease in expenditures of \$3.6 million to \$110.4 million, explained Kez, the finance commissioner.

"Two major items contributed to the increase in revenue [from budget], which we could not have predicted," she said. This was a \$4.2-million subsidy as Westmount's share of grants from Quebec to offset COVID costs and losses as well as an increase in transfer duties (welcome tax) of some \$4 million. This resulted from the sale of the apartment complex at 4300 de Maisonneuve.

Had it not been for these two items, Kez *continued on p. 7*

City presents ideas for Westmount Park



... including this "air" bridge for the play area near the library. See p. 22 for story.

ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF THE CITY OF WESTMOUNT.

City to clear WAG track this winter

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

For what is believed to be the first time in recent years, the city will clear snow this winter from the track at the Westmount Athletic Grounds (WAG) behind Westmount High, Councillor Cynthia Lulham, said last week. The move results from a

number of requests.

"Council is very keen to support people getting outside these days," she explained. "Grit will also be spread because the track can become very icy."

In keeping with the need for outdoor activity during the pandemic, Mayor Christina Smith told the council meeting November 16 that the city will recommend to Montreal that the section of de Maisonneuve immediately west of Atwater remain closed for the winter. This is the stretch alongside Dawson College that has been closed for re- *continued on p. 3*

Don't miss our pull-out
Gift Guide
after p. 12

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Acquired from the above by the present private collection, Montreal (March 1975).

This work is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity from Jean Kisling, co-author of the *Catalogue Raisonné de l'Oeuvre de Moïse Kisling* currently being prepared with Marc Ottavi.

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A Greene Christmas

Greene Ave. on November 17, just before sunrise. PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

Holiday Gift Guide

mySHOESHOP.ca, p. GG-1

Lambert roofing and fireplace specialists, p. GG-2

Campbell Picture Framing • Jeannettes Needlecraft, p. GG-3

S. P. Diamant Jewels • la cookery, p. GG-4

Boutique Emma • Maison Goldberg, p. GG-5

Maison Christian Faure • L'Autre Choix • Le Fournil, p. GG-6

Forno West, p. GG-7

Collange Lingerie, p. GG-8

Thanks for 'essentiel' support



Westmouter and grade 11 student Vanessa Vassalos, right, operated the "Essentiels covid 19" pop-up store on Park Ave. this summer and on Sherbrooke near Prince Albert this August, and was able to raise and donate the sum of \$5,765 from her sales to the Montreal Children's Hos-

pital's Healthy Kids Fund, which she presented November 6.

"[Vanessa] would like to thank everyone for support," said father Steven.

She was accompanied by Veronique Courey, the director of advancement at ECS.

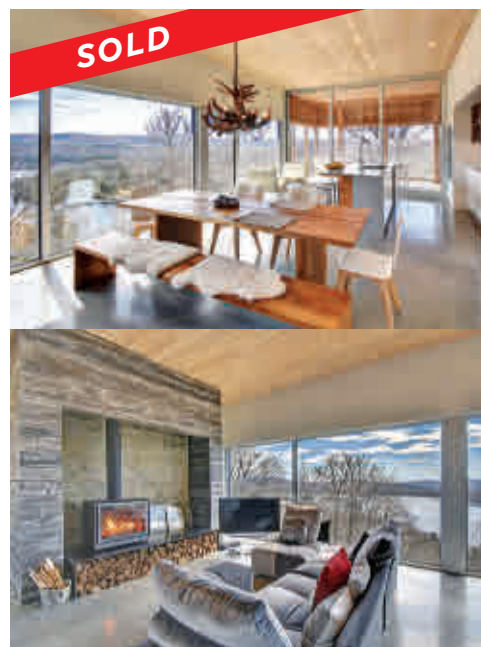
PHOTO COURTESY OF S. VASSALOS.

WAG, cont'd. from p. 1

pair work on the Metro station's roof beneath it. That work was recently completed.

This was in reply to an email request received for the council meeting from Dan Lambert, president of the Association of Pedestrians and Cyclists of Westmount (APCW).

Lambert also asked that the city request Montreal delay its work to replace the water line on de Maisonneuve between Clarke and Melville until the end of COVID. This follows results of a survey of de Maisonneuve pedestrians by the APCW. "We understand the need for pedestrian space," Mayor Smith said but believed the contract for the work had already been awarded.



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Bridge 1, truck 0



A truck became stuck under the rail underpass on Greene below Dorchester November 5, as has happened many times in the past. The solution was also perennial: letting some air out of the tires, in this case by Westmount Public Security. “When will they ever learn?” asked one resident. Another said, “Some truck drivers seem to approach the sign with an eye to civil disobedience, but it is physics. And why did he or she not notice when the vehicle hit the warning panel placed the maximum height?”

PHOTOS COURTESY OF WILLEM WESTENBERG (LEFT) AND BILL SMITH (RIGHT).

Giving Tuesday is Dec. 1

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Giving Tuesday, a day marked globally as “the opening day of the holiday giving season,” received city council’s blessing at the meeting November 16. It takes place on the first Tuesday of December, which this year is December 1.

“Whereas the city of Westmount wishes to encourage its citizens to support charities,” stated a resolution moved by Councillor Mary Gallery, the city supports the Giving Tuesday initiative and invites “all residents to participate.”

“We’ll be out there on the streets to promote it,” Gallery said.

On Giving Tuesday, the city’s Public Security Unit will position a patrol vehicle outside the Victoria Ave. entrance to the Metro store from 10 am to 7 pm to collect donations of non-perishable foods. This is part of its annual holiday food drive.

The day before, Monday, November 30, a vehicle will also be located outside Les 5 Saisons on Greene Ave. during the same time period to receive donations.

From November 21 to December 15, a donation button will be available on the homepage of the city’s website to accept monetary funds.

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Quebec.ca/gettingbetter

 Info-Social 811

Police Report

Burglars steal jewellery from second Mount Pleasant Ave. home

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

The owner of a house near the corner of Mount Pleasant Ave. and Sherbrooke St. returned from a three-day absence on the afternoon of November 6 to find the home

had been broken into and burglarized. (This is the second Mount Pleasant burglary in one week.)

Stolen, according to Montreal Police Station 12 community relations officer Stéphan Pimentel, were several items of

jewellery whose value was not disclosed in the police report.

The perpetrators exploited a weakness in the security at the home's main entrance door – a window measuring approximately two-by-two feet. "The suspects fractured that window and entered by that entry point," he said.

Inside, according to the police account, they searched bedrooms. The investigators concluded this from the state of disarray seen afterwards. The suspects found the jewellery in one of the bedrooms.

"There were no fingerprints, and the alarm system was not activated," said Pimentel, adding that without evidence or witnesses the investigators have almost nothing to go on.

While the alarm wasn't triggered in this case for a reason that isn't known, he noted that alarm systems generally are a useful deterrent against burglars, while providing investigators with valuable information about the time of day when incidents occur.

Knapsack, laptop stolen

Sometime between 3:20 and 3:45 pm on the afternoon of November 11, a knapsack

containing a laptop was stolen from a car parked on Greene Ave. near the corner of Sherbrooke St. while the owner was inside a nearby shop for no more than a quarter of an hour.

"The car was parked and the person who owned it was away for 15 minutes," said Cst. Pimentel. "When he got back to the car, his knapsack was missing."

Apart from the computer, the knapsack also contained an iPad tablet, as well as some personal effects, including eyeglasses. There was no damage to the vehicle, suggesting it might have been left unlocked.

While getting your car broken into and being robbed is never a happy event, it at least offers a lesson in security, according to Pimentel.

"We are always repeating: never leave anything valuable in the open inside your car," he said, while adding that thieves act quickly when an opportunity arises.

"Leave it in the trunk, even if it's just for a short period of time," he said. "It's a lot easier to break a car window, to smash and grab, than to force open a trunk. There is an extra step there that adds a layer of security."

Surplus, cont'd. from p. 1

calculated, the projected surplus might have been roughly \$200,000 to \$300,000.

