

No lessons – no changing access – 70 percent lower capacity

Pool to open – date unknown

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

The Westmount pool was being filled last week and the wheels set in motion to open but on June 3 the city was still awaiting Quebec government directives to start working on all the management details. “As of right now, the only guidelines we have are from the Association des responsables aquatiques du Québec (ARAQ),” said Sports and Recreation director Dave Lapointe.



The Westmount recreation centre swimming pool had been filled and looked ready to go on June 4 at 5 pm. PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

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According to these, there will be no lessons, no access to changing rooms or showers except the outdoor shower, he said. The pool’s capacity of 350 would be reduced by some 70 percent to just over 100 at any one time, he said.

“We’re still waiting for an opening date but keeping June 22 in mind,” referring to a date that had been reported unofficially. There’s so much to do, he said, to manage the changes, set schedules, manage general swim and lap times, determine the

number of staff and even find out how users “will be allowed to move in the water.” How will the reduced capacity be managed? By online appointment? “It’s still unknown,” he said.

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Phase 2 contract approved

Work starts soon on new \$1.4M slate roof for city hall

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

The work to refurbish city hall is to continue for a second consecutive year following council’s approval June 1 of a contract to replace the slate-shingle roof. Last year’s phase 1 of the project involved a \$1-million restoration of the masonry. The roof contract was awarded for a maximum amount of \$1,425,633 including

tax credits to Couverture Montreal-Nord. This was described as the lowest conforming bidder. There were three bids, one of which was lower and therefore presumably deemed non-conforming. “We will be using the same slate shingles as the existing ones, while restoring and reusing wherever possible,” said city Engin- continued on p. 20

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Information and advice inside.

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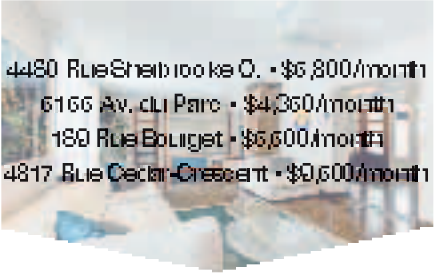
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Council appropriates \$200,000 for commercial sectors



Optimism and emptiness on Sherbrooke St. May 28: (re-)opening signs for Bilboquet, which had closed before the March provincewide COVID-19 shutdown, and the empty former site of Lolé.

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The city's plans to revitalize its commercial sectors are receiving an injection of \$200,000 from the 2019 operating budget to help make this happen.

A funding resolution was moved at the council meeting June 1 by Councillor Cynthia Lulham to appropriate the \$200,000 from unappropriated surplus for the 2019 fiscal year of \$405,684 "to ensure the vitality of the commercial sectors during the COVID-19 pandemic."

It was presented as a new business item at the council. The appropriation

means it cannot be used for any other purpose than what is approved by the council.

In this case, the appropriation is intended to help pay for projects such as creating a market or small public spaces in a road or in a lane, for example, in collaboration between the city and Victoria village and Greene area merchant associations, Lulham explained.

"A city needs commercial areas as part of our urban character," she said. "We've been discussing many ideas" and the funding will make these "a reality."



Closure on St. Catherine. The Lucille's branch near Gladstone, seen June 5, is closed for good. Its Monkland branch is open for delivery.

PHOTOS: INDEPENDENT.

Second tax installment still due June 29

The second property tax installment is still due June 29, Mayor Christina Smith said last week. There is no change, despite one announced last week for city of Montreal taxpayers. "Montreal is still making us pay the (agglomeration) *quote-part* so we cannot defer," she explained. This is the city's remaining payment for its share of 2020 island-wide services.

Brokers' Appreciation Day – June 15

In celebration of International Real Estate Brokers' Appreciation Day on June 15, I would like to take a moment to thank my mother Isabelle Lafrenière.

In the early 60s, my mother was in the fashion industry, operating a consultation service for ladies home shopping. But her real passion was houses. She approached the local real estate agencies to work as an agent, but was rejected by all of them because "women don't sell houses, men do." She persevered and convinced one brave manager to hire her under probation. After one month, she had sold three houses! Convinced of her abilities, she founded Isabelle Lafrenière Brokerage and was the first female broker to join the Montreal Real Estate Board. She and her (female) brokers became a household (pun intended) name in Westmount and the surrounding areas.

One of her slogans was: "House hunting with a feminine touch" or in French: "Notre intuition féminine vous guidera." She worked with consulates, diplomats, was the go-to broker for Expo 67, and established a flourishing business with a great reputation and a sense of style. In the mid-80s, I joined her for two years before going to RE/MAX, where I have been for 34 years.

It takes courage, determination, passion, acceptance, resilience and a wonderful sense of humour to succeed in real estate and I am grateful to my mom for paving the way.

Please take a moment to thank your real estate brokers for their commitment and professionalism.




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Black Lives Matter protest comes to Westmount



Protestors were standing on both sides of Sherbrooke St. June 7 at 5 pm holding homemade signs supporting the Black Lives Matter cause. One girl said she came out in the morning and more people joined in on the other side of the street. Another said, “There was no formal organization. People just joined in.” There were lots of honking horns in support.

