

Demo to be considered before land use

City ‘quietly’ introduces new demolition procedure

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

The city has suddenly changed without notice its long-standing practice for reviewing and communicating permit applications to demolish a building and build a replacement, the *Independent* learned last week.

Under what is being called a change in “administrative procedures,” the city is now announcing only the receipt of a demolition application without explaining the intended use of the vacated land by a “replacement program,” according to Councillor Conrad Peart, urban planning

commissioner for permits and architecture.

Previously, and for many years, the two went hand in hand, providing residents or others concerned by a proposed demolition with insight into some of the reasons for tearing down a building and what could be expected from a new, possibly larger or higher, one.

Citizens concerned have a period of 10 days in which to submit objections or comments before a public demolition meeting, to be held virtually March 15 at 6:30 pm.

News of the changes were confirmed after the *Independent* asked Councillor Peart why the usual documents and plans were quickly removed sometime February 9 to 11 from the city web-site without explanation. *continued on p. 8*

See p. 8 for specific news on proposed demo of 325 Melville



“Could this be a new spring variant of the coronavirus emerging into Westmount?” said one Westmounter. This possible sign of spring was spotted on Côte St. Antoine near Lansdowne March 3.

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

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Council adopts second draft of restaurant by-law

Two submissions question timing, zoning confusion

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

As city council March 1 adopted the second draft of its tabled by-law to remove restrictions on numbers and sizes of restaurants in the city’s commercial zones, it also tabled two written comments as part of the 15-day consultation period ending February 17. They were the only ones received.

Adoption of the draft by-law is expected

to follow in early April if no register takes place over the zoning changes, according to Councillor Cynthia Lulham, urban planning commissioner for zoning, economic development and parks.

Residents of affected zones requesting a referendum register have until March 17 at 4:30 pm to submit an application to open a registry to the city clerk’s office (see information on *continued on p. 5*

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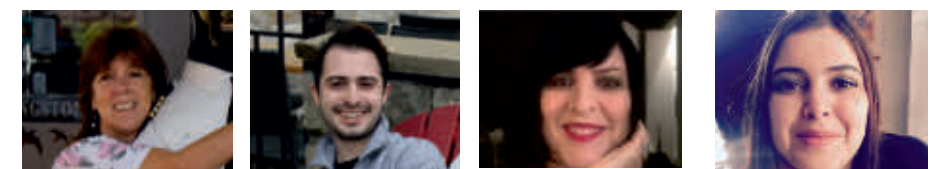
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City to meet with Westmount Park consultants Survey results or project's next steps expected March 15

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Answers concerning the next steps in the revitalization of Westmount Park are expected to be forthcoming at the council meeting March 15, Councillor Cynthia Lulham told the March 1 session.

These would come from a meeting she was to have March 5 with Stantec, the consultants hired for the project, which presented design concepts November 18 at a public consultation on Zoom. This was followed the next day by a survey of residents based on the proposals, after which a deadline was extended by a month to January 18.

Lulham said she hoped the Stantec meeting would provide the survey results residents have been requesting as well as shed some light on the nature of additional







The comfort station in Westmount Park, viewed from the back on March 5.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

consultations, if required, and how the city would move forward with the project.

Mayor Christina Smith had assured questioners at the virtual council meeting February 15 that the results would be made public when known. She also said the city may need more time to consult users of all ages and connect with as many citizens as possible.



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Based on traditional criteria: Gaetano

Lansdowne parking results to be analyzed by transportation committee



Looking north at Lansdowne Ave. from de Maisonneuve March 5.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Results and comments from a parking poll of Lansdowne residents in the block south of Sherbrooke are being sent to the city's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) for consideration before recommendations are made to city council.

This was explained at the city council

meeting March 1 by District 5 councillor Marina Brzeski in reply to a question from resident Richard Lock asking for the number of respondents to the poll at its deadline of February 25.

"I want to emphasize that all communications and information from residents are being looked at," she said. She expected to have more information at the next council meeting.

The second part of his question as to why a decision would require a two-thirds favourable response from the households polled went unanswered. But city engineering director Elisa Gaetano later told the *Independent* that "the two-third criteria has been traditionally used in the past for parking-related polls in Westmount."

The poll questions residents in the concerned block on a city proposal to switch parking from the west side of the street to the east (see story February 2, p. 3).

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Westmount A-dog-tions, p. 14

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Return to Retail: Taverne, p. 21



infoWestmount, p. 16

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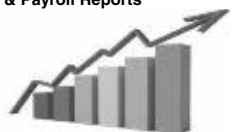


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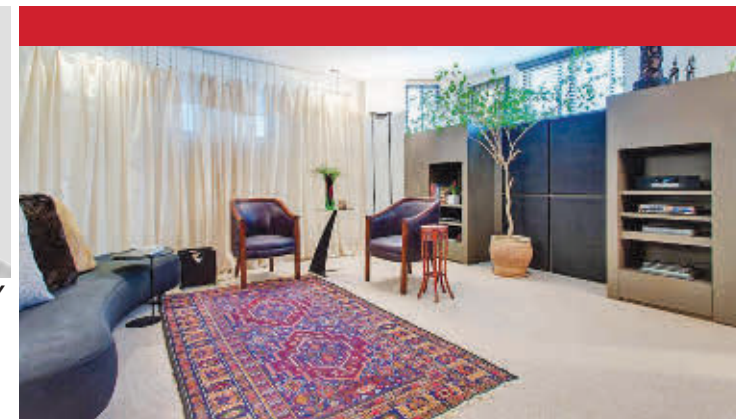
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Some existing restaurants, and restaurant sites



The former site of Bistro on the Avenue on Greene Ave. has been vacant since at least July 2018. It is seen here on March 5.



Vago on Greene Ave. on March 5. It is open for take-out and delivery.



This site on Sherbrooke near Prince Albert – now home to the new Westmount Barbecue – has been the site of Kavos, Parm and Léa, as seen March 5.

PHOTOS: INDEPENDENT.



This site on Sherbrooke near Victoria (at arrow) has been the home to Brasserie Melrose/Centrale, Well House and Mess Hall, as seen March 5.

Restaurant by-law, cont'd. from p. 1

the city's website at Resident zone/Legal services/public notices.

One of the submissions asks whether the apartment building at 4200 Sherbrooke is included in a zone immediately west of the former Lululemon site at the corner of Greene but not easily viewed as within the zone boundaries.

"I am worried that the building will be knocked down and replaced by condos with a Starbucks or Pizza Pizza-type business on the ground level," the writer states. "As I have lived for many years in Vancouver, I have seen firsthand the negative

consequences of such a move."

Councillor Lulham told the *Independent* there is no move to convert residential buildings into mixed occupancies. The changes affect only those currently allowed to have restaurants, as does the former Lululemon occupancy at the southwest corner of Sherbrooke and Greene.

