

District 1's D'Amico joined by Aronson, Roux

All three new councillors vote against re-design of Lexington Ave.

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

City council's three newly elected councillors voted March 21 against a city plan to re-configure Lexington and a small part of Devon during road reconstruction this summer. They cited their concerns with the consultation process as well as residents' preference for the status quo rather than less parking, proposed wider side-walks and more green spaces.

"Residents were vehemently against it and want a minimalist approach," Councillor Antonio D'Amico told the *Independent*. This is the feedback he had received

from residents after the plan was unveiled March 10. He represents District 1, where Lexington is located, and is also the city's finance commissioner.

It is rare at council meetings that any councillors vote against a motion. In this case, however, both Elisabeth Roux of District 2 and Matt Aronson of District 7 joined D'Amico, who had announced his voting intentions at the start of the meeting.

'Loved the design ... not the process'

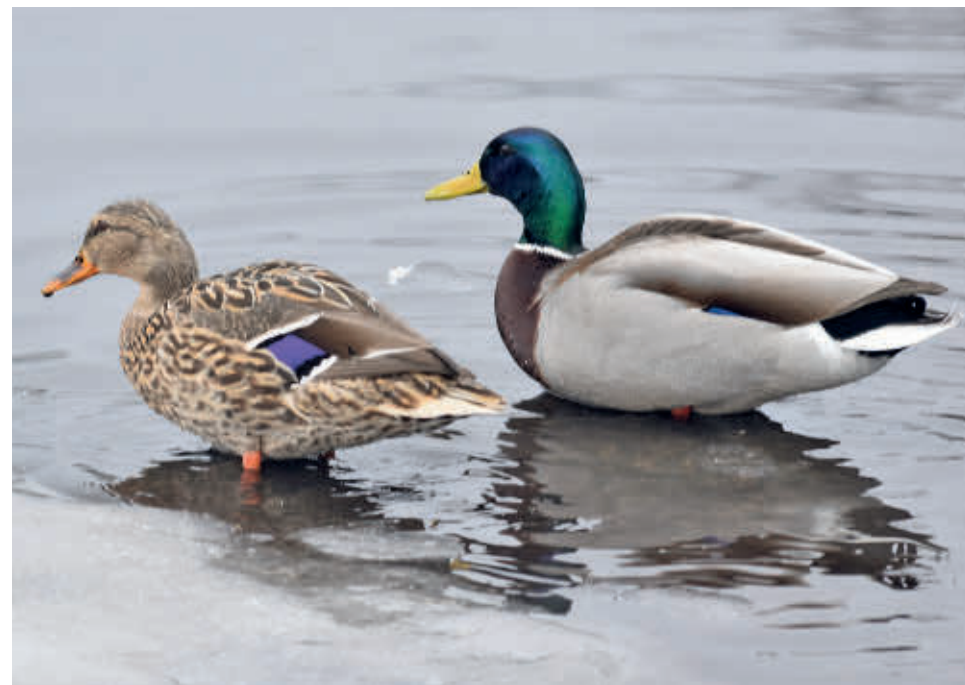
Councillor Aronson, whose commissionership includes citizen engagement, said he

continued on p. 5

**Update on
de Maisseneuve assault,
see p. 13**

**City to host Ukraine rally
Thursday, March 31 at 5 pm,
see p. 6**

The ducks are back!



As seen on the roof of Westmount recreation centre around noon March 25.

PHOTO: HEATHER BLACK

In-person council is back, again

Hybrid work policy adopted as city emerges from pandemic

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY


As many work places, including the city, start to bring back their employees to the office setting rather than working from home during the pandemic, city council March 21 adopted a policy referred to as "telework."

It was the first council session of the year that was open to in-person attendance


(as well as online) since the hybrid format had been introduced in December before the outbreak of Omicron variant. Only one member of the public attended the session in person, however.

The city's "first" first in-person meeting (with video) was November 15 of last year, after a much longer hiatus that began on March 13, 2020 (see November 23, 2021, p. 1).

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Hockey enrollment up

Female registration for city's soccer program 'healthy'

BY JENNIFER BALL

Registration for the city's spring soccer commenced March 15 and the numbers reported by Sports & Recreation sports coordinator Alyssa Sherrard are very healthy, according to her standards: over 200 girls have registered already.

The city's soccer program is hard to compare with previous years, she said, because COVID forced modifications to play last year: only drills and structured skill-building exercises were permitted. The 2020 season was cancelled altogether.

Sherrard is a retired hockey player who was a forward (#11) for the Montréal Canadienne's women's league in the 2016/2017 seasons. After retiring from professional hockey, she wanted to share her passion for competition and she has been working to grow the enrollment of female athletes for the past three years at the Westmount recreation centre.