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

Blazes are repeat issue Authorities put out small summit fire

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

Firefighters have been called three times since last November to extinguish campfires and brush fires found burning in the woods on Westmount’s summit, a source at the Montreal fire department’s Station 76 on Stanton St. has told the *West-*

mount Independent.
On the evening of June 4, firefighters from the station were summoned again after a Westmount woman out walking her dog in the summit woods came upon a young couple that had started a campfire while huddled in one of a growing number of makeshift shelters that have been

erected on the summit from dead wood. According to the source, no action was necessary by the firefighters upon arrival. “The police put it out,” he said, noting that several Montreal police officers responded first. “It was a small campfire and they just put it out.” He said fire department officials at Station 76 are well aware that large amounts of dead and dry wood lie scattered about Summit Woods.

“It’s a forest,” he said. “I’d say since November, we’ve responded three times up there for little campfires, and shrubs and trees on fire.” As for the makeshift wooden shelters, the source said Westmount Public Security is dealing with that. He said the shelters are not an issue from a fire safety point of view, but wondered why they are there since they don’t appear to serve any purpose.



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15 days allowed for written comments

By-laws to allow terrasses to extend into streets, squares

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

A city plan to allow café-terrasses in Westmount to occupy more space came closer to reality last week when the council tabled two draft by-laws June 1. These define new configurations and allow them to extend beyond the sidewalk into other areas of the public domain including the street.

This is being undertaken to help revitalize commercial districts and allow for COVID-19 safe-distancing provisions required by the Quebec government once restaurants are given the green light to reopen.

“What we’re looking at is animating the

commercial areas and allow what Montreal does,” explained Councillor Cynthia Lulham, whose commissionership includes economic development. She said the city is working on a street plan expected to be revealed next week.

In the meantime, and to meet schedules for by-law adoption by July 6 in time for the summer season, one of the by-laws, number 1559 to amend zoning by-law 1303, is being submitted to a 15-day period for people to file written comments for which the deadline is June 25 at 4:30 pm.

This is a process allowed during the pandemic period to replace what would otherwise be a public consultation meeting. Since the use of terrasses is already

permitted in the zoning by-law, the amendment would not be subject to a referendum, according to city clerk Andrew Brownstein.

This draft by-law expands the definition of a permitted café-terrasse from being able to occupy the right-of-way on a sidewalk to occupying “streets, lanes, sidewalks, squares and the public domain of the city.”

New conditions

The other draft by-law, number 1558, amends By-law 1449 on café-terrasses and establishes new configurations and conditions on the public domain. These include occupying no more than two parking

spaces per establishment and allowing at least 2.5 meters for pedestrian circulation. They must have a wooden floor and protective sides that can absorb or deflect the impact of a vehicle.

While no visual plan had yet been released, “the intention is not to limit parking,” according to Lulham.

At the June 1 meeting, council also approved an amendment to the city’s tariffs by-law to eliminate a previous fee system for café-terrasses. This reduces charges to a \$50 fee to apply for a permit (see story May 26, p. 1).

Complete texts of the draft by-laws can be viewed on the city website at Council/recent meetings/June 1.

City polls restaurants, cafés on use of parking spaces

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

In a “call” to Westmount restaurants and cafés last month, the city said it was “evaluating the possibility” of allowing them the temporary occupation of street parking spaces to be used as terrasses. Most were on Sherbrooke, Greene and Victoria.

The initiative would enable the establishments in question to compensate in

part for public health restrictions during the pandemic by allowing them a larger area for serving food and beverages. It would also allow them to install secure terrasses that would not conflict with pedestrian traffic corridors.

“Before advancing further with this idea and assessing the possible impacts and regulatory adaptations to be made, we would like to gauge the interest of the establishments in question,” the notice states.

Recipients were asked to indicate their interest by May 13 but the deadline has since been delayed since some were difficult to contact, Lulham said. By last week, 19 were reported to have been “solicited.”

“By trying different things like a pilot project, the beauty is that we can adapt and change,” Lulham said. “In commercial areas, we have to be more ready to evolve and find new ways as cities are having to do now around the world.”

Registration opens for soccer club

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Long-awaited news came June 4 for young Westmount soccer players. Following the go-ahead from the Quebec government, the Westmount Soccer Club was slated to be able to take to the fields to start training as at June 8.

“We have been in a holding pattern for three months,” said president Doug Hamilton.

“We are already coordinating with the city for field opening so can we have the kids playing as soon as possible” while respecting social distancing, he said. Registration is now open at the club’s website www.westmountsoccer.org. New players are welcome.

The club is run by parent volunteers and fields inter-city competitive teams throughout the summer. It is independent of the city’s spring program, which had to be cancelled this year because of COVID-19.



On June 5: Chairs and benches outside Liv’s on Greene near St. Catherine, above; where Petros’ terrasse was last year, at Grosvenor and Sherbrooke, below.

PHOTOS: INDEPENDENT.



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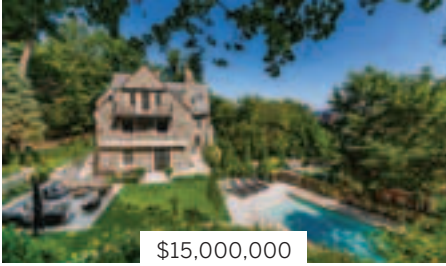
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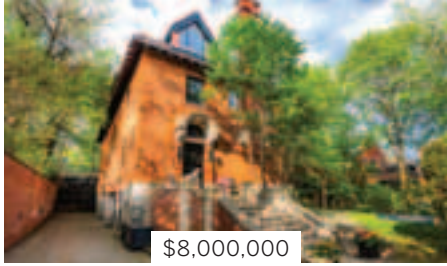