Timing questioned

The other submission expresses concerns that the changes were "ill conceived at this time" when about a half dozen restaurants with acquired rights are vacant, leaving landlords with these spaces to fill.

The fast food restaurants and chains were the ones surviving that could move in, it states, causing parking to spill into residential areas and possibly generating more garbage.

"We want to encourage more restaurants to revitalize our commercial districts," Lulham had explained January 18 in tabling By-law 1568 to amend zoning By-law 1303 for the eight affected zones (see story January 26, p. 1). The city wanted to be prepared for the end of the pandemic.

These are zones C5-20-01, C5-20-02, C5-20-03, C5-20-04 and C5-20-05 in the Victoria village district and zones C5-21-07, C5-

24-12, and C5-24-14 in the Greene area (see maps January 26, p. 14). Lulham has consistently maintained that the city wanted to remove the restrictions to be prepared for the opening of more and larger restaurants to help regenerate the commercial areas.

The modifications, she said, result from a survey of all residents in December 2019 in which 80 percent of the 737 respondents agreed with allowing more restaurants (see story January 14, 2020, p. 1).

New restaurants are already opening in some of the vacancies, she said last week.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MAY CUTLER: LEAVE YOUR MARK, AND FOOTPRINTS

March 3, 2021 marked the 10th anniversary of former Westmount mayor May Cutler's passing. Naturally, as her son, I think of her often. She was a great mother, grandmother and friend to many. Still today, I frequently hear from people, especially Westmounters, who share their memories of her.

Today, as we endure difficult times caused by a world-wide pandemic, I thought it fitting to share with you an extract from May's journal written when she was just 18 years old. For context, May wrote these inspirational words as World War II raged on and after a childhood greatly impacted by the effects of the Great Depression.

*

January 1, 1942

It snowed tonight. Soft, warm white snow that "makes unevenness even" and coats a hazy glow over the street. Whenever I see a field or path covered with snow – smooth and untrodden – I have the desire to walk over it, to be the first to leave my footsteps on a new world.

As I walked home from the streetcar stop tonight, I thought to myself – why, that is like the New Year. That is exactly what the New Year is – a road, untrampled and smooth, lightly covered with soft new fallen snow which conceals all the footsteps of former travellers



May Cutler and family in the 1960s.

PHOTO COURTESY OF A. CUTLER.

and their times.

That is the road which lies before me and I am to walk it – to leave my footprints in the snow for whoever may come after.

And my highest ambition can be only to leave clear, clean-out footprints for those who follow – not dragging or rugged ones, made by lazy feet and careless walking, which will disappear much faster.

And what if those footprints which I must

make should be worn out by the feet of the many who will follow or by the many snowfalls of the future that time is rushing toward me – I shall have done what I have done, and as long as I have done honorably, bravely, with will and a sense of beauty.

ADAM A. CUTLER

LOOKING FOR ELSA MAY

I am looking to learn more about artist Elsa May of Westmount and this painting, "The Outcast."

It was exhibited at the Montreal Art Association (MAA) show in spring 1922. It subsequently sold for the [then] huge sum of \$500.

Elsa was a student of William Brymner at the MAA. She was a nurse during World War I and president of the Beaver Hall Red Cross. She was affluent and the daughter of Frank May. Elsa was never married and died in 1968.

Everything has her in the circle of the Beaver Hall artists, but why, after exhibiting for years, did she stop?

Look at the image, the chain, it's suffragette art. The Montreal Gazette said ... "A difficult subject." The painting is devoid of hands and feet and a face, the hardest things to execute in a painting. This was risqué for 1922. Women did not get the vote till 1940 in Quebec.

I want to learn more about Elsa May's life. Was this painting met with criticism and ridicule? I bet it was.

[There are] suffragette cartoons with chains, the act of women chaining themselves to structures, but never have I seen it in high art.

BRIAN DOUCETTE,

NORTHWEST HARBOUR, NOVA SCOTIA
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WESTMOUNT PARK – WHY CHANGE IT?

It is perhaps more beautiful
In winter than in spring
Stark black trees and mounds of snow
That cover everything
Except the paths that wander
For those that want to walk
And the benches cleared by people
Who just want to sit and talk

Children go tobogganing
Down any slope they find
The hills are mostly very small

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

But they don't seem to mind.
Others construct snowmen,
Some short, some fat, some tall
Which turn into mysterious mounds
When snow begins to fall.

Then there are the snow forts
That are growing here and there
So good for having snowball fights,
They sometimes need repair.
It's full of people these days
People large and small
Some like it just the way it is
And don't want change at all.

Let's treat it as a heritage,
Not make too big a change
Add items that will blend in
And not look far too strange,
Like that the elevated platform
One could walk across at will.
There is a much, much better view
If you stroll up the hill.

ANNE HOLLOWAY, LANSDOWNE AVE.

WHY INFORM WHEN YOU CAN TICKET?

Why put two visible "no parking" signs when you can put one small sign at the end of the street [in this case, St. George's Place]?

These signs must be quite precious and have to be used wisely. Is this some sort of treasure hunt where instead of winning a prize I get to pay a fine?

I was informed by Public Security, at 8 am Tuesday morning [March 2] that the sign was put up 12 hours before: 8 pm Monday night. I guess it's normal to be out and about at 8 pm under curfew.

My car has a parking permit and I could've received a call to remove it (less trouble than hooking up a car and towing it?).

It's an option to consider, in this day and age, to send an email via ewestmount with the street names 24 hours ahead.

MAHITAB MAHABA, PRINCE ALBERT AVE.



This now demolished "fort" with palisade sides appeared last spring at Summit Woods. It was about 12 feet by 15 and the vegetation in that area was scraped clean to the earthen floor. Eventually dismantled, the logs were strewn together. Having a ranger at Summit Woods would help this sanctuary maintain its beauty.

RANGER FOR SUMMIT WOODS?

An idea to be considered is the hiring of a ranger at Summit Woods from May to November. Discovered by many newcomers, it is a quiet, restorative sanctuary to visit during pandemic times. And that's as it should be! This urban forest – no picnic tables, just a pocket wilderness – can only survive if Westmounters enjoy it as a special place. However the influx of visitors causes problems.

Families building shacks is tolerable if those traipsing in the forest are careful not to trample vegetation that is already getting a bashing from off-leash dogs. But it is extreme to find a "fort" of 12 by 15 feet scraped clean of vegetation to create an earthen floor. Someone with the requisite knowledge of the woods could help deter outright destruction, as well as guide visitors to acquire an appreciation of the biodiversity.