On the other hand, revenue was reduced in several other areas owing to COVID. These included parking meters, tickets and fines, recreational activities and Hydro Westmount due to many commercial buildings being unoccupied.

The decrease in expenditures resulted from close to \$2 million less spent in remuneration due in part to employment vacancies. As well, the city scaled down its capital works projects to reduce its pay-as-you-go (PAYG) contribution from the operating budget by some \$10 million. "We've been tight," Kez said. "We didn't go full steam ahead."

It's premature to predict at this time how a surplus might be used since these are only projections, Kez told the *Indepen-*

dent. There also is uncertainty regarding future COVID expenses.

The forecasts are required of municipalities under Quebec's Cities and Town Act. Comparative statements showing the current year's revenues and expenditures versus the same period the previous year are also required at least four weeks before the council meeting when the budget for the following year must be adopted.

These were also presented by Kez. Dated September 30, 2020, they showed the city's actual spending at \$90.9 million compared with \$97.3 million last year. Actual revenues were \$107.6 million compared with \$108.4 last year.

Mayor Christina Smith told the meeting the city's operating budget would be presented in "mid-December." The city also adopted its capital works budget for 2021 of \$27.2 million (see story p. 8).

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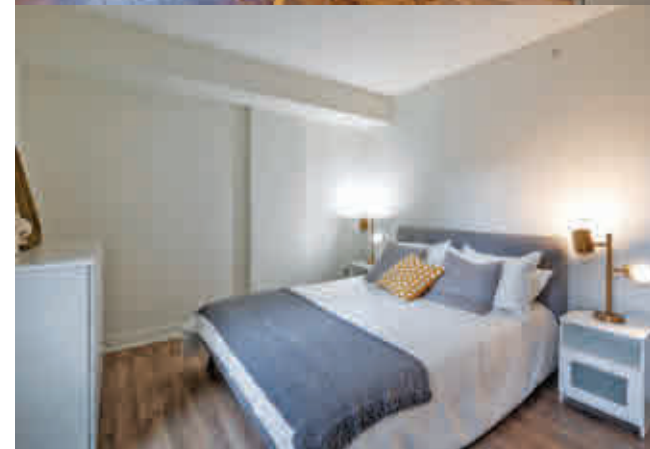
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Some projects deferred from this year: Cllr. Cutler

\$27.2M record capital works budget adopted for 2021

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The city presented and adopted a new record-setting \$27.2-million capital works budget for 2021 at a special virtual council meeting November 16. The infrastructure program includes reconstructing roads, updating water mains and sewers as well as parks and carrying out other major work.

“We will not be borrowing to move forward with these initiatives,” said Councillor Philip Cutler, commissioner of infrastructure and innovation, in delivering the capital works speech.

Instead, the coming year’s work is to be funded from \$13.6 million already appropriated from previous surpluses, \$12.6 mil-

lion from the city’s operating budget (as pay-as-you-go) and close to \$1 million expected from government grants.

A breakdown by category in rounded figures calls for \$10 million of work to municipal buildings, \$8.2 million for roads and street lights, \$4.1 million for water and sewer, \$2 million for Hydro Westmount, \$1.7 million for parks, \$1 million for vehicles, and some \$300,000 or information services (IT). *See table, below.*

“While addressing urgent needs, we must always consider the potential cost of deferred maintenance and assess the risks of a much higher bill over the long term,” Cutler said.

“This is the most challenging of all the years I’ve been involved in this project,”

Cutler said. “I’m pleased with the outcome.”

‘Critical projects’

Among the year’s major projects are the reconstruction of Sunnyside, deferred from 2020, and budgeted at \$3.7 million, restoration of the greenhouses now at \$5.4 million and phase 3 of the exterior restoration of city hall at \$1.6 million.

“These three projects are critical investments, scheduled for completion next year,” he explained. All are to be paid from appropriated surplus earmarked for each.

Increased investments are also planned for parks and greenspaces at \$1.7 million including Devon, Stayner and Westmount Park.

The Blvd. coming

Mayor Christina Smith added that also being planned is a professional services study to prepare concepts, designs and tender plans for the reconstruction of The Boulevard.

This is estimated to be a three-year project involving the coordination with public utilities, water main rehabilitation, the addition of retention networks, geometric redesign, street lighting, traffic lights and a consultation process with residents. The city of Montreal has a “significant amount of infrastructure” that will be involved.

Projected capital works projects for the following two years without any details were included: \$27.6 million for 2022 and \$28.2 million in 2023. The city’s capital works budget has increased from \$14.1 million in 2019.

While the capital works program for 2020 was initially record-setting at \$26.9 million, the pandemic uncertainty reduced this work to \$15.9 million, Cutler explained. “As a precaution, some projects, such as Sunnyside, had to be postponed to 2021.

He thanked the city staff and members of the city’s Financial and Administrative (F&A) Committee, which he chairs.

Resident’s contractor causes gas leak, power outage



This November 17 photo is of Grosvenor Ave. (at de Maisonneuve), which was closed up to Sherbrooke. PHOTO: INDEPENDENT

A contractor excavating for a resident of Grosvenor broke a natural gas line November 17, causing a leak, which in turn caused

the Montreal fire department to ask that electricity be cut to much of Victoria village. “Several homes” were also evacuated, according to Westmount director Benoit Hurtubise.

Repair work by Energir “that was initially thought to be straight forward became complex and ended up being very complicated. They had to dig up the street and sidewalks in two different locations to cap the leak. A water conduit was also hit during the repair operation,” he continued in an email to the *Independent* November 19.

“The gas leak has been capped ... Residents can return to their homes,” summarized a Laconic post on the city’s website of November 17. The outage lasted the entire afternoon.

Coiffure Jean John

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Homme

Femme

Enfants

Men

Women

Children

Major work for 2021: \$27,173,900

The following proposed projects are those explained by city director general Benoit Hurtubise as being the most important ones from a dollar-cost point of view. The amount “is an envelope of money approved by council for the execution of projects” that is to be integrated into the coming operating budget. “Council can always decide on project priorities,” which can mean deciding to do a new project over one on the list, he said.

Roads \$8,150,500

Road and sidewalk reconstruction

- Sunnyside (Upper Bellevue to Belvedere) with electrical work, Claremont (NDG Ave. to Côte St. Antoine) and Mount Stephen with electrical work),

Sidewalk reconstruction and asphalt resurfacing

- Dorchester (Greene to St. Catherine),

Additional projects

- Resurfacing and work in many lanes as well as street electrification.

Water network and sewers \$4,072,800

Rehabilitation of water main and replacement of services

- Lexington, Forden Crescent and Forden Ave. (Montrose to Forden Crescent),

Replacement of water main and services

- Mount Stephen,
- Various secondary water mains which

belong to Westmount at intersections of work by Montreal on primary water conduits on de Maisonneuve (Clarke to Melville),

Sewer main rehabilitation on various streets.

Buildings \$9,950,600

Special projects plus other work

- Restoration of heritage greenhouses,
- Restoration of exterior of city hall (phase 3, the windows),
- Victoria Hall mechanical and boiler room,
- Public Works garages and mess hall.

Parks \$1,710,000

- Reconstruction of Roslyn steps and masonry wall,
- Devon Park, replacement of playground equipment,
- Stayner Park, reconstruction of splash pad,
- Somerville tot lot, reconstruction,
- King George (Murray) Park, various.

Vehicles \$1,040,000

Replacement of four trucks and other vehicles for Public Works and six Public Security patrol vehicles.

Hydro Westmount \$1,960,000

Infrastructure upgrades, replacement of lead cable, transformers and other equipment.

IT \$290,000

Replacement of servers, various computer equipment.