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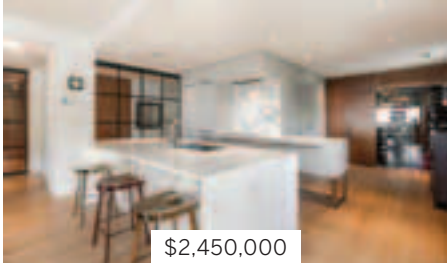
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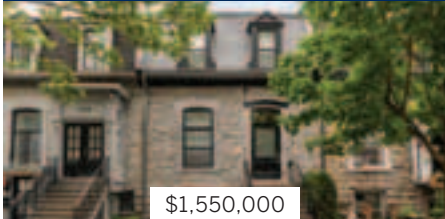
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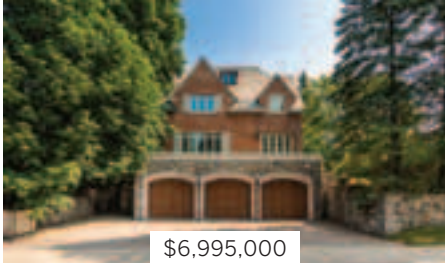


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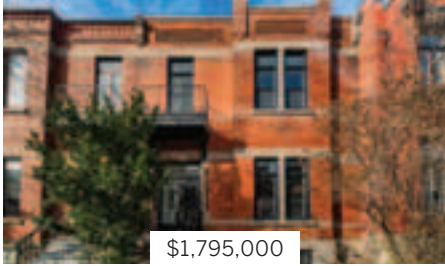
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If you feel the need or if you or a family member has a health problem or a psychosocial problem, you can consult a health or social services professional, even during the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is especially important to go to your health or psychosocial follow-up appointments if you or a family member have:

- ✓ **a chronic disease** (e.g., diabetes, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, degenerative disease, etc.);
- ✓ **a mental health condition** (e.g., depression, anxiety disorders, etc.);
- ✓ **cancer;**
- ✓ **or any other disease, condition or situation that requires regular follow-up with a health or social services professional.**

At any time, you can call Info-Santé staff if you have questions or concerns about your health, or Info-Social staff if you need psychosocial support.

Consultation by telephone or in person



Often, consultations with a health or social services professional can be done over the telephone. Telephone consultations are being prioritized during the pandemic (depending on your condition).



If you have to go to your consultation in person, rest assured that the necessary measures have been taken to ensure your safety and staff safety. Anyone who goes to a health care facility, such as a hospital, a clinic, a doctor's office or a family medicine group (FMG), should wear a homemade mask (face covering) or procedure mask. This recommendation applies to both the patient and the person accompanying the patient. If you have COVID-19 symptoms, the staff might ask you to wear a procedure mask.

How do I consult a health professional?

You must first determine whether you have flu symptoms, gastroenteritis symptoms or COVID-19 symptoms.

If you have COVID-19 symptoms, regardless of the reason for your consultation in family medicine, call 418 644-4545, 450 644-4545, 514 644-4545, 819 644-4545 or 1 877 644-4545. For the hearing impaired (TTY), call 1 800 361-9596 (toll free).

Your health condition will be assessed and you will be referred, if necessary, to a designated assessment clinic or another resource where you can be seen safely during the pandemic.

If you do not have any of these symptoms and you need a consultation, proceed as follows:

→ If you have a family doctor

- Contact the clinic or family medicine group (FMG) that you usually go to to make an appointment. You can check whether your clinic or FMG offers medical and psychosocial consultations by searching your clinic or FMG's name on the Finding a Resource page: sante.gouv.qc.ca/en/repertoire-ressources
- If you are unable to reach your clinic or FMG, call Info-Santé or Info-Social by dialling 811.

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- Call Info-Santé or Info-Social at 811 for advice or to be referred to an appropriate resource.
- You can also contact a clinic that provides services to people who do not have a family doctor, such as a super clinic.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GET YOUR FACTS RIGHT

This is in response to Thomas LaPierre from Chesterfield's letter ("Garbage day, disgusting ways," p. 14) regarding the garbage mess he took a picture of.

I would like him to know that this "special type of idiot" put her garbage outside at 6:25 am the morning of garbage pick-up as she left to go work on the front-lines at the Jewish General Hospital [not at night, as asserted].

I would like him to know that my husband then picked up the mess that was left behind.

STEPHANIE MASSE, GROSVENOR AVE.

IS WESTMOUNT NOT TAKING A STANCE AGAINST RACISM?

I am writing as a concerned citizen of Westmount and of Montreal as to why we, Westmount, do not seem to be standing against the painful issue of racism. I've yet to see a solidarity move towards our fellow citizens of colour. Although Westmount is predominantly white, there are a lot of citizens from many different cultures, whom I am sure would appreciate and value their mayor taking a positive and proactive stance on the problem of racism on the island of Montreal.

If we don't take a positive stance, it will tell the world that we are turning a blind eye to racism.

We are educated and we are privileged, we live in such a beautiful city and must be the example for our children and future generations. We cannot make excuses and

pretend it doesn't affect us. We cannot sit back and stay silent.

I've yet to see or hear of any proactive stance on this racially fractured time other than money going to renovate the pool etc...

Please do the right thing and make a proper announcement and a follow-through plan with financial and legal aid to help our neighbouring Little Burgundy and Côte des Neiges-NDG. Let's show Montreal how amazing and supportive Westmounters are in this pivotal moment in time.