Yes, an excellent "nature board" exists to be consulted, but it's not like having a conservationist on hand to point out the names of wild flowers in bloom – "touch

with your eyes only," and to explain the threat of invasive plant and tree species, as well as identify a tree's knot-holes sheltering a family of raccoons with its numerous kits.

Summit Woods offers delights: there's the booming pileated woodpecker that has flourished in an inner city green refuge. Semi-rare species include the orange salamander and the pink ribbon (garter) snake. The dramatic spring run-off and sightings of the mourning coat butterfly herald the advent of spring. Unique are the delightful warblers – some 33 species – during the migratory fly-over.

In the 1960s, there was a ranger who had chores like feeding and watering some 50 Laurentian pheasants! Having an official friendly guide will help preserve Summit Woods, as well as add to our enjoyment of this nature sanctuary.

JOHN FRETZ, LANSDOWNE AVE.

NEW BINS NOT WORKING

Flying its eco colours, Westmount replaced all garbage receptacles on city streets with a sleek new model featuring designated sides for recyclables and garbage, dropped in through swinging lids.

But since their arrival last year, I continue to see bags of garbage, cardboard drinking cups, plastic bottles, pandemic masks and even oversized boxes sitting on top of the bins.

Is this a case of the receptacles not being emptied often enough, or that some passers-by simply can't be bothered to push their detritus into the appropriate slot?

On a recent morning just after noon, I noticed several bins topped with an assort-



ment of garbage and recyclables, on Sherbrooke St.'s north side between Prince Albert and Victoria.

But the situation is not limited to Sherbrooke St. I've seen similar use of the bins on St. Catherine and Victoria.

Has council and/or Public Works considered what will happen in warmer weather, when flies are attracted by the menu on top of the cans?

I'll leave it to the city to consider how to ensure responsible use of the new bins. But I do know when not used properly, the effect is unsanitary and unsightly.

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Process, procedure questioned

Neighbours seek demo, replacement details for 325 Melville

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Three residents submitted questions to the virtual council meeting March 1 decrying a lack of public information on a proposal to demolish the four-unit residence at 325 Melville and a preliminary replacement project.

The questions arose from the sudden and unexplained disappearance of demolition details and a proposed six-unit replacement project that had been posted for one or two days on the city website and on a city notice board outside the property.

These were later replaced by a summary presentation consisting of a photo and certificate of location of the existing building.

Citizens asked why details had not been made public as has been Westmount's long-standing procedure over many years, why the city would allow tearing down what appeared to be a viable family apartment residence and, in the absence of in-

formation, would the city withdraw the demolition application?

In separate questions, residents Peter Hoffmann and François L'Heureux, who are both lawyers, and Robert Babcyak alleged the absence of public information and process did not adhere to the city's permits by-law, SCAOPI by-law, the Planning Programme or the tradition of transparency in demolition proposals. (See separate story, below).

Mayor Smith: Process followed

Mayor Christina Smith replied that she understood their interests as nearby residents of the project. The city was following the legal demolition process, she maintained, and that what was being considered before the public demolition meeting March 15 was only whether the building should be demolished and not preliminary information on what would replace it.

In the current case, if a replacement pro-

Residents: Why was demolition info removed from city's website?

Why has the city not made the demolition documents public, stated the first question received from Peter Hoffmann, a lawyer who lives on de Maisonneuve near Melville.

Hoffmann later told the *Independent* that "the current process does not adhere to the city's by-laws or long-standing practices. When the rules and established precedents are not followed, confidence in the fairness of the outcome is undermined."

He explains that permits By-law 1300, article 79.7 states: "Application for a demolition permit must include a complete set of replacement plan."

He also questions why in this case the demolition is being considered when, as a SCAOPI project, the city's by-law calls for it later in the process.

"Are all documents filed?" asked François L'Heureux, another nearby resident and lawyer: and, in light of the absence of information, would the city suspend the demolition process?

Mayor Smith said the city had no intention of doing so.

The third question, from Robert Babczak of the Melville Terrace complex, which overlooks the proposed demolition/construction site, stated that the current building may need a coat of paint and some renovation "but it does not appear to

pose a danger to the inhabitants or the public."

As such, he said its demolition to allow for a new larger building contravenes the city's Planning Programme, which, on p. 14 states that a residential building should not be demolished to "regenerate the property."

As a result, he asked, "Is this a new position of the city that a viable residential building be replaced by a larger one?" The question went without answer.

He later said that the building always seemed to be fully occupied and was a home to families with children and dogs.

Meanwhile, the city's legal notice published February 9 refers "to relevant documents concerning the demolition application, including plans," that are available on the city's website. Previously such information was also available for immediate viewing in a file at city hall.

According to the city's long-standing procedure before the pandemic closure of city hall, the public was able to view the demolition file at city hall as soon as the legal notice was given (in this case that was February 9).

More recently, this was also presented in summary form on the website including details of a demolition application including a building's history, condition, applicant and plans of the preliminary replacement project.



ject were to be a SCAOPI one for non-conforming to the zoning, residents would have one to two opportunities to weigh in.

Over the years, the city had prioritized what would replace a demolished building and made this public as soon as the legal notice was published, even though the practice might be over-and-above what was required by the either the city's current demolition by-law or Quebec's enabling legislation.

Initial details before their removal from the website included figures on the site and existing building. Included was a

Demo procedure, cont'd. from p. 1

They were for the proposed demolition of a four-unit residence at 325 Melville and its replacement by one of six units.

Explanations were also requested by residents of the concerned neighbourhood at the city council meeting March 1, but answers did not explain the new procedures (see separate stories, p. 8).

These documents were removed, Peart explained, so as to not make public any information on a replacement plan or procedure given new administrative procedures. "What was previously a parallel procedure is now a sequential one, in that the demolition is considered separately from the replacement or preliminary program," he said.

The reason for the change is because "the sole focus of this review is to establish whether or not the application to demolish the existing is acceptable." On the other hand, "the intended use of the vacated land is but one of the many criteria for consideration by the Demolition Committee."

Nevertheless, the city's demolition By-law 1317 requires that a plan for a replacement project be provided by an applicant at the time of a request for a demolition permit and subject to a review by the city's Board of Inspections for compliance to

▲ 325 and 327 Melville on March 5. The notice board with the demolition (circled) notice has been removed since our February 11 photo (inset).

PHOTOS: INDEPENDENT.

favourable demolition recommendation from the city's Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) "subject to the approval of the SCAOPI replacement program" since the existing building and its proposed replacement do not conform to current zoning.

PAC's recommendation was based on the building's background, modifications, and that its Category III rating "holds little heritage value."

current zoning.

Under the new procedure, he said, "the demolition application is the first gate for the applicant to clear," because the preliminary plan that follows an authorized demolition "either conforms to all our current by-laws or it doesn't."