Commission scolaire English-Montréal

English Montreal School Board

Commission scolaire English-Montréal – Élection scolaire du 20 décembre 2020

Avis public de la révision de la liste électorale

AVIS PUBLIC est, par la présente, donné aux électeurs de la commission scolaire par Denise Contant, présidente d'élection, que :

1. La liste électorale de la commission scolaire a été déposée au siège de la commission scolaire le 27 septembre 2020.
2. La liste électorale de cette circonscription fera l'objet d'une révision :

• Circonscription 3

3. Les conditions requises pour être une électrice ou un électeur et avoir le droit d'être inscrit sur la liste électorale sont les suivantes :

Toute personne qui, le jour du scrutin (20 décembre 2020) :

- Est majeure (avoir 18 ans accomplis);
- Est de citoyenneté canadienne;
- Est domiciliée sur le territoire de la commission scolaire;
- Est domiciliée au Québec depuis au moins six (6) mois;
- N'est pas sous curatelle;
- N'a pas été déclarée coupable d'une infraction constituant une manœuvre électorale frauduleuse en matière électorale ou référendaire;

et :

- A un enfant admis aux services éducatifs de la commission scolaire anglophone qui dessert son domicile;

ou

- N'a pas d'enfant admis aux services éducatifs de la commission scolaire anglophone ou du centre de services scolaire francophone qui dessert son domicile. Cette personne a le droit de choisir d'être inscrite sur la liste électorale de la commission scolaire anglophone, ou de révoquer ce choix.

4. La liste électorale peut être consultée au bureau de la présidente d'élection.
5. Les demandes d'inscription, de radiation et de correction, ainsi que les avis de choix d'exercer son droit de vote dans une commission scolaire anglophone peuvent être présentés devant la commission de révision.
6. Lors d'une demande d'inscription, l'adresse précédente de la personne visée doit être indiquée. De plus, deux documents doivent être présentés : l'un mentionnant le nom et la date de naissance et l'autre, le nom et l'adresse du domicile.
7. Les endroits, jours et heures pour consulter la liste électorale ou présenter une demande sont :

Commission de révision

6000, av. Fielding, Montréal (Québec) H3X 1T4
514 483-7200, poste 8800

- Jeudi 26 novembre : 10 h 00 à 13 h 00
- Dimanche 29 novembre : 13 h 00 à 17 h 00
- Mardi 1er décembre : 18 h 00 à 22h 00

Mesures exceptionnelles liées à la situation sanitaire actuelle (COVID-19)

8. En vertu de l'arrêté 2020-066, les personnes domiciliées dans un CHSLD ou une résidence privée pour aînés identifiée au registre constitué en vertu de la Loi sur les services de santé et les services sociaux peuvent faire une demande écrite de modification à la liste électorale (inscription, radiation, correction, avis de choix) en la transmettant à la présidente d'élection, au plus tard le 1^{er} décembre 2020.

En vertu de l'arrêté 2020-066, une demande d'inscription doit être accompagnée des documents suivants :

- Une attestation d'un membre du personnel du CHSLD ou de la résidence, confirmant l'identité et le lieu de résidence de la personne dont l'inscription est demandée;

Ou

- Une copie de deux documents dont l'un mentionne le nom et la date de naissance et l'autre, le nom et l'adresse du domicile de la personne dont l'inscription est demandée.

9. En vertu de l'arrêté 2020-066, les personnes considérées en isolement sont les suivantes :

- Les personnes de retour d'un voyage à l'étranger depuis moins de 14 jours;
- Les personnes ayant reçu un diagnostic de COVID-19 et étant toujours considérées comme porteuses de la maladie;
- Les personnes présentant des symptômes de COVID-19;
- Les personnes ayant été en contact avec un cas soupçonné, probable ou confirmé de COVID-19 depuis moins de 14 jours;
- Les personnes en attente d'un résultat au test de la COVID-19.

Donné à Montréal, le 18 novembre 2020.

(s) Denise Contant
Présidente d'élection

Prenez note que la secrétaire d'élection pour les élections scolaires 2020 est Madame Natalie Audet.

English Montreal School Board - School board election on December 20, 2020

Public notice of the revision of the list of electors

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given to the electors of the school board by Denise Contant, returning officer, that:

1. The school board list of electors was deposited at the head office of the school board on September 27, 2020.
2. The list of electors of this electoral division is subject to revision:

• Ward 3

3. The requirements to be met by a person to be an elector and to be entitled to have his/her name registered on the list of electors are the following:

Any person who, on polling day (December 20, 2020):

- Is at least 18 years of age;
- Is a Canadian citizen;
- Is domiciled in the territory of the school board;
- Has been domiciled in Quebec for at least six (6) months;
- Is not under curatorship;
- Has not been convicted, within the last five years, of an offence constituting a corrupt electoral or referendum practice;

and:

- Has a child admitted to the educational services of the English-language school board serving his/her domicile;

or

- Does not have a child admitted to the educational services of the English-language school board or the French school service centre serving his/her domicile. That person has the right to choose to be registered on the list of electors of the English-language school board, or to revoke that choice.

4. The list of electors may be consulted at the office of the returning officer.
5. Applications for registration, removal and correction, as well as notices of a choice to exercise the right to vote in an English-language school board may be made before the board of revisors.
6. When applying for registration, the previous address of the person concerned must be indicated. In addition, two documents must be submitted: one showing name and date of birth and the other showing name and domiciliary address.
7. The places, days and times to view the list of electors and to present an application are:

Board of revisors

6000 Fielding Ave., Montreal, Quebec H3X 1T4
514-483-7200, ext. 8800

- Thursday, November 26, from 10 to 1 p.m.
- Sunday, November 29, from 1 to 5 p.m.
- Tuesday, December 1, from 6 to 10 p.m.

Exceptional measures related to the current health situation (COVID-19)

8. Under Ministerial Order 2020-066, individuals domiciled in a CHSLD or a private residence for seniors identified in the register established under the Act respecting health services and social services may make a written request for a change to the list of electors (registration, removal, correction, notice of choice) by sending it to the returning officer, no later than December 1, 2020.

According to Order 2020-066, an application for registration must be accompanied by the following documents:

- An attestation from a member of the CHSLD staff or from the residence confirming the identity and place of residence of the person whose registration is requested;

Or

- A copy of two documents, one of which states the name and date of birth and the other the name and domiciliary address of the person whose registration is requested.

9. Under Ministerial Order 2020-066, individuals in isolation are as follows:

- Individuals returning from a trip abroad in the last 14 days;
- Individuals who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and are still considered carriers of the disease;
- Individuals with symptoms of COVID-19;
- Individuals who have been in contact with a suspected, probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 within the last 14 days;
- Individuals waiting for a COVID-19 test result.

Prepared in Montreal, on November 18, 2020.

(s) Denise Contant
Returning officer

Please note that the Elections Secretary for the 2020 School Election is Ms. Natalie Audet.

New owners originally unaware of pending protection: Smith

Goode House gets final okay as local heritage landmark

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

The second oldest house in Westmount, which dates back to the 1840s, made history November 2 when city council adopted a final by-law to preserve not only the exterior, but also its interior and landscaping. This includes a large garden to the rear that abuts properties on Springfield.

Heritage recognition under Quebec’s Cultural Heritage Act of 2012 means that this home at 178 Côte St. Antoine, known as the Goode House, has become the first private residence in the province to be so protected. This is thanks to having its interior being left relatively intact by three generations of the Goode family before it was sold.

While the city has stated that the heritage protection would not prevent the interior from being updated, Mayor Christina Smith told the virtual council meeting that the city was looking forward to working with “the new owners” to make the house suitable for a family to live in.

According to the property’s deed of sale, it was transferred in June to Westmounters

Robert Sibthorpe and Lesley Pahl. It turns out that the heritage protection by-law was tabled July 6 (see story July 7, p. 8). Mayor Smith was asked last week whether the new owners had been aware of the pending plan.

“We had begun the process with the Goodes but [the new owners] bought it unaware of the citings,” she told the *Independent*. “It was a surprise because it had not been disclosed to them.” As a result, she said, the city had worked closely with them to enable the process to continue but they wanted certain “assurances.”