We are one race and when one injustice is brought upon any one of us, it affects us all.

KARLA GOMEZ DE LA PEÑA,
MOUNT STEPHEN AVE.

BENCHES ARE GREAT

In response to a letter to the editor two weeks ago ("Pick up trash, don't set up benches," May 26, p. 4) re: the city putting out benches, we have a different take: the benches are great!

Walking is one of our very few activities these days and we seniors occasionally need to rest so the benches are most welcome. We don't feel worried about sitting on one because sun is an excellent disinfectant. And in the very many years we've lived in Westmount, we've never ever encountered any problems re: congregating at benches.

CARLA LAUFER & ALFRED EDEL,
VICTORIA AVE.

GRAFFITI THE SPEED BUMPS

Since the city isn't painting speed humps (not that it hasn't been entertaining watching racers wrecking their undercarriages as they whizz by), how about letting graffiti artists loose to do the job? The results could be creative, colourful and effective. Drivers might even slow down to appreciate the art.

SHARON SPARLING, ROSLYN AVE.
RACING CORRIDOR

OWNERS DOO UNDERSTAND



PHOTO COURTESY OF D. FISH

Clearly letter writer David Fish ("What's a dog to doo?", May 12, p. 7) does not own a dog. No. 1 turns the grass brown and can't be picked up. No. 2, can be, and is supposed to be removed by the dog owner.

When I saw the sign, I understood the point and thought it was well made.

(But I did have to explain it to my dog since, as Mr. Fish points out, he cannot read.)

ANNE BARKMAN, HALLOWELL AVE.

WHY CAN'T WE LOOK AFTER OUR GRASS?

Recently, we have experienced several extremely hot days. On May 27, the temperature actually reached 35°C and the situation has been made even more problematic by the lack of rain.

As the hot, dry conditions continue, I would have expected to see sprinklers used to water the grass on the playing fields in Westmount Park. After all, why install a sprinkler system if not for use in these conditions? Not for the first time, the grass has gradually been allowed to turn yellow, and now brown. Last fall, the fenced field in front of Westmount Park School was re-seeded/sodded and barriers positioned to give the grass a chance to grow. That field too is now burned.

Why does the city spend money and resources to improve the grass then neglect to care for it? Is it so difficult to turn on a sprinkler? Apparently, those at the WAG behind Westmount High are working just fine. They were being used the week of May 25.

MAVIS YOUNG, MELVILLE AVE.

SYNCHRONICITY PLEASE

I know Mayor Smith and her city councillors are concerned about speeding, red light running, and safety for all who share the road. I know Westmount wants to optimize traffic flow and reduce its carbon footprint. Proper synchronization of traffic signals promotes these objectives, but The Boulevard, a main artery, fails the test.

Recent drives along The Boulevard have not been smooth and pleasant, especially between Victoria and Clarke (and vice versa). Even in light traffic, I stopped for three or four red lights, and had to speed to avoid others. And at some intersections, quick decisions had to be made between hitting the brakes or pushing the accelerator – not what the doctor ordered. My journey took longer, and idling at reds caused excessive GHG emissions. Not smart and not safe.

Proper synchronization of traffic lights is not rocket science, and there's no excuse for the current dysfunction on The Boulevard. It's time for Westmount to do better.

NORMAN SABIN, NDG

Editor's note: Over the paper's 13-year existence, synchronizing lights has been a perennial desire of some residents and passers-through. It seems to be trickier than people think and require constant adjustment, and also to be a matter of personal judgement as to what works and what doesn't. I would bet that it is still an issue in 13 years' time. – DP.

MAKE THE LANSDOWNE BIKE PATH CONSISTENT

I was very pleased to read (May 19, p. 5) that city council is being encouraged to provide more space for pedestrians and cyclists on our streets as a result of the pressures caused by the current crisis.

The Lansdowne Ave. bike path is mentioned as being "well used all the way down from Westmount Ave. to access the Lachine canal bike path." There is one problem, however, which could cause accidents – the fact that parking is inconsistent. On Lansdowne above Sherbrooke and below de Maisonneuve parking is on the east side, but between the two is on the west.

This may cause some confusion to cyclists coming sharply down the hill and crossing the Sherbrooke intersection.

This problem could be easily – and logically – solved by making parking the same both above and below Sherbrooke. Cycle traffic would likely move more smoothly and more safely. Another practical point is that on the 300 block [de Maisonneuve to Sherbrooke] there are more driveways on the west side, so that the proposed change would

continued on p. 15

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

actually provide more parking spaces.

The perfect solution, of course, would be to make Lansdowne below Sherbrooke one way down – as it is above Sherbrooke! The perhaps standard reaction might be “but it’s always been like that ...”

Times have changed, and it is up to us to change with them!

RICHARD LOCK, LANSDOWNE AVE.

REMEMBER BROKEN BUILDING-GUIDELINE PROMISES

At the June 1 council meeting, our mayor and councillors clearly demonstrated indifference to the interests and concerns of our residents. They refused to act on a long-established commitment to update our renovation guidelines, which are now decades old.

On November 3, 2015, in a Councillor’s Column in this paper, then councillor Samiotis outlined clearly the city’s plan for the guideline update with a first draft to be completed within months.

This commitment then stalled and was eventually effectively shelved. Still, during the election campaign [of 2017], Mayor Smith continued to profess a commitment to the update process.

As the public launch dates one by one fell by the wayside, residents were then given new start dates. In retrospect, one can now see that all the dates were bogus and it was simply a charade.