"In the latter, it would be subject to a SCAOPI application."

Peart said he agreed that "we could have done a better job at the time to explain the reason for the change in administrative procedure and motivation behind the revisions to the information on our website" given the community's "very high interest in our built environment" and that it is "our ongoing effort to better communicate what, how, and why we do what we do."

Demo meeting for 314-316 Lansdowne March 15

A virtual meeting on the proposed demolition of 314-316 Lansdowne by the city's Demolition Committee is also slated to take place March 15 at 6:30 pm, the same time set for a hearing into 325 Melville (for details see story February 16, p. 1).

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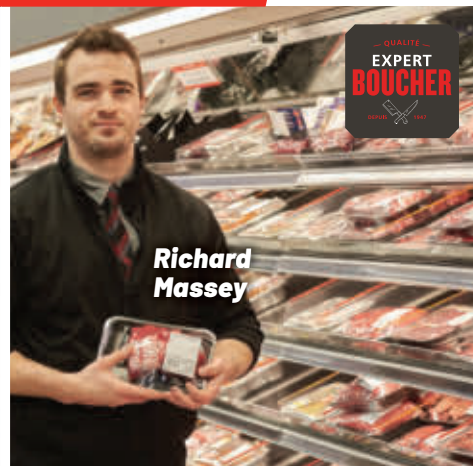
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This stage of work is ‘conductive to the unexpected’

Groupe Maurice: pile driving over, digging to go till June

Groupe Maurice sent a mailing to some residents of southwest Westmount updating them on the construction of a seniors’ residence at Claremont and St. Catherine, just outside Westmount in NDG.

The mailing says that the pile driving “that generated pounding and vibration” is over and that excavation will now go on until June.

It also reproduced a map of the trucks’

route in the current stage, which includes Westmount streets Claremont south from Sherbrooke, St. Catherine to Lansdowne and Glen Rd.

The document’s penultimate sentences conclude more ominously, “Note that these stages can be conducive to the unexpected. This obviously remains beyond our control.”



Foreground, the Groupe Maurice construction site on March 8.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

Second ‘Miracle Food Drive’ coming March 13

“The urgent call to help stock the pantries of Montrealers in need has grown during the second wave of the pandemic, compounded by more people being out of work over a longer period,” begins a press release from the group organizing the second Miracle Food Drive, which will take place on Saturday, March 13.

“Giving is easy,” it continues, “residents ... need only place a non-perishable food item on their porch or stoop by 10 am. Teams of volunteers working throughout the city will collect every item.

“Residents are [also] urged to sign up early as volunteers by visiting www.miraclemontreal.org.”

We welcome your letters

We welcome your letters but reserve the right to choose and edit them. Please limit to 300 words and submit before Friday 10 am to be considered for publication the following week. *email us at:* editor@westmountindependent.com



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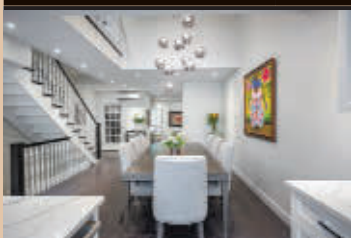
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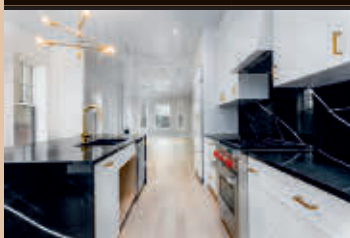
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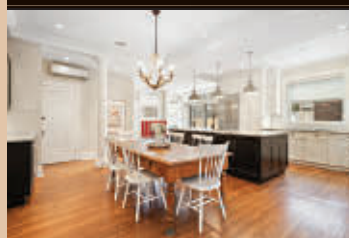
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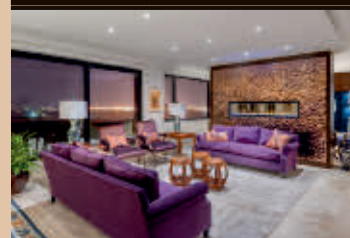
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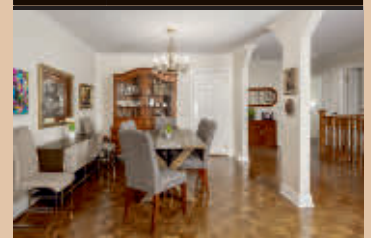
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We all want to know more about COVID-19 vaccination



There are many reasons to get vaccinated, including protecting ourselves from the complications and dangers caused by infectious diseases, but also to stop the return of infectious diseases that are avoidable through vaccination.

The COVID-19 vaccination campaign now underway is aimed at preventing serious complications and death from COVID-19. We also use vaccination as a way of protecting our healthcare system and getting back to a more normal life.

When did the vaccination campaign start?

COVID-19 vaccination in Québec began in December 2020 with the delivery of the first vaccine doses. Because the availability of vaccine is limited, categories of people deemed at higher risk of developing COVID-19 complications have been given priority. As more vaccine becomes available in Canada, the categories of recipients will be extended.

Order of priority of recipients of COVID-19 vaccines

- 1 Vulnerable people and people with a significant loss of autonomy who live in residential and long-term care centres (CHSLDs) or in intermediate and family-type resources (RI-RTFs)
- 2 Workers in the health and social services network who have contact with users
- 3 Autonomous or semi-autonomous people who live in private seniors' homes (RPAs) or in certain closed residential facilities for older adults
- 4 Isolated and remote communities
- 5 People 80 years of age or older
- 6 People 70 to 79 years of age
- 7 People 60 to 69 years of age
- 8 Adults under 60 years of age who have a chronic disease or health problem that increases the risk of complications of COVID-19
- 9 Adults under 60 years of age who do not have a chronic disease or health problem that increases the risk of complications, but who provide essential services and have contact with users
- 10 Everyone else in the general population at least 16 years of age

What supply strategy was used to acquire the vaccines?

The Government of Canada signed advance purchase agreements for seven promising COVID-19 vaccines with the following companies: AstraZeneca, Johnson & Johnson, Medicago, Moderna, Novavax, Pfizer and Sanofi Pasteur/GlaxoSmithKline. The purchases are conditional upon approval of these vaccines by Health Canada.

To date, the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines have been approved for distribution in Canada. Soon, other vaccines from these companies will be used to speed up COVID-19 vaccination.



**COVID-19
Vaccination
operation**

What types of COVID-19 vaccines are being studied?

There are three types of vaccine currently being studied.