“I would like to thank the new owners of the house who have worked with us collaboratively,” she told the November council meeting. “Their heart is to protect the heritage of this house and we look forward to working with them.”

The *Independent* reached out to the new owners but did not receive a reply. The house was advertised for sale this fall.

Councillor Conrad Peart said that the “only reason” this protection had worked out was because the city had found “the ideal partner” in the new owners.

Car crash on Sherbrooke at Olivier



The Nissan Rogue at centre right was moving north from Olivier Ave. November 19 in order to go west on Sherbrooke when it collided with the eastbound Honda Accura at centre left. Airbags in both cars deployed.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WILLEM WESTENBERG.

Councillor Cynthia Lulham, who moved the adoption of the by-law as council’s representative on the city’s Local Heritage Council, also thanked Caroline Breslaw of the Westmount Historical Association (WHA) for “bringing the house to our attention.” The WHA had inherited a number of items from the home on the death of a former Goode owner.

“It’s a first in Quebec,” Lulham said, adding that “Westmount is always the first of many things to do with heritage.” It would be “exciting to work with the new owners.”

She also thanked Youki Cropas, architectural officer for Urban Planning, for getting the city “this far” in its “journey” to obtain protection of the home.

The house, whose roof has large eaves, is located just west of Forden Ave. It was one of four originally built as part of what was called “Metcalfe Terrace.” The only other one surviving is the house at 168 Côte St. Antoine. It is distinguished by its yellow stucco and has undergone many changes.

After the consultation meeting September 16 anyone wanting to make comments was given until October 1 to do so in writing under new COVID procedures (see separate story).

Two letters replace public consultation

Two letters received by the city as part of the city’s written consultation period for the Goode House at 178 Côte St. Antoine were released by the city under its Access to Information process. Both were dated as having been received September 16.

The first supported the heritage designation. It stated the respondent walked by the Goode House almost daily and appreciated the exterior and what can be seen of the garden with its cardinals, trilliums and “enormous ginkgo tree” in the back yard.

“Westmount is splendid architecturally but this house is most evocative, offering us, in my opinion, the most rich example of our heritage, our connection with the past.” The writer hoped that “the old green fence bordering the front” could also be preserved.

The second letter challenged a lack of access to the back garden of a neighbouring property due to the protected landscaping. This was an issue that had been reported at a previous council meeting during the question period. At that time, it was explained that the garden’s preservation was posing a problem for a house on Springfield that required access for construction work.

“When the permit was given [for the Springfield work] what did the city assume would be their access?” the writer asked. It refers to a civil statute stating that access must be given for major construction projects.

According to Mayor Christina Smith, this has since been resolved. Trucks have been able to access the worksite from Côte St. Antoine along the side of the Goode House property.

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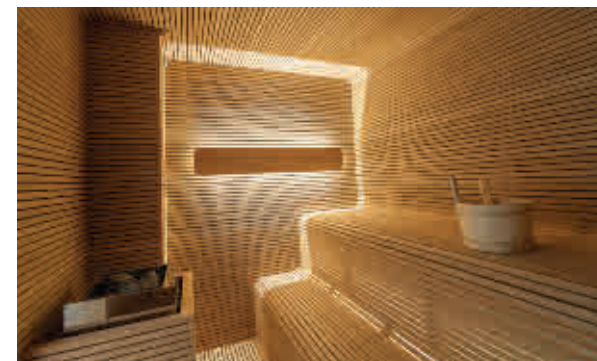
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Be there for yourself the way you're there for others



You are always there when your loved ones are going through difficult times. But don't forget about yourself—solutions exist to help you feel better.

The current situation may cause you distress. Experiencing various levels of anxiety in some spheres of life is normal. When this happens, you may find it more challenging to deal with your thoughts, emotions, behaviour and relationships with others. Most people succeed in adapting, but listening to your needs is vital. **Don't hesitate to do whatever is necessary to help yourself.**

Take care of yourself

- Rely on your personal strengths and have confidence in your abilities.
- Remind yourself of the winning strategies you used in the past to overcome difficulties. There is no one-size-fits-all solution! Each and every one of us must take steps to foster our own well-being.
- Enjoy life's little pleasures, such as listening to music, taking a warm bath, reading, exercising, etc.
- If you live close to nature, make the most of it. Breathe deeply and slowly as you walk.
- Learn to delegate, and allow others to help you.
- Ask for help when you feel overwhelmed. **It is not a sign of weakness, but rather a sign of strength when you are strong enough to do what is necessary to help yourself.**
- Lend a hand in your community in a way that respects your personal limits and public health directives. By helping others, you can improve their wellness and your own as well.
- Think about what has meaning and value for you. Reflect on the important things in your life that you can hold onto in hard times.
- Reduce the stressors in your life.
- While it is important to stay informed, limit the amount of time spent reading about COVID-19. Information overload can increase stress and anxiety, and even cause depression.



The *Getting Better My Way* digital tool

Getting Better My Way is a digital self-management tool for emotional health. If you are experiencing stress, anxiety or distress, this tool can help improve your well-being by identifying practical things you can do to feel better. Learn more at [Québec.ca/Gettingbetter](https://Quebec.ca/Gettingbetter)

Pull-out section

Holiday Gift Guide 2020

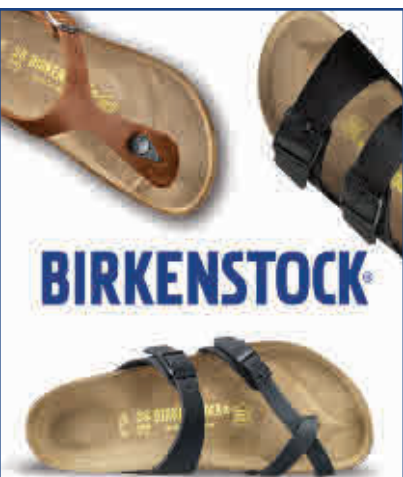
WINTER IS COMING! Snow is coming! HOLIDAYS ARE COMING! Christmas is coming! HANUKAH IS COMING! New Year's Eve is coming! 2021 IS COMING!

Outdoor skating is here!



Mayor Christina Smith, centre (in dark blue), cut the ribbon to open the refrigerated outdoor skating rink in Westmount Park November 20. Her daughter, Issy Cundill, centre front, was raring to go. Councillor Cynthia Lulham (red sweater) and Councillor Mary Gallery (light blue jacket) held the ribbon while Dave Lapointe (left), director of Sports and Recreation, and Robert Talarico, director of Public Works, looked on. See p. GG-3 for story.

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.



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The reconstruction of the steps in front of the boutiques on the north side of St. Catherine between Kensington and Metcalfe is finished.


PHOTOS: INDEPENDENT.



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Westmount Park’s refrigerated rink opened, used



Above, the mayor’s daughter, Issy Cundill (left), and Stella West, who recently arrived in Montreal from Germany with her parents, took to the ice too.

BY RALPH THOMPSON

Mayor Christina Smith and city councillors Mary Gallery and Cynthia Lulham officially opened the refrigerated outdoor ice-skating rink in Westmount Park November 20 at 10 am. Lulham presented a sketch of further work, which includes black painting under the ice, lights in the trees and ornaments in the planters.

“We’d like to add some heaters. I’m looking forward to having a fondue dinner in the park,” said Lulham. “We hope people will get outside and enjoy the fresh air and

skating.”

Robert Talarico, director of Public Works, said the rink will be open from 8 am to 10 pm and will be maintained until March 15. The lighting comes on automatically. The refrigerating equipment has been rented by the city.

Although Mayor Smith and councillors Gallery and Lulham were first to *officially* lace up their skates and take to the ice, Alan Klinkhoff and his five-year-old grandson Wyatt Maclaren had already sneaked on before the ceremony.

See p. GG-1 for another photo.

Holiday schedule

This issue is the

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT’s

third-to-last one before our usual Christmas break

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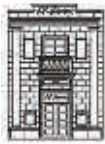


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If this guy doesn't say 'winter' ...