During this last council meeting, Councillor Peart acknowledged that the deadlines were all missed, but then declared that the city was now embarking on something even grander, which I assume refers to Imagine Westmount 2040. We won’t likely be seeing anything for years.

Residents are tired of being burdened with antiquated rules that don’t reflect new engineered materials and deny modern technology that in many cases offers a superior environmental footprint. This inaction will continue to drive higher material and installation costs. We have been

forcefully expressing our discontent for years but it is apparent that, rather than seize this opportunity to improve the well-being of our citizens, our elected officials simply don’t care.

At election time the fall of next year, we should remember this broken promise.

DENIS BIRO, BURTON AVE.

HAPPY WITH ST. MARGARET’S, ARMY

My mother is a 92-year-old resident of St. Margaret’s in Westmount. While there have been several COVID infections in the facility, my mother has so far tested negative three times and is feeling well.

I am very impressed with the professionalism, dedication and humanity of the staff there. Because we could not visit her, the staff celebrated her 92nd birthday and sent us a photo. In addition, my mother is very happy with the extra help provided by the Canadian army, talking enthusiastically about “her two soldier boys.”

I told this story to a cartoonist friend, Mike Cochran, who is producing a series of “Pandemic Heroes” cartoons on his website, and he drew the cartoon at right describing her experience. (He has also designed a T-shirt for “Pandemic Heroes” that he has paid to have printed and sent to front-line workers in hospitals.)

Anything we can do to share some good news now is helpful right about now, is it not?

ROANNE WEISMAN, CLARKE AVE.

Editor’s reply: It is! – DP.

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Pandemic Heroes

Another true story: The Canadian military has been deployed in nursing homes to assist the residents.



See all cartoons: <https://www.pandemic-heroes.com>

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'Great idea:' Mayor Smith Create car-free zone between Dawson and Alexis Nihon?

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

How about creating a car-free park or plaza on de Maisonneuve between Dawson College and Alexis Nihon Plaza west of Atwater?

The idea was met by an enthusiastic response when proposed to city council at its virtual meeting June 1 as a submitted email question from Dan Lambert, president of the Association of Pedestrians and Cyclists of Westmount.

This stretch of de Maisonneuve just east of Wood has already been closed to vehicular traffic for more than a year by work to replace the waterproof membrane over the underground Atwater Metro station and is expected to remain closed for the remainder of this year, he noted.

"This has reduced car traffic on de Maisonneuve, making the entire street quieter." There was a similar effect many years ago when de Maisonneuve was closed off through Westmount Park, he pointed out.

So, "we ask simply that Westmount agree to extend the temporary closure" for another year to study design options for

"possible terraces and greenspaces."

"A great idea, worthy of exploring further," replied Mayor Christina Smith.

She added how some good things, such as "how we use public spaces," are emerging at this time of social distancing. Thousands of students cross de Maisonneuve between Dawson and Alexis Nihon, she noted.

Councillor Cynthia Lulham added that a small park or "parkette" could benefit the Dawson daycare as well. "It would also be a way to bring people from the Metro sta-

tion to Greene Ave." This "way finding" practice is something the city has been working on as part of its revitalization of commercial sectors.

Lambert later told the *Independent* that closing the de Maisonneuve stretch would tie in with the scheduled closure of the street to all but local traffic further west between Clarke and Melville for most of 2021. This is planned by the city of Montreal for maintenance work on its water main.

Shutting down the Atwater stretch would require discussions with Montreal, Alexis Nihon and Dawson, he pointed out. Currently, traffic is able to access the Alexis Nihon parking garage and Dawson daycare parking lot from Wood.

▼ Looking east on de Maisonneuve from Wood Ave. towards Dawson College CEGEP on June 5.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.



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Weredale 'tunnel' completed



A tunnel, seemingly for construction, covering the western, entrance arm of Weredale Park road was completed by June 7. The roadway there has been closed since February 27 after bricks fell from the house at that corner, 4030 Dorchester. The city went to court to get the right to do work on the building, but that effort was interrupted in early April by the COVID shutdown.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JIM RICHARDS.

BUILDING PERMITS What's permitted

Council approves 7 on May 19, refuses none

The following 7 requests for demolition, exterior construction, alteration or renovation were approved at the May 19 meeting of the city council on the recommendation of the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC). There were no refusals.

623 Victoria: to modify openings and create new ones on the rear façade integrating new ones and a new door;

788 Upper Lansdowne: landscaping work at the rear, including resurfacing the part of the driveway behind the house and the construction of a deck and reflecting pool;

522 Grosvenor: to replace two doors provided the front balcony door is made of wood (exterior and interior) without any cladding;

639 Belmont: to replace two basement windows;

420 Mount Stephen: to replace windows and doors provided the balcony door on the front façade is made of wood (exterior and interior) without any cladding;

386 Victoria: to install new exterior lights provided they are directed on the commercial signs;

3233 The Boulevard: at The Study, a mixed Category I-II building, to undertake Phase 1 of a major landscaping improvement project planned for the entire property, which includes the full reconstruction of the main entrance area on Braeside Place and the reconstruction of the east walkway located in the side yard.

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Guest column

Joys of, and threats to, Summit Woods

By Dr. Robert Zimmermann

It is always nice to hear of the joys that the Summit Woods bring to local residents (e.g. Tony and Ann Moffat's letter "The Joys of Summit Woods," p. 4, May 25). This year, the dog-tooth violets, the bloodroots, and the white trilliums were indeed especially showy against all odds.