Speaking of hockey, the fall-winter hockey season stats that Sherrard shared would appear to be trending up.

"For girls in hockey, in 2019, we had 21 girls playing inter-city hockey, in 2022 we

now have 27 girls. In 2019, we had a total of 68 girls playing hockey (including recreational and instructional). In 2022, we have 75 girls and, for the women's program, we had 39 women playing hockey in 2019 compared with 40 women in 2022."

Sherrard believes that the pandemic had an impact on all types of sports, in part because Sports and Recreation needed to cap its registration at a very low number, as mandated by the provincial government, which created a demand.

"We filled our registrations, we did have to deny a lot of people and a lot of people stayed on the waiting list."

Before the pandemic, Sherrard shared that they had a hard time even running their girls' programs because they needed a minimum of 10 participants. Sometimes they needed to shut it down or make the programs co-ed.

"Once [they] get out again, see [their] friends and start socializing again, they are going to find the love for the sport again."

As reported earlier, the inter-city Westmount Soccer Club – which is not affiliated with the city's program – has been experiencing a significant drop in girls registering for the under 12 (U-12) and U-16 divisions (see March 22, p. 1).

Sherrard offered up a theory as to why that could be happening: "We tend to see a drop with the U-12 to U-16 groups, but I do not think it is necessarily because the girls drop out of sports, I think they gear more to playing for their school at that age or for a different association."

Last fall, Westmount launched its first all girls' hockey team, becoming the first one at the novice (under 9) level in the Eastern Hockey League (see story November 9, 2021, p. 5).

Many 'Sports and Rec' programs already full

First separate spring registration attracts pre-pandemic levels, waiting lists

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

As the city's Sports and Recreation programs are set to emerge from pandemic restrictions, some were already filled or at maximum capacity last week and attracting waiting lists. This was only one week after the spring registration opened for Westmount residents March 15. Most programs start at the end of April.

"People are anxious to get back to in-person activities again," said department director Dave Lapointe.

The new youth flag football was full, with 80 participants. Youth tennis was already filled with 235 while adult tennis had 271. Soccer remained on par with pre-pandemic levels after a week with a total of 530 youth (315 boys and 215 girls) and was expected to remain open this week depending on the number of coaches available.

"It's exciting to see," said Andrew Maislin, the department's operations manager. "We're getting back to pre-pandemic levels and people are wanting to get back out there." In some of the other youth programs, he said, computer coding was "maxed out" at 30, and drama was full at 24, cycling at

20 and karate at 40. Certain levels were also full for ballet and break dance.

It's the first year the city has held a separate spring registration to be followed by one for the summer. This program's summer booklet is in the process of preparation to be available in early April. Included will be registration for summer camps, aqua fitness and a full range of swimming lessons.

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Remembering Andy Durso

Well-known Sherbrooke St. notary and Rotarian Andy Durso died March 22. He was the longest serving member of the Rotary Club of Westmount, which met weekly in person at Victoria Hall in pre-COVID times and which is meeting online at present. The *Independent* hopes to have more coverage of his life next week.

Telework work at city, cont'd from p. 1

According to the telework policy resolution moved by Councillor Jeff Shamie, "telework has become a must in the offer of working conditions to employees." This, it states, allows flexibility in the work-family balance and "an attractiveness in the context of labour shortage."

It also refers to teleworking as helping reduce greenhouse gas emissions – one of the city's initiatives – since vehicles are "one of the largest contributors in Quebec."

Though the policy went without comment at the meeting, Mayor Christina Smith told the *Independent* that employees would be offered the option of working remotely one or two days a week if their work allows for it.

Among many criteria to be used by a manager in analyzing a request for teleworking are that the employee be working from home using their own equipment at their own expense. This includes high speed internet, voice mail and other tools. The city provides only a laptop computer.

Employees must also have a dedicated work space accessible on 24-hour notice to the employer to verify security. They must also ensure confidentiality of information.

The employee also must be able to provide quality work independently, be able to provide the same level of customer satisfaction at a distance and be able to travel to the work location "within a reasonable time on the same day if necessary."