... what does? This rare white squirrel was photographed November 20 on Côte St. Antoine.
PHOTO COURTESY OF JONATHAN ZIDEL



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Other outdoor rinks waiting for long spell of cold weather



While the city's new exterior refrigerated rink is open (see p. GG-1 & 3), its more traditional ones were getting ready and waiting for every Canadian's "friend" – the cold. Above, Queen Elizabeth Gardens at Wood and Sherbrooke November 20. Conventional outdoor rinks are also planned for Prince Albert and King George (Murray) parks, Mayor Christina Smith told the *Independent* November 20.

PHOTOS: INDEPENDENT.



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Westmounter Eithne Coyle Taylor made this jam and baked this pie with plums from a tree that the city of Westmount planted on her Abbott Ave. property. (See her thank-you letter on p. 14.)

PHOTO COURTESY OF E. C. TAYLOR.



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Holiday shopping in Westmount



Westmount Square is dressed to kill with holiday decorations and is carefully posted regarding social distancing. Still, only a handful of people were seen walking through November 21.



Eight-year-old Matthias was pretty excited about the new sneakers that his parents were buying him at Naturino/MyShoeShop on Greene Ave. November 21.

PHOTOS: RALPH THOMPSON.



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Give voice to your feelings

- Keep in mind that having a range of emotions is normal. Feelings play an important role in life, and it is essential to experience them without passing judgment.
- Use words to express what you are going through. Do you feel alone? Are you worried?
- Allow yourself to share your feelings with a trusted friend or family member. It might also be helpful to write down how you're feeling or call a helpline. Find what works for you!
- Those closest to you may not necessarily be able to "read" you. Express your feelings.
- Leave space in your life for your feelings and those of your loved ones.



Make judicious use of social media

- Use critical thinking before sharing something on social media. Ill-advised information can have harmful effects and be detrimental to everyone's efforts in these times.
- Use social media to share positive actions.
- Watch videos that make you smile.



Choose healthy living habits

- Try to keep to a routine for eating, resting, sleeping and other daily activities.
- Take time to eat well.
- Go to bed at an hour that lets you get enough sleep.
- Be physically active on a regular basis, while complying with public health directives.
- Reduce your consumption of stimulants like coffee, tea, soft drinks, energy beverages, chocolate, etc.
- Drink lots of water.
- Lower your alcohol, drug and tobacco consumption, or simply say no to them entirely. The same goes for gambling.

Help and resources

We are all going through unprecedented times that can intensify our emotional reactions. For example, you might feel greater fatigue or have fears that you can't shake, or even have trouble just dealing with the day-to-day. Focus on these signs of a problem and, as soon as you can, contact resources that can help you to better manage your feelings and develop new coping strategies.

- **Info-Social 811**
Info-Social 811 is a free and confidential telephone consultation service available 24/7
- **Regroupement des services d'intervention de crise du Québec**
Provides 24/7 referral services for people in distress (French): centredecrise.ca/listecentres
- **Suicide prevention crisis helpline**
Crisis helpline that provides suicide prevention services 24/7:
1 866 APPELLE (277-3553)

For a host of other helpful resources, visit Quebec.ca/gettingbetter

Quebec.ca/Gettingbetter

 **Info-Social 811**

Québec 

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THANKS FOR THE FRUIT

About five years ago I received a green-gage plum tree from the city of Westmount, which I planted in my back yard. After about three years it bore fruit which the local birds devoured. This year with the help of some netting it was a good harvest. We have had jam and some delicious pies. Thank you, Westmount. (See photo, p GG-6.)

EITHNE COYLE TAYLOR, ABBOTT AVE.

LITTER, GRAFFITI AND CAMERAS



During a cold November stroll in Murray Park November 15, I noticed lots of cans thrown throughout especially around the playground. Whoever did this hasn't grown up yet and even left a debit card under the bench. Are they the same people that defaced the beautiful tree trunk? Maybe time to install security cameras...

MARJA SHERMAN, LANDSDOWNE AVE.

A VIEW FROM CLAREMONT AVE. TO GLEN HOSPITAL



I thought you might like to have these pictures for your archives. You may already have taken some yourselves. It's not in Westmount but soon this view from Westmount will vanish forever [due to the construction of a seniors' residence].

BESTE BARKI, ST. CATHERINE ST.

JUST WONDERING...

Here are three questions I have been wondering about, two for a while and one just this week:

1. Has there ever been a discussion about the cast-iron misprint on the manhole cover at Sherbrooke and Arlington? Did Westmount get a discount for the misspelling of the town name? There is a city



of Westmont in Illinois. Do they have one of ours?

2. Although the floral clock at Sherbrooke and Lansdowne is beautifully landscaped each spring, the clock mechanism never works. Can the clock motor



be repaired, or, if not, why keep the non-functional timepiece intact?

3. How much salt did the city spread on Sherbrooke St. after the light dusting of snow at the beginning of the week starting November 2? Some sidewalks were still piled high with the substance on Friday, November 6. Is there any salt left for future snow events?

Curiously,

ROGER JAY, SHERBROOKE ST.

ENOUGH WITH THE SPEEDING!

I have been putting off writing this e-mail for quite some time, but I feel as though I and other pedestrians of Westmount are a bit at wit's end. It's regarding the reckless speeding above Sherbrooke, particularly on Mountain, Clarke and Argyle. I live below Sherbrooke but often take walks in the daytime and I haven't seen any police speeding or stop-sign operations other than, rarely, near St. George's elementary school [on The Boulevard]. This speeding, coupled with the incessant revving of powerful engines, has made walking in Westmount unpleasant. Last, but not least, there are several intersections with four-way stops and it's rare I'm ever granted the right of way to cross the street, let alone for a driver actually stop. I read your paper every week and make a point to support the local businesses that advertise but I find it odd a letter hasn't been written before about these issues in this particular area.

EPHRAIM WRIGHTMAN, CLARKE AVE.

NO NEW CYCLIST PRIVILEGES UNTIL BEHAVIOUR IMPROVES

The front page of your November 3 edition features an article by Laureen Sweeney reporting on Mr. Dan Lambert's latest appearances before Westmount city council. Amongst other things (some of which may be reasonable enough), Mr. Lambert advocated a further reduction of parking spaces for the benefit of cyclists on Côte St. Antoine, despite the path already set aside for cyclists, which is largely ignored. Their preference is to use the sidewalk or the open road going the wrong way, glaring at oncoming motorists as if they had no right to exist.

This weekend [November 7-8] both at the Victoria and Claremont intersections with Sherbrooke I witnessed pedestrians having to dodge cyclists defiantly ploughing through the crosswalk interval intended for pedestrian safe passage.

As I have pleaded in the past: Please, mayor and councillors, no more privileges for cyclists until they reform their behaviour.

This is the only antidote since virtually all legal regulation of cycling has either been repealed or is not enforced.

Finally, I am surprised that the *Independent* continues to ascribe to Mr. Lambert the high-sounding title of "President of the Association of Pedestrians and Cyclists of Westmount (APCW)" since we now know from your own reporter's investigation (September 16, p. 16) that such an organization does not in fact exist.* The views expressed under its name are Mr. Lambert's personal views, which he is free to

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

We are Westmount

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PRESSTIME: Monday at 10:30 am
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LETTERS: We welcome your letters but reserve the right to choose and edit them. Please limit them to 300 words and submit before Friday 10 am to be considered for publication the following week. Please check your letter carefully as we may be unable to make subsequently submitted changes. Letter writers should not expect to be published in every issue, or in back-to-back issues, or repeatedly in the same season or on the same topic. Please include your name and street for publication (or borough or municipality if you do not live in Westmount), but not your address (unless you want it published).

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

express as such, but should not be otherwise aggrandized.

ROBERT COWLING, PARKMAN PLACE
& PRESIDENT, WESTMOUNT
ASSOCIATION OF MOTORISTS FOR A
FAIR VOICE IN TRAFFIC REGULATION
(A NON-EXISTENT ORGANIZATION)

**Editor's reply:* A group's lack of formal incorporation does not mean, in my view, that it does not exist, in fact and in normal English usage. – DP.