It is easy to overlook, however, another striking but less common spring flower – the yellow-flowered bellwort (*uvularia grandiflora*). Some assign it to the *liliaceae*, others to the *colchicaceae* families.

Alas, by the time I got around to photographing it (on May 24, see inset photo at right), it was already wilting. There were only two or three clumps of it among the white trilliums at the western end of the woods (see photo at right).

The woods also contain a clump of a fairly rare shrub, the bladdernut (*staphylea trifolia*), which will soon carry white flowers, at first glance reminiscent of lilies of the valley. It belongs, however, to its own family, the *staphyleaceae*. Look for its odd-looking fruit, which gives it its name, in the early fall. It is located near the bulletin board about the fauna and flora of the woods. It is a rather delicate shrub.



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As a forest ecologist (and former colleague of Professor McArthur, who proposed the status of a "nature area" for Summit woods), I am, however, concerned about the future of such a small wood in an urban setting.

Forest's complex cycle of life

It is not a park, and thus its regeneration depends on the hazardous cycle of thousands of seeds turning into hundreds of seedlings, in turn surviving as dozens of saplings eventually ending up as a few mature trees per few square meters.

Even a mighty oak represents an acorn that survived squirrels' teeth, rot and insects, a seedling surviving late frosts, fungal and other diseases, trampling, grazing, and browsing, and later a sapling surviving more diseases, crowding, shading out and other hazards.

Mature trees are vulnerable to windthrow, lightning, ice storms, diseases and parasites. We cannot control most of these natural hazards, but by minimizing soil compaction or erosion and trampling of seedlings, we can at least improve the odds of an adequate initial regeneration.

That means staying on a well-designed network of paths, avoiding opening ever more shortcuts, and improving the design and drainage of the paths so that they do not get widened every time puddles form.

Another area of concern is how people will react to the accumulation of plant debris, which is what happens in a "natural" wood.

Debris = life

To a plant ecologist, plant debris are sources of nutrients waiting to re-enter the cycle of plant life and to animal ecologists they are useful habitats, but to some or perhaps many visitors, they are understandably unattractive.

There are also standing dead or badly damaged trees, great for woodpeckers but eyesores to some. They are also a safety hazard.

Tree falls also leave gaps that often are invaded by aggressive exotics such as Norway maples or buckthorns (*rhamnus cathartica*).

Finally, the overarching concern is the overall health of the Summit Woods. To a forester, a healthy or stable forest is not only one reasonably free of disease and pests, but also one that has a "normal" distribution of age classes. Without getting into statistical and other definitions of what is "normal," a forest should have an abundant initial regeneration (given the odds against initial survival, as noted earlier),



many saplings, and sets of generations of mature trees so as to ensure the replacement of these generations as time goes by, and the oldest trees die off.

Fires, windthrow, diseases and, of course, deliberate fellings will disrupt this sequence of age classes, but in a "healthy" forest a reasonable representation of all age classes will be present. Crucial to the maintenance of a forest is the presence of the so-called advance growth or recruitment just below the oldest age class. It stands to reason if a large, old tree dies, and only seedlings or saplings are present, it will take a long time to fill the gap.

Gaps lead to invasives

If you are a logger, and after felling your saw logs, you have nothing to replace them within a reasonable span of time, you will go bankrupt. In tropical forests, felling of trees without protecting the advance growth can easily spell the end of the forest. In the case of the Summit Woods, a small (23 hectares/57 acres) forest in a city, the death of old trees where no adequate advance growth is present can mean the invasion of exotic species found along streets and in gardens, and the potential transformation of what was once a handsome oak-maple forest into the scrubby, short-lived "forest" like what you can see along the Turcot escarpment.

Detailed inventory data are unfortunately unavailable, but the Summit Woods these days give the distinct impression that a whole generation of old trees, mainly red oaks but also some maples, black cherries and ashes (the emerald borer is not helping) are dead or dying. Great for woodpeckers, eyesores to others, a safety hazard to Public Works.

Where there is no adequate advance

growth, and gaps are left, many Norway maple saplings are already present to take over. Gaps can also be invaded by buckthorn. Other so-called pioneer species, including two native poplar species and sumac, are also invasive, as can be seen in one patch near the lookout. One Canadian species, but not native to Quebec, is also indicative of disturbed sites: this is the Manitoba maple (boxelder; *acer negundo*), which is a small, short-lived tree prone to breakage. It is already present on the Summit; it is the main species that has colonized the Turcot escarpment, where it is, however, useful in providing an initial cover to a dump. All these "pioneer" or "ruderal" species have their role to play. The question is what kind of forest do we want on the Summit?

We seem to need a frank and open public debate on what the aesthetic and other limits of this "natural" wood should be, and what forms of "management light" may be necessary to maintain an acceptable compromise between natural messiness and recreational attractiveness.

Dr. Robert Zimmermann holds a degree in physical geography and environmental engineering from Johns Hopkins University.

He specialized in the role of vegetation in the hydrologic cycle. He was a professor of biogeography at McGill from 1968 to 1977.

He then retrained as a tropical forester, serving in various African and southeast Asian countries between 1979 and 1997.

Since retirement, he has been involved in studies of Madagascar and Switzerland. On a personal level, he has followed the transformation of the city forest of Zurich from a highly managed production forest into a "natural" recreational forest. He lives on de Maisonneuve Blvd.