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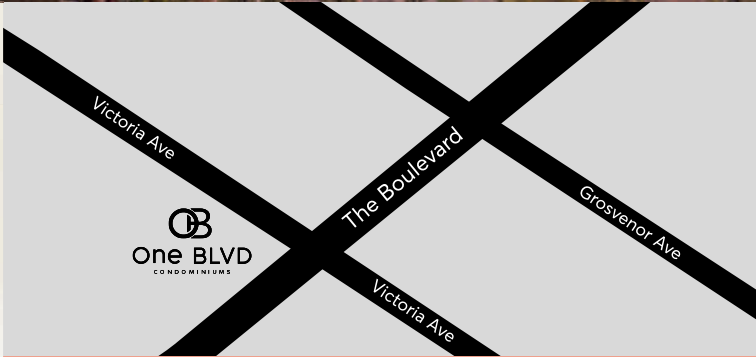
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An illustration from the city's presentation of March 10, looking north on Lexington to its intersection with Sunnyside.
SOURCE: CITY OF WESTMOUNT'S "ENGAGE" WEBSITE.

.....
Lexington, cont'd from p. 1

"loved the design as a model for how a street should be done but not the process around it." Only the residents who were able to tune in to the online consultation presentation got to see the final plan.

"It's a beautiful plan but not what people want," according to Roux. This was based in part on results of a survey completed by 44 people. She said that representing Westmount residents and their tax dollars "is why I ran in the election."

The new design was prepared by the city after the survey had been sent to 278 addresses in a large neighbouring area (see story February 8, p. 12). Of those who completed it, 49 percent reported "satisfaction" with the street's current design, 29 percent were dissatisfied and 62 percent were against removing parking to allow for an array of suggested traffic-calming measures.

The new "final" configuration was presented for the first time to residents at a Zoom consultation meeting March 10.

It was then approved last week by five of eight councillors, enabling it to go directly to tender in time for the work to take place this summer.

D'Amico, in his role as finance commissioner, also said that he had been unable to obtain from the city the "incremental" cost differences between the current and proposed designs. Given residents' satisfaction with the status quo, however, any savings from retaining it could be well used on infrastructure needs in other sections of the city, he suggested.

While it was not shown at the council meeting, Councillor Conrad Peart, commissioner of urban planning and infra-

structure, described the new design as undertaken "to fit today's needs." It would reduce speeding and "create a safer, greener and nicer street."

The re-design is the result of a new city approach to streets up for reconstruction. Each new design is to be developed by a team from various city departments, he explained. "This is something never done before."

Peart was thanked during the meeting by questioner Conor Sampson of Grosvenor for the initiative to re-design roads.

Lexington was last reconstructed 40 years ago but the sewers and water mains were renewed in 2020 and 2021. Mayor Christina Smith told the *Independent* that design changes had been discussed with some residents over those last two years. She understood that this is the third summer that many will be faced with work disruptions.

Narrower intersections are designed to improve crossing and walkability while additional greening is hoped to be better for

water retention. "Every time a street is redone, it needs to be improved," she said.

The new plan can be accessed on the city's "engage" website under engage.westmount.org/en/, "See our latest projects," "Lexington and Devon: safer, greener, nicer!" and then the blue box at bottom right that says: "Consult the presentation document."





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City's historic incinerator set for demo hearing April 5

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

A city demolition hearing is set to take place Tuesday, April 5, at 4 pm the day after the next council meeting. Unusually, it will consider applications related to four properties, one being the city's former incinerator building rising behind the Hydro Westmount power station on Glen Rd.

The other three demo requests are for detached garages at the rear of 1 Murray and 665 Belmont, the latter already removed, and endorsement of a previous demolition at 45 Roxborough that exceeded the permitted amount.

The city's online information regarding 1 Murray, states that the garage, built in 1917 after the main house in 1905, shows significant deterioration and mold. The plan would be to replace it with vegetation.

A 1956 bungalow at 45 Roxborough, a Category III house, went through a demolition hearing June 17, 2019 to remove the roof and add a second storey (see story June 25, 2019, p. 5). The current application is to endorse the 89.9 percent demolition work already undertaken that exceeds the permitted amount.

Demolition of the garage behind 665

Belmont is also after the fact. It had been removed in December 2021 on an urgent basis due to its structural condition. It is to be replaced with a pool and landscaping.

Highly contaminated

The city's former incinerator, a three-storey building at 30 Bethune, was built in 1953 to transform waste into electricity (see story June 19, 2018, p. 1). This enabled the city to become the first in Canada, and reportedly in North America, to do this.

When this practice eventually ceased, it was used as a warehouse but has been described as highly contaminated by asbestos and in unsafe structural condition for municipal use. It has not been in use in any way since at least 2011.

A replacement building is to be used for industrial storage space for Hydro Westmount.