KEEP 'WESTMOUNT HIGH'

Richard Orlando's suggestion to re-name Westmount High after US vice-president elect Kamala Harris (November 17, p. 16) is commendable but not something I would support. Graduates Leonard Cohen or former Westmount mayor Karin

Marks would be far more deserving of the honour although, to me, Westmount High is a perfectly good name!

VIRGINIA ELLIOTT, HILLSIDE AVE.

'KAMALA HIGH' OVER THE TOP

It's a bit over the top to re-name Westmount High the Kamala Harris High School. Name the labs or the gym or the playgrounds or even a neighbouring street after her. But Westmount High is Westmount High and should ever be so known.

TIM CARSLY, BARAT RD.

CAN OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS BE CONSIDERED A WINNER OF US ELECTION?

It is notable that Kamala Harris attended and graduated from a Quebec pub-

lic school. Westmount High. Yet, it is Westmount High with its motto, *dux vitae ratio* or "reason is the guide of life," which is her *alma mater*, and proudly so.

This school stands out in several ways: its rich diversity; its inclusivity, its staff's dedication and a curriculum that highlights critical thinking. As Ms. Harris' prominence became known, the question was raised: How did this exceptional woman's experience at a high school in Canada, and in particular Quebec, influence her perspective – if at all?

According to a close friend of hers, their friendship informed the path she took as a public prosecutor in California.

Further, in her initial candidacy for president, her outspoken belief in the importance of the public school system irrefutably influenced the priorities of the president-elect, Joe Biden.

Canadian public schools are extraordinary places: welcoming regardless of class/caste, socio-economics or where new arrivals hail from. And, particularly notable in the Quebec English school sectors, they enjoy high graduation rates.

Ms. Harris' instinct to work hard and "do the right thing" ultimately led to a fulfilling life with significant success, revealing another central factor in education: it begins at home. Her mother, Shyamala Gopalan Harris, was a force of character and her parental commitment stands out. Evident in her daughter's speeches, *this parent* – a single career mother (medical researcher at McGill University) – ensured her daughters would embody values, resilience and respect for themselves and others. Each time Ms. Harris speaks, she honours this parent, claiming she was the "greatest source of inspiration in my life" – a poignant tribute that touches us all.

Success is built on the strength of the foundation laid at home, regardless of personal and career paths, prevailing tribal divisions or economic reality.

Kamala Harris' mother's strength of character and guidance is a powerful reminder. She enrolled her daughters in a public school system she trusted – and both excelled!

We will wonder, of course, in what way the people she met, her peers, her teachers and the community she thrived in while here left their mark.

CAROLINE JONDAHL, ST. CATHERINE ST.

Classifieds in the *Independent*

Why list your goods (or services) on fly-by-night, who-knows-who-is-replying websites when you can list (and sell) locally?

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Maccarone on new TV series

Jennifer Maccarone, the provincial legislator for Westmount-Saint-Louis, will appear in the Télé-Québec television series *Nos élus* [*Our Politicians*] airing on Thursdays at 8 pm from November 19 until December 10.

"She shares some of her private life as an MNA and single mother of two autistic children. We discover her daily life: its challenges, its difficulties, but also the files and issues she is passionate about," said a press release from her office.

Vic village Metro to re-open Thursday

The Metro grocery store on Victoria Ave. was passing out flyers last week explaining it would be closed this week for a major effort on its renovation and expansion. It is set to re-open Thursday, November 26 at 8 am.



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Quebec okays EMSB Ward 3 election for December 19-20

By MARTIN C. BARRY

While they may not concur on who's best qualified to fill the Ward 3 seat in the EMSB elections on December 19 and 20, the two candidates vying for the position do agree that the Legault government is probably trying to undermine the value of the vote by holding it in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Although the provincial government announced last month that school board elections, originally scheduled for November 1, were postponed because of concerns

over the spread of COVID-19, Quebec said November 13 that the elections will now take place on December 19 and 20.

The vote is taking place as the province's English language school boards continue to legally challenge the CAQ government's Bill 40, which seeks to replace English school boards with service centres, as has already been done with French-language school commissions.

The government suffered several legal setbacks over the past year when court decisions upheld the English boards' right to maintain their own elected governance as guaranteed under section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

In the meantime, Julien Feldman, the incumbent Ward 3 commissioner, and Irwin Rapoport, who is running against him, agree the government has something to gain from scheduling the elections next month.

"The government is engaged in a facile exercise, which in all likelihood is designed to bolster their weak case in court concerning Bill 40," said Feldman. "But I would say that a lot of it is in vain, because the government already has a weak case, and creating evidence on the ground is not really going to help their case."

Rapoport said the government is purposely holding a vote in the middle of a pandemic "to ensure there are so few votes, that when they argue for the legality of Bill 40, then can say the English community doesn't care about its schools, school boards or controlling and managing its own educational system."

Advanced polls will be held on December 12 and 13 at Westmount High School, and the main voting will be on December 19 and 20 at Roslyn Elementary School and Westmount High.

To get your name placed on the electoral list for the Ward 3 election, you must apply between November 21 and December 1 to the Board of Revisors at EMSB headquarters, 6000 Fielding Ave. in NDG.

Phone: 514.483.7200 x 8800.

Since some may prefer mail-in voting during the pandemic, it is also possible to vote by mail if you meet certain criteria (e.g. residence in a seniors' home, expo-

sure to COVID), although registration must take place before December 10.

See the EMSB's advertisement on p. 9 for details.

BUILDING PERMITS What's permitted

City council approves 14 building permits at Nov. 2 session

The following 14 requests for demolition, exterior construction, alteration and renovation were approved at the November 2 meeting of the city council. There were no refusals.

Approved

- 4840 Sherbrooke:** to modify the sign for Metro;
- 375 Metcalfe:** at a Category I house, to add an addition on the rear facade, replace windows, replace the slate roof, and re-point the brick facades;
- 16 Willow:** to replace the existing metal roofing material of the front porch with standing-seam metal roofing;
- 34 Sunnyside:** to replace windows on condition they are the same as the existing ones of SDL type;
- 589 Côte St. Antoine:** to do exterior and interior modifications, including relocating the main entrance from the east facade to the west facade, replacing windows and doors and modifying window and door openings;
- 635 Lansdowne:** to replace windows;
- 24 Forden:** to do landscaping in the front yard including minor modifications to the height of one part of the retaining wall;
- 8 de Casson:** to replace windows provided their divisions match those of the original windows of SDL type including spacer bars in between the muntins within the thermal glass and that the existing color be maintained in order to match the existing windows on the

building and on the attached building part of the ensemble.

- 4859 Sherbrooke:** to install a commercial sign at La Cookery;
- 337 Kensington:** to replace a garage door provided it is of wood;
- 3641 The Boulevard:** to replace the garage door provided the number of wood panels is increased to reduce the exaggerated horizontal proportions of the proposed three wide panels on the submitted garage door design to better integrate with the traditional architecture style of the building;
- 773 Upper Lansdowne:** to replace a door and windows with conditions;
- 635 Lansdowne:** to modify the window and door openings on the rear facade provided the patio door has wider rails and stiles;
- 3492 Holton:** to replace windows and doors provided the windows match the original ones and have muntins with simulated divided lites, including spacer bars between the muntins within the thermal glass, and that the single large-scale fixed kitchen window adjacent to the door be composed of two casement windows.



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Real Estate

ANDY DODGE

Note: The following article relates to offers to purchase Westmount residential dwellings which were reported by local real estate agents as having been accepted in September and October 2020. Because they are not final registered sales, the addresses cannot be made public, but give a good idea of current trends in local real estate activity. The graph at right offers a picture of these trends over time.

Real estate agents are trying to catch their collective breath as the COVID-19 pandemic continues, but are having difficulty while the market roars ahead.