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City hall's roof on June 5. The use of a drone was approved by Nav Canada (reference: UL20200604-I72).

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.



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IMPORTANT NOTICE

- 1. At its regular meeting held on Monday, June 1, 2020, the Municipal Council adopted, by resolution, the first draft of By-law No. 1559 entitled “*BY-LAW 1559 TO FURTHER AMEND ZONING BY-LAW 1303 – CAFÉ-TERRACES*”;
- 2. In accordance with Order 2020-033, the public consultation meeting is being replaced by a 15-day written consultation during which written comments will be received by email or mail as follows:

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By mail to the attention of:
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City Clerk
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- 3. Any interested person may submit written comments **no later than June 25, 2020, at 4:30 p.m.**
- 4. The legal notice relating to the foregoing is available at: www.westmount.org/en/resident-zone/legal-services-city-clerks-office/public-notice/.

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Roof, cont'd. from p.1

eering director Elisa Gaetano.

The current work does not include a replacement for the existing facade lighting, she explained. This, however, is included in the city’s work permit. It is nonetheless “recognized,” she said, “and we are anticipating a new lighting design project for a non-invasive solution vis-à-vis the restored masonry, that answers to the needs of the community while conforming to the existing regulations on light pollution and fixture cut-offs.”

The roofing work is expected to start in mid- to end of June.

We welcome your letters

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As Social Notes depends on social events, which depend on gatherings, times have changed.

But we'll meet again.

Until then, we profile the disappointed but determined supporters of great causes to see how they are faring in our smaller world and learn their event's new plans.

Susan Stern is the CEO of Weizmann Canada.

What was your event?

We have regularly hosted spring events featuring visiting scientists, so at the onset of this pandemic Weizmann Canada was faced with important decisions.

First, we had to cancel/postpone all upcoming events for the next few months. This is not as easy as it sounds: it involved moving around guest speakers and changing international travel arrangements. We also had to quickly set up our team to work remotely.

How are you staying in touch?

We felt it was extremely important to stay connected with our family of donors and friends during these challenging times

as well as to share information from our scientists. This meant radically shifting to hosting events using online platforms, such as Zoom and GoToMeeting.

Since March 15, Weizmann Canada has hosted or facilitated seven virtual events on topics ranging from the ramp-up of 50+ Weizmann labs working on various aspects of COVID-19, including more efficient testing, potential treatments, predicting outbreak areas and collaborations for drug development.

We just launched a website called Stuck-at-Home, which provides free online teaching tools for parents currently at home with school-aged kids at www.davidson-courses.com/stuck-at-home-en.

Participation has been fabulous! Invites are sent by e-mails to donors and we encourage them to invite friends. Listening to important information and having the opportunity to ask questions directly of the scientists for many shifted their mood from feeling powerless to feeling empowered.

The only thing missing was the amazing food. But we did get dressed up for the events!



Social Notes

VERONICA REDGRAVE

How are you sheltering in place?

My husband and I are staying home. We go for long daily walks, while respecting social distancing.

Have you developed a daily routine?

My routine is a very basic one. I wake up at around 6 am, check emails and often communicate with scientists or management at the Weizmann Institute in Israel, which is seven hours ahead.

I work out every day – three times a week virtually with my trainer.

I get dressed for work (although I *really* miss shoes!) and officially start my day at around 8 am. Our team is using online platforms like TEAMS so we can see each other for meetings.

I spend a lot of time during the day in conversations with donors – checking in to see how they are doing, sharing recent news on science or just trading great recipes.

I take a few moments to have lunch with my husband, which is a treat as in pre-pan-

continued on p. 22

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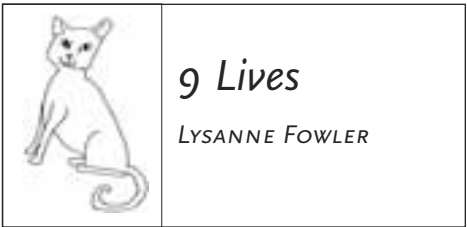
Sociable Lucky



Lucky does need a bit of karma and you can change his future. He would fit in perfectly in our neighbourhood, a sporting and affectate fellow who is ready to join a family for the good doggie life. A very handsome malamute, he attracts attention wherever he goes and

is memorable for his gentle ways. Lucky is at the Montreal SPCA kennel and he should be spending his time with other dogs on the Summit and dog parks, happy as can be while socializing, trotting around with a smile and sniffing tree trunks. He is a very healthy five-year-old, up to date with his inoculations and treatments, neutered and microchipped. Lucky's SPCA identification number is 44143102 and he is patiently awaiting a new home. Please refer to its website at www.sPCA.com and complete its simple online application for Lucky's adoption. You will be contacted within 24 hours for a telephone interview followed by a visit by appointment at the SPCA. Your neighbour, Lysanne

Rusty the marmalade tabby



Rusty is a beloved classic orange tabby, happy go lucky and extremely affectionate. He is at the Montreal SPCA cattery and as, you can see from this photograph, he is waiting anxiously for a forever family and a caring home life. He is a young two-year-old, extremely

handsome with these red markings and soft green eyes. He is also very healthy, up to date with his inoculations and treatments, neutered and microchipped. His identification number at the Montreal SPCA cattery is 44430275. Please refer to its website at www.sPCA.com and complete its simple online application for Rusty's adoption. You will 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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Social notes, cont'd. from p. 21

demic days, I rarely took time to eat lunch. I try to get in some fresh air during the day – usually a brisk walk up the hills of Westmount. Facetime with the kids and grandkids is a regular and important part of my day, as is checking in with my 93-year-old mother and making sure she has what she needs. At around 5:30 pm, I start thinking about making dinner – trying new recipes or making old favourites. After dinner, we usually catch up on the news and then on one of the many series (Netflix, crave, Prime, etc...) that we are watching.