- 1 mRNA vaccines:** These vaccines contain part of the RNA of the virus which has the ability to make the S protein located on the surface of the virus. Once the RNA messenger is inside our cells, they make proteins similar to those on the surface of the virus using the instructions provided by the RNA messenger. Our immune system recognizes that this protein is foreign and produces antibodies to defend itself against it. The RNA fragment is quickly destroyed by cells. There is no risk that this RNA will alter our genes.
- 2 Viral vector vaccines:** These contain a weakened version of a virus that is harmless to humans. Once in the body, the vaccine enters our cells and gives them instructions to make protein S. Our immune system recognizes that this protein is foreign and produces antibodies to defend itself against it. Once in the body, the vaccine enters our cells and gives them instructions to make protein S. Our immune system recognizes that this protein is foreign and produces antibodies to defend itself against it.
- 3 Protein subunit vaccines:** These contain non-infectious fragments of proteins that mimic the envelope of the virus. Our immune system recognizes that this protein is foreign and produces antibodies to defend itself against it.

Will an mRNA vaccine alter our genetic code?

No. Messenger RNA does not enter the cell's nucleus or come into contact with the nucleic DNA. As such, it cannot alter our DNA in any way.

How do COVID-19 vaccines work?

When someone receives the vaccine against the virus that causes COVID-19, their body starts to defend itself against the virus. An immune reaction occurs which neutralizes the virus producing antibodies and activating defense cells.

Most COVID-19 vaccines in development prompt the production of antibodies to block protein S; the protein that allows the virus to infect the human body. This prevents the virus from entering and infecting human cells.

The virus that causes COVID-19 is composed of strands of ribonucleic acid (RNA) genetic material surrounded by a crown-like envelope with proteins that include the S (spike) protein, hence the name "coronavirus."



What side effects can be expected from injection with the COVID-19 vaccine?

Some minor side effects may occur, such as redness or pain at the injection site and fatigue, fever or chills. These symptoms are less common among vaccine recipients over the age of 55, are usually benign and do not last long.

As of now there are no known serious side effects from mRNA vaccines. While other random problems may arise, such as a cold or gastroenteritis, they are not related to the vaccine per se.

Because the vaccine does not contain the SARS-CoV-2 virus, it is not capable of causing COVID-19. However, people who come into contact with the virus in the days leading up to their vaccination or within 14 days of receiving the vaccination could still develop symptoms and get the COVID-19 disease.

As such, following health measures remains important until such time as a majority of the population has been vaccinated.

Why did it take 40 years to develop a flu vaccine but only nine months for one against COVID-19?

Past efforts, particularly during the SARS epidemic in 2003, advanced coronavirus vaccine research and accelerated the fight against COVID-19.

There are currently over 50 COVID-19 vaccines undergoing clinical trials around the world, the result of unprecedented scientific cooperation. Considerable financial and human resources have been invested in the development of vaccines that meet regulatory requirements in such a short span of time.

Public health and regulatory authorities in many countries, including Canada, are working hard to ensure that as many safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines as possible become quickly available to their populations.

Why are two vaccine doses required?

The second dose "reminds" the immune system to continue producing antibodies and ensures long-term protection. In current circumstances, where COVID-19 is spreading very fast, administration of the second dose may be delayed somewhat to be able to vaccinate more people with the first dose.

Québec.ca/COVIDvaccine

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9 Lives

LYSANNE FOWLER



Such a fun guy: affectionate, chatty, companionable and a cute snoozer. A delightful grey-and-black striped tabby with huge green eyes, he is most expressive as he keeps busy throughout his day. He is a jolly senior at a young 13 years of age, a bit chubby but that can easily be set right.

This is a call to cat owners who have diabetic cat experience, and there are surprisingly many of us, as we ourselves have had three in our family throughout the last few years.

As his regular routine, Fripouille is scheduled for his insulin injection twice a day at the moment, at 7:30 am and 7:30 pm, with a plan for him to have a veterinary appointment before he is adopted for a base line program.

On an ongoing basis, Fripouille will be

Fun Fripouille

having the special diabetic-mix food that is available from the veterinary selection that we all appreciate. Being a strong and active tabby, his regular vetting is up to date for his inoculations. He is neutered and microchipped as well.



Westmount A-dog-tions

LYSANNE FOWLER

A blonde beauty! With her honey-toned coat and striking brown eyes, her presence is very special. Celeste is a good girlie, a young three-year-old who is waiting at the Montreal SPCA kennel for a caring and active adult family to bring a framework and assurance to help her grow confident in her young years.

She is a sweetheart, very much in need of a home full of affection and nurturing. She is healthy and sporty, up to date with her inoculations, spayed and microchipped. Please refer to her identification number 46669857 when you visit the Montreal SPCA website at www.sPCA.com and fill out the adoption application for her on


Please refer to his identification number 46626173 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 for a telephone interview, followed by a visit by appointment at the SPCA.

Your neighbour, Lysanne

Celestial Celeste

the attached link. Once submitted, you will then be contacted for a telephone interview, followed by a visit by appointment at the SPCA.

Your neighbour, Lysanne



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WANT closing – Zone closed



Retail Review

VERONICA REDGRAVE

home and furniture. The James Perse Côte Cuisine (4865 Sherbrooke West) has been a popular, delectable take-out for ages.

Zone closed

Rushing over to Zone (5008 Sherbrooke St., west of Claremont) for a quick gift purchase, I sadly noticed this handy neighbourhood shop has closed. But for those of us who shop at Atwater Market, there is now a store there.

Toulch coming to Greene

I'm thankful for large informative signage I can read from afar as, utterly muffled and masked, I rush bent over cringing from winter winds. Thus, I learnt that Toulch is opening a new space on St. Catherine near Greene. Celebrating over 60 successful years, this will be its third location. We will be speaking with Michael Toulch shortly so stay tuned for details.

Vie en Rose coming to Alexis Nihon

Speaking of large signs, La Vie en Rose has a massive billboard hiding interior construction for their new boutique to come soon in Alexis Nihon Plaza.

While stopping by WANT Apothecary (4960 Sherbrooke St., east of Claremont) to take advantage of their “minus-75-percent sale,” the staff told me the boutique is closing.

According to its website, “we’ve decided to close our WANT Apothecary locations and consolidate both WANT websites to wantlessentiels.com. This new experience will be the digital home for WANT Les Essentiels and stock several of the skin-care, beauty and home brands you know and love.

“We look forward to this next adventure and we’ll see you soon on wantlessentiels.com.”

James Perse Home will move in shortly. LA designer Perse is multi-talented. His website offers collections for men and women, as well as estates and hospitality projects, limited editions, and of course



WANT Apothecary on March 8.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.



BEFORE & AFTER



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Published by the City of Westmount

NOUVELLES

PROCHAINE SÉANCE
DU CONSEIL

Mardi 6 avril

NEWS

NEXT COUNCIL
MEETING

Tuesday, April 6th



COVID-19 : vaccination

Les personnes de 70 ans et plus peuvent maintenant prendre rendez-vous pour se faire vacciner.
People aged 70 and over can now make an appointment to be vaccinated.
quebec.ca/vaccinocovid

COVID-19 : mesures en vigueur
Visitez quebec.ca/sante pour connaître les plus récentes mesures annoncées par le gouvernement du Québec.