Having reported last month that 12 one- and two-family dwellings graced the September sales list in Westmount, we add another eight late-reported sales (along with one more for July and one more for August), coupled with a paltry seven sales in October. The 20-house tally in September makes it a record high for the month, beating out 19 sales in September 2003 and 18 in the same month last year. And if no more sales notices are posted (late) for October, it will have a record low volume for Octobers going back to 1986.

The late postings for September included one \$7,000,000 mansion – by far the highest price so far this year – and one row-house which sold for \$1,002,000, which made it the lowest price of the month. One other of the late-posted September sales went for \$1,505,000, almost double its \$763,600 municipal valuation, the highest mark-up of the month. The biggest mark-down remains 24.8 percent, for a house that sold for \$2,875,000.

Then in October the adjusted average price moved up even further, with sales ranging from \$1,300,000 to \$3,850,000,

September/October Sales: Playing catch-up

with a narrow set of mark-ups except for one, as the \$3,850,000 sale price was triple its \$1,265,300 valuation (but perhaps including furniture), while the lowest mark-up was 9.4 percent for a house on Côte St. Antoine Rd. The amazing fact among October sales is that all of the houses sold in less than 24 days, including two that went for much more than their asking prices.

Condos

The condominium market, too, went through a very busy third quarter – July, August and September – with 15 sales ranging from \$525,000 to \$2,740,000, then in October only three more sales were posted, all for prices under \$1 million. The average mark-up for the third quarter was 19.1 percent, moving up to 22.3 percent in October.

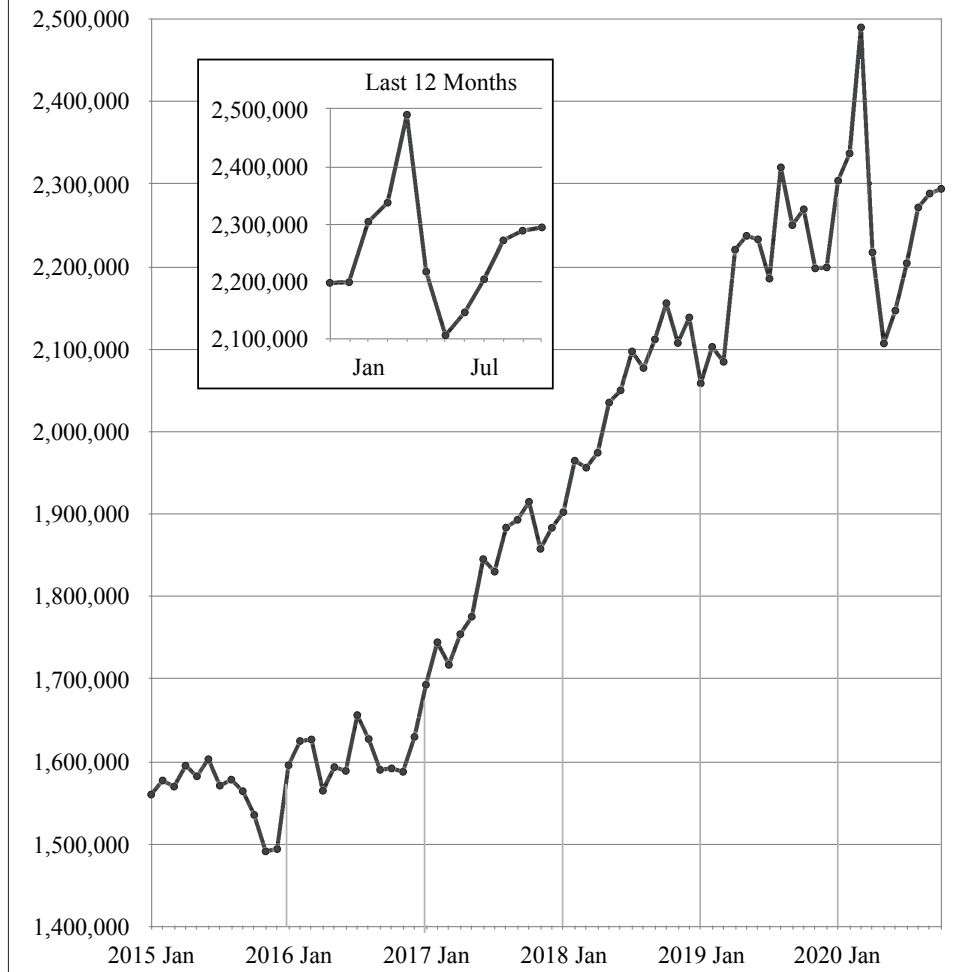
Westmount adjacent

The adjacent-Westmount market in October was fairly slow, too, with three sales in eastern NDG, one on Gage Rd. and one in the Square Mile, along with several condominiums and co-ops.

As we move into the holiday season, the number of listings is declining, mainly those in the \$1 to \$3 million range, which in mid-November had dropped from 63 to 56 houses for sale, with 33 asking more than \$3 million both last month and this month. Lowest price for a Westmount house is \$1,055,000, and the highest asking price is \$17,950,000.

Six more houses were rented in Westmount in the past month, and it appears no new ones came on the market during

Average adjusted price for 'typical' Westmount house, by month, January 2015 to October 2020, based on accepted offer dates



that time. The house rental range is between \$3,876 and \$19,500 per month, but in fact only one rental has been reported at more than \$10,000 per month this year.

Morin honoured at The Study's 105th anniversary

**Social Notes**

VERONICA REDGRAVE

Former Westmounter Andréanne Morin was The Study's recipient of the Young Alumna Distinction Award presented at the school's 105th anniversary celebration. Among many accomplishments, Morin was an Olympic silver medalist in women's 8 rowing in 2012 and a member of the World Anti-Doping Agency.

In 2018, she served as an ombuds-person for the Canadian team athletes at the Olympics and was inducted into the Temple de la renommée du Panthéon des sports du Québec. Today, Andréanne works as investment counsel for Tikehau Capital and lives in Paris with her husband

and their two sons.

The Study also honoured the school's founder Margaret Gascoigne and the Judy Elder Alumna Award winner Gillian Riley (class of 1985), CEO of Tangerine Bank, EVP of Scotiabank and founder of the Sco-

tiabank Women's Initiative. Riley is a past president of the Canadian Club of Toronto and a director of the St. Michael's Hospital Foundation.

The winners' inspirational acceptance speeches were streamed live.



Andréanne Morin



Gillian Riley

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Ti-Loup for family time



9 Lives

LYSANNE FOWLER



Well, this sweet, affectionate fellow has two strikes against him, he is a black cat and he is a senior cat...

I know for a fact that these are not barriers to adoption for our neighbourhood families. No, we proudly adopt small black cats and big black dogs, as well as juniors and seniors, for a full life in our arms.

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Miss Lucy



Westmount
A-dog-tions

LYSANNE FOWLER

She is such a pretty white and caramel girlie, only a bit over three years old now. She even has a caramel shade peaking through the pink of her adorable nose!

Miss Lucy is a sturdy athletic type, ready to lounge in between walks and runs in the dog parks and on the Summit. She responds well to instructions, following every move with her beautiful brown eyes and is very companionable to family members.

She is healthy, up to date with her inoculations, spayed and microchipped. Her identification number is 45995375 and you can refer to it when you visit the Montreal SPCA website at www.sPCA.com and fill out the adoption application for her on the attached link. Once submitted, you will then be contacted within 24 hours for a

telephone interview, followed by a visit by appointment at the SPCA.

Your neighbour,
Lysanne

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If you would like more information on this handsome Ti-Loup, please refer to his identification number 46091728 when you visit the Montreal SPCA website at www.sPCA.com and fill out the adoption application for him on the attached link. Once submitted, you will then be contacted within 24 hours for a telephone interview, followed by a visit by appointment at the SPCA.

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Return to Retail

VERONICA REDGRAVE

One Of A Kind is just that

the line is hot was just proven. VF Group bought it for \$2.1 billion.