City organizes demonstration for Ukraine

There will be a public demonstration in front of Westmount city hall on Thursday, March 31 at 5 pm in support of Ukraine, the city informed the *Independent* by press release March 25. "The ongoing loss of life is tragic. The city of Westmount wishes to express its solidarity with the Ukrainian people and all those affected by this conflict worldwide. Along with Mayor Christina M. Smith and the Westmount city council, let us unite our voices to bring peace to this region."

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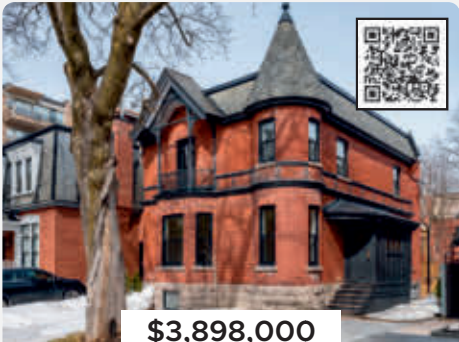
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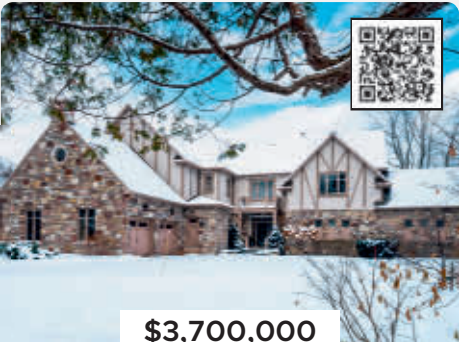


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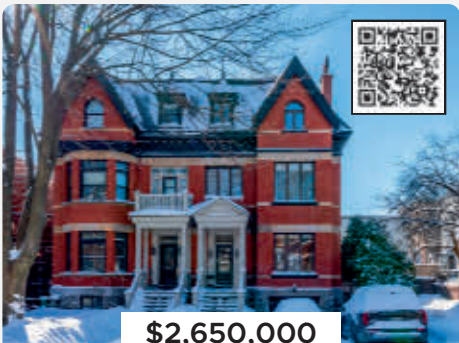
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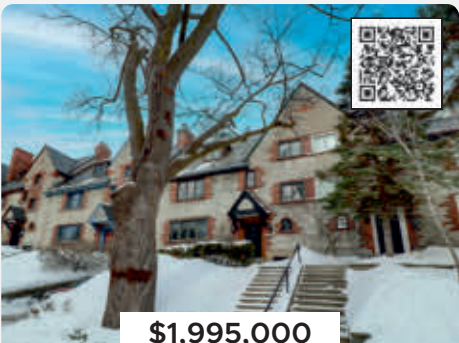
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I live right by the scene of that horrific crime where a young woman was stabbed early Sunday morning [March 20]. Earlier today, I saw this heartbreaking token of love and support attached to a post in front of my building.

I know everyone who has heard this terrible story is devastated and wishing her strength for a full recovery.

And a reminder to be grateful for our brave and wonderful Public Security who happened upon the scene and most probably saved her life. (See p. 15 for story).

LYNN CAPLAN, DE MAISONNEUVE BLVD.

INSANE AMOUNT OF DUST
FROM 500 CLAREMONT

As the long-awaited renovation work finally starts on 500 Claremont, workers have been busy taking out the joints between the bricks on the exterior walls with their disc grinders. There is absolutely nothing to catch the insane amount of dust created that floats and hangs for a long time and then collects on surrounding properties.

It boggles the mind to witness such a blatantly detrimental act of air pollution. Needless to say, airborne particles do not have any upside for the environment, people with respiratory illnesses nor anyone else for that matter.

Why is this even possible in 2022?

MARIO JANELLE, WINDSOR AVE.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DISAPPOINTING FAIT
ACCOMPLI ON LEXINGTON

A survey from December 22 to January 14 was conducted by the city of Westmount regarding the Lexington and Devon project. On March 22, we were invited to a Zoom meeting to see the results.

The questionnaire that was sent out was ill worded and sent out at an inappropriate time. There was no option to leave the street configuration as it is.

The first slide we were shown was that 49 percent of the voters were satisfied with the street and when asked if we would be in favour or removing parking spaces, there was a resounding 62.3 percent who said “no.”

Then we were asked to classify the order of importance of street lighting, on-street parking, width of sidewalks, electric vehicle charging stations and a bicycle route. On-street parking came in second after street lighting.

Then they continued with their presentation and guess what? Our parking spaces were reduced and wider sidewalks were introduced, none of which we wanted. Plus, they decided to plant 20 new trees. I am appalled and super disappointed in the way Westmount has handled this project since they just pretended to want to get our input, but it was already a *fait accompli*.