Patinage libre et bâton rondelle au CLW
Les activités de patinage libre et de bâton-rondelle ont repris au Centre des loisirs de Westmount. Il est nécessaire de détenir une carte d'accès aux installations sportives et de réserver en ligne au préalable. westmount.org

Abattage d'arbres morts et dangereux
Les travaux ont débuté le 1er mars et se poursuivront durant toute l'année.

Restauration du conservatoire
Les travaux de restauration de ce bâtiment, construit en 1927, sont en cours. westmount.org

Collecte de résidus alimentaires
La phase 2 du programme de compostage est amorcée et les immeubles résidentiels de 9 à 30 unités sont invités à y participer. westmount.org

Système d'alerte à la communauté
Inscrivez-vous dès maintenant pour recevoir les alertes de Westmount par téléphone, par courriel ou par texto. westmount.org

Bulletin hebomadaire E-Westmount
Abonnez-vous à westmount.org.



Conférence / Lecture: Danièle Sauvageau

The Importance of Being Active for Mental Well-Being
Mardi 16 mars à 19 h. Voir plus bas.
Tuesday, March 16 at 7 p.m. See below.
Inscrivez-vous à / register at **Eventbrite**

COVID-19: measures in effect
Visit the quebec.ca/sante website for details about the latest measures announced by the Gouvernement du Québec.

General Skating, Stick & Puck at the WRC
The Westmount Recreation Centre has opened its doors for general skating and for stick & puck activities. A Facility Access card and advance online reservations are required.
westmount.org

Felling of dead and damaged trees
Work began March 1st and will continue throughout the year.

Conservatory restoration
Restoration work on this 1927 building are now underway. westmount.org

Food waste collection
Phase 2 of the composting programme has begun and residential buildings of 9 to 30 units are invited to participate. westmount.org

Community alert system
Sign up now to receive Westmount's alerts by phone, by email or by text. westmount.org

Weekly E-Westmount newsletter
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Cette année, nous te demandons d'écrire une histoire, un poème ou un essai décrivant comment une petite action peut faire une grande différence dans une communauté. Invitation aux élèves du primaire et du secondaire. westlib.org

L'heure du conte en ligne
Découvrez nos contes en ligne. westlib.org

Collecte de sang d'Héma-Québec
Mercredi 10 mars, 13 h 30 à 19 h 30, Victoria Hall. Pour prendre rendez-vous, téléphonez au 1 800 343-7264 ou envoyez un courriel à jedonne@hema-quebec.qc.ca.

Conférence : The Importance of Being Active for Mental Well-Being
Mardi 16 mars, 19 h, sur Zoom. Danièle Sauvageau, entraîneuse olympique médaillée d'or, saura vous motiver, peu importe votre âge! Inscrivez-vous sur **Eventbrite**.

Discussions au coin du feu avec Mitch Joel
Mercredi 24 mars, 20 h en direct sur YouTube. En conversation avec Nick Farkas, vice-président, concerts et événements chez evenko. youtube.com/bibliowestmount

Sessions en studio au Victoria Hall
Samedi 27 mars, 20 h sur YouTube. Fieldstone Reverie. westlib.org

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Storytime online
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Héma-Québec Blood Donor Clinic
Wednesday, March 10, 1:30 to 7:30 p.m., Victoria Hall. To make an appointment, phone 1 800 343-7264 or send an email to igive@hema-quebec.qc.ca.

Lecture: The Importance of Being Active for Mental Well-Being
Tuesday, March 16, 7 p.m. on Zoom. Danièle Sauvageau, Olympic medal-winning coach, will help you get motivated, no matter your age! Register on **Eventbrite**.

Fireside Chats with Mitch Joel
Wednesday, March 24, 8 p.m., live on YouTube. In conversation with Nick Farkas, Vice President of Concerts and Events, evenko. youtube.com/bibliowestmount

Victoria Hall Studio Sessions
Saturday, March 27, 8 p.m. on YouTube. Fieldstone Reverie. westlib.org

Westmount conservatory – A second look at ‘week 2’ of renovations



Work on the conservatory and “frog pond” greenhouse in between Victoria Hall and the library, February 27.

PHOTOS: RALPH THOMPSON.



Art News

VERONICA REDGRAVE

Desmarais welcomes ‘first visitor’ Sills at MMFA

Thanks to COVID, museums around the world have been closed for months. Now the good news. The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts is open!

The museum’s Stéphane Aquin, director, and Westmounter Mary-Dailey Desmarais, director curatorial division, welcomed Sylvia Sills, the first visitor, to



From left, Stéphane Aquin, Sylvia Sills and Mary-Dailey Desmarais.

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the Riopelle exhibit.

Respecting COVID guidelines, the museum asks visitors make their reservations online. As the museum has been closed

for 204 days of the last 365, understandably the line-up was long. However, it moved quickly while following social distancing – and everyone masked, of course. The web-

site also offers many free virtual exhibits. (mmba.qc.ca)

\$\$\$ INCOME TAX RETURN \$\$\$

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Cleaning in COVID times, and normally

A breakdown of cleaning chemicals that break down – and don't



HEIDI LEIN, B.Sc.

My interest in writing this article was to reduce not only my own exposure to harsh chemicals used for cleaning household surfaces, but that of the environment as well, all the while protecting my home against COVID-19.

Spoiler alert: *soap and water are enough* to clean home surfaces in most instances.

It must be noted right here that the Canadian government and chemical manufacturers all recommend:

- 1) washing soil off the surfaces with soap and water before using chemical products; and,
- 2) leaving chemical products on the surfaces for two to 10 minutes, as in visibly wet, to disinfect.¹

Disinfectants, wipes, gels and creams containing chemicals are actually not as good as soap and water at inactivating COVID-19. Soap contains fat-like substances structurally similar to those in the virus membrane, and the combined action of soap and water actually compete with many of the bonds that help the virus stay together, and the virus eventually falls apart.² This is why proper handwashing beats handsanitizing. Chemicals “dissolve” the virus, but high concentrations are needed, as well as time. Moreover, they must be left wet on a surface for minutes to work.

That's a lot of chemical.

Coronavirus not hardy

“There are many bad things about the coronavirus, but there is one good thing: It is not very hardy,” said Dr. John Swartzberg, an expert on infectious diseases and a professor emeritus at the University of California, Berkeley, School of Public Health.