Frank shows me the Instagram-ready über-popular photo area.

“As well as our one-of-a kind unique pieces, we sell regular Jordans, Nike, Adi-

das, Hello Kitty and Off White.”

Off White just happens to be designed by Virgil Abloh, artistic director at Louis Vuitton. You get the picture of today’s cross-over meld of culture and couture.

Along with the seen-everywhere white

sneaker, brights are part of the new fashion vocabulary. The trend train has not only arrived in Westmount: its contemporary conversation has already influenced shoppers. The day I visited, buyers at OAK wore eye-popping neon sneaks and “it” brand hoodies.

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Westmount is often referred to with adjectives such as “tony” and “classic.” The Sherbrooke St. shop called OAK (One Of A Kind) calls another description to mind: street savvy.

Co-owner Frank Benalia, right, explained that the store sells “rare, exclusive street wear items, curated by OAK.”

Coveted labels sell out immediately, either from their website or in person. This fun space has become the go-to destination for street style. Global behemoths such as Nike and Adidas had the marketing muscle to drive the rise of the sneaker cult, collaborating with superstars such as Michael Jordan and Kanye West.

Street style has become fashion’s new normal. Influential fashion houses such as Dior are not only paying attention: they have hired subculture celebrities to add cheeky street cred to their collections.

Offering a fabulous funky range, the OAK boutique is the only one in Quebec. Big Bird sits cheerfully in the window. Last week, alongside a range of brands, the hot line Supreme reigned, well, supreme. That



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Park proposals open to comment

Naturalized pond, paths for ‘commuters’ and ‘strollers’

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Preliminary proposals for refurbishing Westmount Park were outlined November 18 in a virtual presentation showing, among many other things, the conversion of the watercourse into a naturalized pond, creation of primary and secondary pathways and a special events area along with changes to some of the park’s entrances. No possible price tags were mentioned. Presented by Stantec consultants as “a

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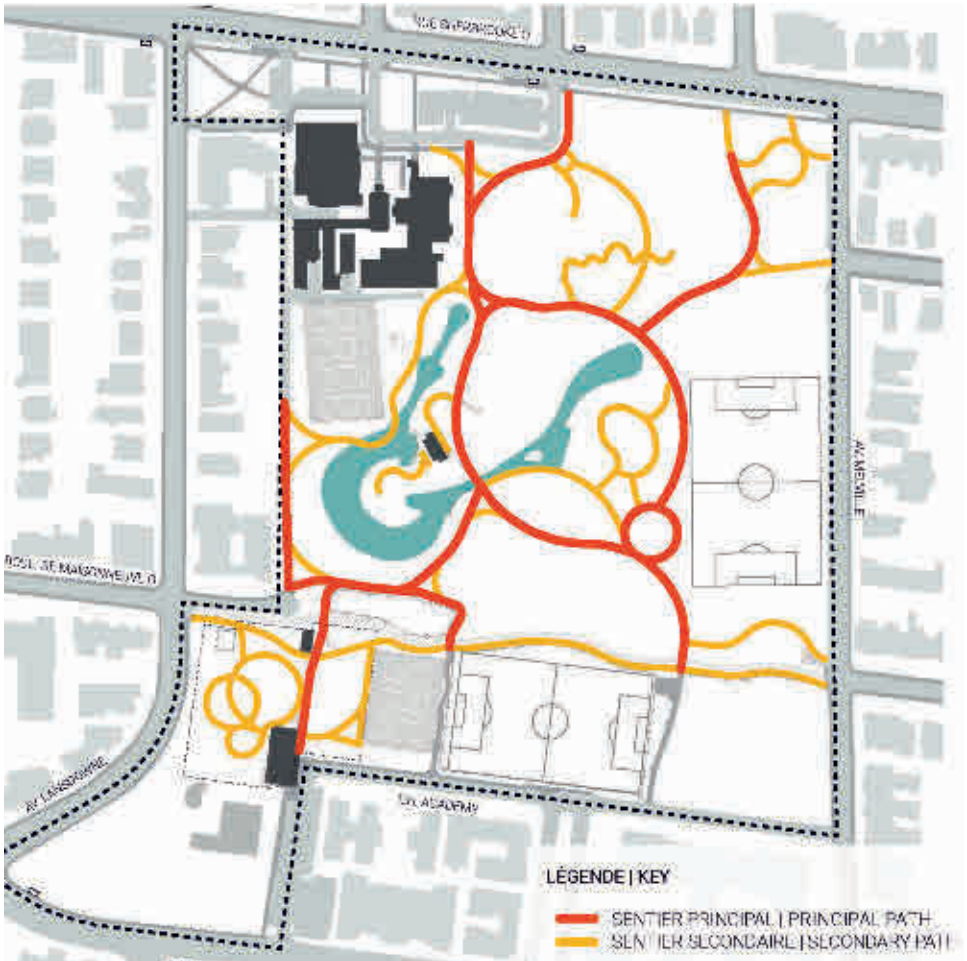
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walk in the park,” stopping to explain various proposals, the Zoom presentation was reported at the end to have involved 121 participants who had registered for the event. Of these, 86 questions were moderated by city director general Benoit Hurtubise, who expressed surprise at the number but had only enough time to address a few. “I’m happy to see your interest,” he said. The proposals and designs will remain on the city website to be accompanied by

Diagram of proposed pathways shows primary ones in red and secondary ones in orange. ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF THE CITY OF WESTMOUNT. a grouping of the questions with answers, said Councillor Cynthia Lulham in concluding the event. Also posted is a survey for residents to express their comments on each “slide” and proposal. Among the many highly illustrated proposals described by Brenda Webster Tweel, Stantec urban spaces associate, were an “air” foot bridge curving around the east side of the playground, a secondary park

path off Sherbrooke near the current splash pad (the former sailing pond), and the creation of primary and secondary paths, most in their current locations but delineated by the use of the materials and purpose. Delineation of the bike path and its clear separation from pedestrian paths was also proposed with crossings to indicate pedestrian priority. The primary paths for north-south and some east-west “commuters” would be granite tiles on a concrete base, allowing them to be easily plowed of snow. The secondary ones, consisting only of crushed granite, would be intended for strolling through the park. Few examples of playground equipment were shown or an extension of the area, but a number of large boulders, which kids like to play on, were visible in the slides.

No more pond concrete
The creation of a naturalized pond, which has long been advocated by Lulham who has spearheaded the park’s refurbishment, was an important focus of the proposals. The proposal shows how rain could be pumped and circulated into the pond or water basin that now is filled from regular tap water. The concrete would be removed. The pond would have landscaped edges and water plants “to keep it oxygenated,” said Stantec architect André Arata. The proposals were based on an analysis in May 2019 and a compilation of comments from a residents’ survey last October-November as well as a workshop at Victoria Hall last November.

Among the commonalities were maintaining the paths throughout the year, maintaining the trees and natural historic ambiance of the park and a desire for more swings in the playground. These were discussed briefly at the opening of the presentation.

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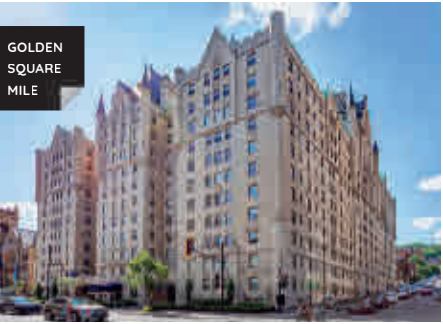
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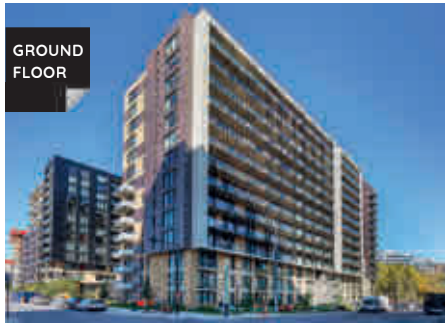
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