Instead of cocktail attire, what are you wearing?
I usually wear pants and a sweater, often adding a colourful scarf to brighten my look.

Link for supporters?
We are hosting fund raising events on-line. Global \$25M Emergency Fund for Coronavirus Research at weizmann.ca/covid19fund.

What do you miss the most about our smaller world?

Comin' Up

THURSDAY, JUNE 11

Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom presents "Together in Spirit and Song," featuring Jenny Cohen, Joseph Kaiser, Rona Nadler, Paula Rosen, Rachelle Shubert, Jake Smith and comedy duo YidLife Crisis. Free. Temple's YouTube channel. 8 pm.

I miss dressing up and connecting with people in person. I'm a hugger, so that's a challenge. I miss seeing our kids, playing with our grandchildren – and hugging and kissing them – and hosting dinners at home. I miss walking up the mountain without worrying about zig-zagging the street. I miss restaurants, theatre, special events and travel. Pre-pandemic, I was travelling almost every week for many years. And I do miss the hair salon and manicures. I miss being at our offices where there is a buzz of activity. I miss PEOPLE! Believe it or not, I miss traffic! It's quite surreal to see the streets these days.

ONGOING

Looking to develop your public speaking and leadership skills? You can still check out Westmount Toastmasters on Zoom every Tuesday evening from 6:50 pm until 9 pm. Please join us during COVID-19 by using the following link: www.us04web.zoom.us/j/8525267519

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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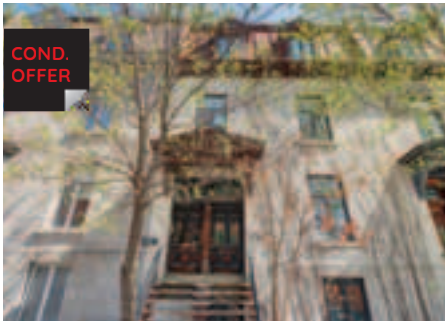
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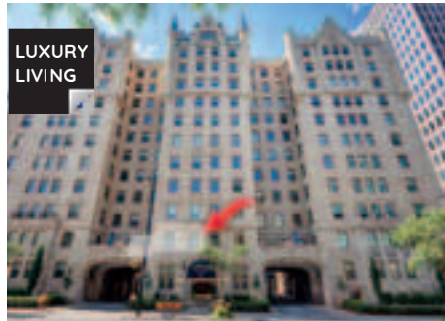
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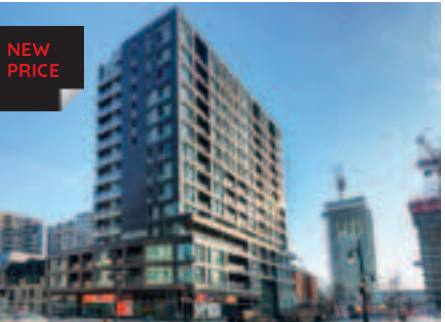
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PRIME LOCATION
WESTMOUNT SQUARE
Mountain views, 1bdr + garage \$740,000



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2 bdr unit w/ Western exposure, facing park \$530,000



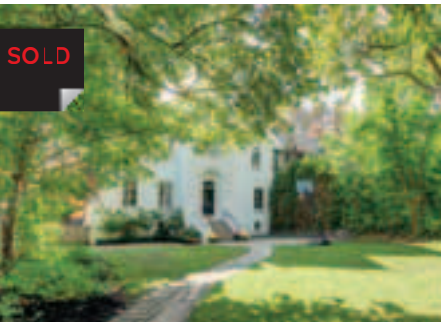
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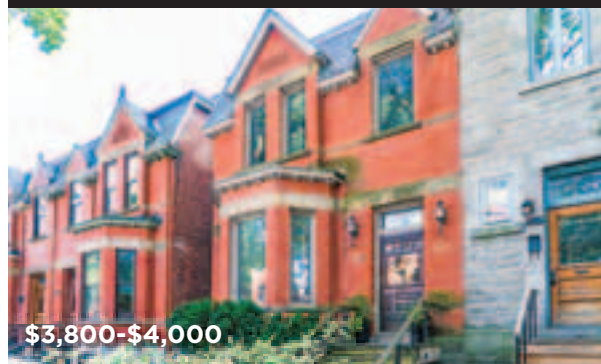
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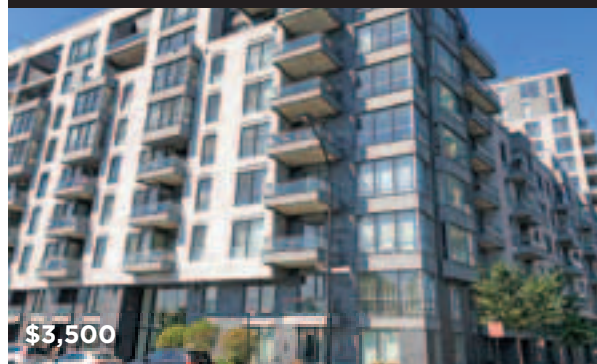
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