Richard Sachleben, an organic chemist and member of the American Chemical Society explains: “The virus has an outside coating, and the stuff inside – DNA or RNA – is what actually causes the disease. It's kind of like the casing on a bomb or torpedo. The soap or detergent breaks up that coating, so the virus spills its guts and falls apart.”³

As Cambridge virologist Jane Greatorex puts it, using bleach to do the same job “is like using a bludgeon to swat a fly.”⁴

There are many permutations of chemi-

cal disinfectants on the market, but broadly speaking, there are four categories of surface cleaners effective against SARS-CoV-19 according to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), whose “N-List” the Canadian government quotes on its webpage.

Let's look at them, and their toxicity.

Quats

Quarternary ammonium products – “quats” – are commonly available. Their active ingredient is typically benzalkonium chloride, or alkyl dimethyl ethylbenzyl ammonium chloride.

Brand names include Lysol, Lysol and Clorox wipes. As regards health and environmental considerations, one should wear gloves with these products. Various chemicals may be present in any quat product, and they may disrupt key cellular and hormonal pathways.⁵

Obviously, these toxins will be released into the environment if we pour them down the drain, and so we pass on the toxicity to other living organisms. Gloves – whether disposable or rubber – eventually contribute to pollution.

Bleach

Sodium hypochlorite, or “bleach” is different when poured down the drain. If contained (e.g. in a sink or bucket), it is extremely toxic to aquatic organisms, but when poured down the drain, it will react with organic matter and its toxicity will be removed before reaching the environment.⁶ Some brand names are Clorox Disinfecting Bleach, La Parisienne, etc.

Bleach products usually become unstable after 24 hours if mixed with water, so mixes of bleach and water cannot be stored. They are harsh products, and may damage whatever one is trying to clean.

Over and above this, sustained contact with skin ranges from irritation to severe injury, and it is toxic as an inhalant or if ingested. Glove-wearing is again recommended.

In short, it is less toxic to the environment, but potentially toxic to the individual using it. In May, Health Canada reported a 58 percent increase in the number of accidental poisonings since the pandemic began, and most calls to poison centres involved bleach.⁷

Alcohol

Isopropyl alcohol or “rubbing alcohol” comes in concentrations of 60 to 99 percent, but needs to be at 70 percent to be effective as a household cleaner against COVID.

At higher concentrations it evaporates too quickly to kill COVID – remember the surface needs to be visibly wet for minutes.

Products with ethyl alcohol, or “ethanol,” are also effective disinfectants; ethanol has a slightly different chemical structure than isopropyl alcohol.⁸ There is less potential for damage to surfaces with isopropyl alcohol than with bleach, however gloves are recommended as it can be harsh on skin. Wipes with alcohol work well, but wipe disposal does add up, if considering lowering one's waste.

Peroxide

Hydrogen peroxide is on the government of Canada's list of products that disinfect against COVID-19. It can be bought over-the-counter as a pharmaceutical, but is also packaged as a disinfectant by chemical companies such as Clorox, Virox, Biosafe, etc., sometimes in a spray, wipe, or gel. While hydrogen peroxide is considered less harmful than quats or bleach, it is still risky. Fumes may cause respiratory and heart issues, and it can cause irritation to the eyes, nose, skin and throat. In a closed environment such as a room, hydrogen peroxide emissions are present just from washing one square meter of floor with this non-bleach cleaner.⁹

Personally, I will use a spare amount of a 70% alcohol product on only those surfaces (e.g. door handles, cell phone, cards I used in a purchase) that have had contact with anything outside my home, unless I can use soap and water. Handwashing is my biggest ally before I touch a surface in my home.

Thymol

Thymol. Another product of great interest to me is thymol. Thymol is a component found in thyme oil, derived from the thyme plant. It has many antimicrobial properties, and some products (e.g. from

Clean Well) make the EPA's N-list! Those products are also designed to kill 99 percent of germs, bacteria and viruses, including COVID-19, yet they are alcohol-free, non-toxic, and safe for food surfaces. They may well become the complement to soap and water in protecting my home from COVID.

Parting shots

If you're looking for biodegradable soaps, try those from Etee. They're plant-based concentrates, packaged in beeswax!

Please talk to your doctor if someone in your home has tested positive for COVID. Cleaning and disinfecting standards will be much stricter.

Heidi Lein, B.Sc. Nursing, is a member of Westmount Healthy City Project's environment committee.

¹“Many common household cleaning products can kill the coronavirus if you use them properly”, Herb Weisbaum, Better by Today. March 17, 2020.

²www.marketwatch.com/story/deadly-viruses-are-no-match-for-plain-old-soap-heres-the-science-behind-it-2020-03-08

³www.nbcnews.com/better/lifestyle/many-common-household-cleaning-products-can-kill-coronavirus-if-you-ncna160271

⁴www.nationalgeographic.com/science/article/why-soap-preferable-bleach-fight-against-coronavirus

⁵Xu, Libin, Chemical and Engineering News, Consumer Safety, COVID-19, cen.acs.org/safety/consumer-safety/know-enough-safety-quat-disinfectants/98/i30

⁶Chlorine and sodium hypochlorite hazards and risks, Green Facts (www.greenfacts.org/en/chlorine-sodium-hypochlorite/index.htm)

⁷globalnews.ca/news/7501583/coronavirus-disinfectant-hydrogen-peroxide-covid-19-safety/

⁸“What's the Difference Between Ethyl Alcohol and Isopropyl Alcohol”, Kristen Hall-Geisler, Aug 4. 2020. (science.howstuffworks.com/difference-between-ethyl-and-isopropyl-alcohol.htm)

⁹pubs.acs.org/doi/10.1021/acs.est.0c04702

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Police Report

Backhoe causes gas leak at Claremont and Côte St. Antoine

By MARTIN C. BARRY

A natural gas leak, caused when a pipe was broken by a backhoe being operated near the corner of Claremont Ave. and Côte St. Antoine Rd. on the morning of March 4, brought police, firefighters and gas company workers racing to the area, which was shut to traffic until nearly the middle of the afternoon.

Around 9:30 am on Thursday last week, a contractor was doing excavation work to fix a water pipe break on behalf of the city of Westmount, said Station 12 community relations officer Adalbert Pimentel.



The gas leak “prompted this response Thursday, cutting off power for about four hours. Messages were also sent out [by the city] to boil tap water before drinking. Thank you, Westmount,” said Windsor Ave. resident Erin Hogg.

PHOTO COURTESY OF E. HOGG.

Following protocols used to control gas leaks, workers had to cut off gas and water supplies, leaving several homes in the area dry and without heat for several hours.

As well, said Pimentel, a number of houses close to the break had to be evacuated. He said a special bus serving as a mobile shelter for people displaced from their

homes during cold weather was brought in.

Throughout the morning and into the afternoon, STM buses had to be rerouted. By 2:20, the incident was deemed to be over.

Bicycle stolen

A tenant at an apartment building on de Maisonneuve Blvd. who hadn’t checked a basement locker for most of the winter found out on February 26 that someone broke the locker’s locks and made off with a bicycle stored there worth \$3,000.

“The bike was covered by a tarpaulin,” said Pimentel, noting that most

people store their bikes this time of year as relatively little bicycling is done during the winter. “When he went back on the 26th, he noticed that the tarp was removed and the locks were cut.”

As the investigators were unable to locate any security cameras in the area that might have provided some clues as to the identity of the perpetrator, they have little to go on for the time being.

Pimentel said the Montreal police department is currently promoting a new bicycle anti-theft program called *Projet Numéro*, which involves placing an unremovable identification sticker on bicycles. He said he hopes to give a public demonstration of the program to Westmounters later this year.

COVID checks continue

As the provincial government’s pandemic curfew continues in the Montreal

region, officers from Station 12 were again busy last week conducting inspections at homes in Westmount where residents who recently returned from outside the country were obliged to stay under a 14-day quarantine.

According to Pimentel, there were five such inspection visits in Westmount between February 25 and 27.

During those visits, officers identified, through passports and other official documents, individuals and corresponding addresses, as well as whether any other persons not residing at the given address might be present.

Pimentel said no tickets were issued in Westmount since the previous week for breaking the 8 pm to 5 am curfew. As previously reported by the *Independent*, at least one person, caught driving on February 24 near the corner of The Boulevard and Clarke Ave. after curfew, was given a \$1,550 ticket by the police.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

Application to open a registry in view of approval by way of referendum – Second draft of By-law 1568

1. Following the consultation period held between February 2, 2021 and February 17, 2021, on the first draft of By-law 1568, the Municipal Council adopted by resolution at its regular meeting held on March 1, 2021 the second draft of by-law 1568 entitled “BY-LAW TO FURTHER AMEND ZONING BY-LAW 1303 – ZONES C5-20-01, C5-20-02, C5-20-03, C5-20-04, C5-20-05, C5-21-07, C5-24-12, AND C5-24-14 (RESTAURANTS)”.
2. This second draft by-law contains provisions that may be requested by interested persons in order that a by-law containing them be submitted for their approval in accordance with the *Act respecting elections and referendums in municipalities* (CQLR, chapter E-2.2).
3. Interested persons may submit to the City Clerk’s Office, no later than **Wednesday, March 17, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.**, an application to open a registry in view of submitting the provisions of the second draft of by-law 1568 to the approval of certain qualified voters.
4. The legal notice relating to the foregoing is available at: <https://westmount.org/en/resident-zone/legal-services-city-clerks-office/public-notices/>

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agent.” (His card reads “Brommelier.”)

Working with private imports ranging from Italian organic wines to California favourites, he can only sell a full case (six or 12 bottles depending), but “this hasn’t seemed to curtail orders during the lockdowns!”

Cercone delivers the wine himself, often suggesting pairings.

Taverne is renowned for many dishes,

including pastas as well as mac ‘n’ cheese and “our infamous hamburger, which people love. It seems to trigger happy, fun memories.”

And, a sense of fun stands in Taverne’s entrance. Those who pick up their orders see a larger-than-life cut-out of Jon Cercone, complete with a massive teddy bear. Both bring a smile to our eternal ennui.

Now working with a staff of 10 instead

of 50, Cercone lauds chef Stephen Leslie, also a business partner, for creating new and different dishes. Dinner orders are taken Tuesdays to Saturdays. “And we look forward to opening soon!”

Editor’s note: In the before times, Taverne was also very well known for being the only Westmount location with Sapporo beer on tap.

A year of drinking it from cans has proven two things to me: from the keg is better, as is enjoying one at friendly, lively establishments, like the Taverne. – DP.



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BUILDING PERMITS What's permitted

Council approves 8 permits at Feb. 1 meeting

The following 8 requests for demolition, exterior construction, alteration and renovation were approved at the February 1 meeting of the city council. There were no refusals.

Approved

- 480 Mount Pleasant:** to build a stone house with basement, two storeys and a third one in the attic and sloping roofs, a revision of the permit previously approved August 3 in which the area of the garage and front terrace were reduced to respect the servitude of view from 50 feet in the front;
- 415 Mount Pleasant:** to increase the scope of the approved work by adding the replacement of the front and side windows;
- 1362 Greene:** to modify the front façade by relocating the storefront windows and door of the ground floor further to the front;
- 448 Argyle:** at a Category I house, to re-

- build the front staircase and replace the railing;
- 526 Mount Pleasant:** at a Category I house, to make interior and exterior modifications to the building, including converting the existing attic into a habitable space, building a new dormer on the south-east side of the roof, modifying an existing dormer on the south-west side of the roof, replacing some windows, replacing the garage door, blocking a basement window opening, and replacing the slate roof with same, provided the new windows and garage door are wood (without cladding);
- 464 Strathcona:** to replace windows;
- 11 Burton:** to replace a window;
- 45 Roxborough:** to do landscaping work at the front, sides and rear of the property, including reconfiguration of the front stairs and walkway and to build a swimming pool on the south-west side of the rear yard.

Council approves 5 permits at Feb. 15 meeting

The following 5 requests for demolition, exterior construction, alteration and renovation were approved at the February 1 meeting of the city council. There were no refusals.

Approved

- 25 Bellevue:** to modify an opening on the side façade for a new patio door;
- 651 Victoria:** to modify a garage opening and replace the door;
- 25 Bellevue:** to replace windows and doors;
- 4947 de Maisonneuve:** to replace doors and windows, create a new opening for a patio door at the back and build a back balcony;
- 9 Burton:** to replace a second floor balcony door on the rear façade.



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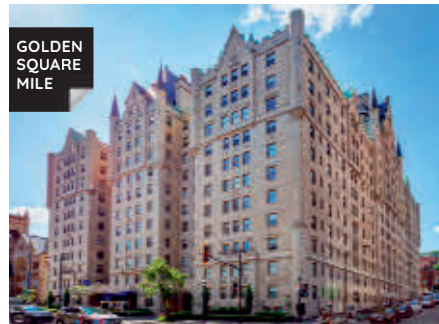


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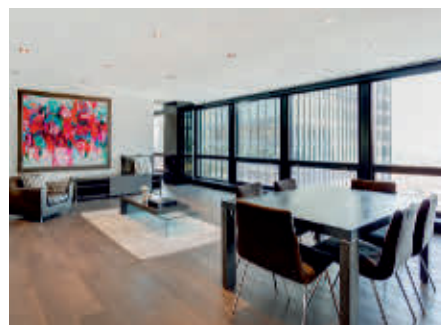


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