I have been living on Lexington just past Shorncliffe for over 49 years, and my house is 101 years old and was the first house built on Lexington Ave. Increasing the sidewalk size and removing parking spaces on the east side of the street will be a disaster.

Yes, it's true we cannot park on the east side during the winter, but I can assure you that everyone is happy when that restriction is lifted on March 31. Gardeners will all be required to park on the west side of the street, which by the way has all the driveways for the homes.

This gives us even fewer parking spots. Yes, we all have driveways (not all of them double width) but we can't always be playing musical cars when someone has to go out. Where are cars going to park when there is a major party (like Rosh Hashanah, Yon Kipper, etc.)?

For at least the last 10 years, on Edgehill, there has been one house after another that has been under major construction. Parking is only allowed on one side of the street, but that matters little. While some workers park on that side, they do so with big trucks and extra wide pick-ups. Often times, they also park illegally on the other side and on the sidewalk. It narrows the road down to one lane in most places. On Sydenham, it is much the same, but mostly with landscapers. It is one thing to slow down traffic,

it is quite another to make the drive feel like an obstacle course. During the information session, the city claimed someone would be around to “educate” the contractors. That is all nice, but it will do little. Look at Edgehill and Sydenham. No one does anything.

Narrowing Lexington is likely to end up the same way. Will Public Security have to be called every day to correct the situation?

In the winter, the contractors leave massive snow banks when they clear the driveways. Right now, the roads are wide enough that it does not matter. In the winter, I have noticed on narrowed streets, that there are often big blocks of ice on the side of the roads. This narrows the road even more. So, while the roads may be “technically” wide enough for a car, with that added obstruction, it makes it a one-lane-at-a-time situation.

Lexington (between Shorncliffe and Devon) is already quite narrow and I am certainly not looking forward to having it made narrower.

Lexington is nice, bright and airy, and flowers can grow. By planting more trees, there will be less sunshine. The flowers that the city is planning to plant between the new trees already look like weeds [in its presentation]. All the leaves that will fall in the autumn will end up coming to our well manicured lawns and we will be paying our gardeners to rake them up – not the city of Westmount's Public Works.

Initially, Public Works will look like they are taking care of the spaces but eventually, that will disappear just like the flowers that used to be planted annually in front of Roslyn and The Boulevard going up the stairs to Upper Roslyn.

The need to re-do the infrastructure is understood especially after all the construction work was done on Lexington last year. Re-pave the road and re-do the sidewalks but please don't narrow the road. Add maybe speedbumps but leave it at that.

SHIRLEY CARREIRO, LEXINGTON AVE. AND

MICHAEL CARREIRO, LEXINGTON AVE.

DON'T GILD THE
LEXINGTON 'LILY'

Open letter to District 1 city councillor Antonio D'Amico

Stop the press! It is interesting that every one of us who is affected by the proposed [Lexington Ave.] changes and were on the Zoom this evening [March 10], feel that the city is gilding the lily in this case.

Without consulting with each other, we each felt that the process has gone beyond its mandate. *All we want are new sidewalks and properly paved roads.* We are appreciative of the simple beauty of the street and require no embellishments. How lucky we

are to live on Lexington. Yes, we worked hard to afford to do so and we do not need any extras that we feel would be a waste of people's hard-earned money.

Our lovely homes do not need a dozen more trees, flower beds that mostly turn to weeds and bump-outs that become hazards in winter, to add to the beauty of the street. This wide sunny area draws lots of people to walk here precisely because it is wide and sunny. Some streets in Westmount need greenery to spruce them up. Lexington is not one of them. The architecture and present landscaping speak for themselves.

For some reason, we could not get on the Zoom at 5 pm so I called our neighbour to send both of us the link.

After “raising my hand” from the beginning of the question period and being ignored, I realized you did not see me on the Zoom. Why was the “chat” disabled? At some point my “chats” were appearing under Allen Rubin's name.

Nobody from the southern portion of Lexington was on the Zoom.

We on the northern portion of the street are all of the same mind. It seems like some change could be considered for the busy corner of Lexington and Sunnyside to stop those who may be speeding from downtown at rush hour on their way to Snowdon, Côte St. Luc or Hampstead, but nobody speeds along Lexington Ave. to the degree that this proposal implies.

Check our written answers to the survey. *We do not want bump-outs.* As a past Westmount garden award winner and weeder *par excellence*, I discourage the city from planting bump-outs where unnecessary.

While I'm at it, please have the city or the Oratory put a fence up along the northeast corner of Lexington and Devon so that millions of fallen leaves and soiled masks on the vacant weedy land don't end up on our front lawns in October, causing us to endlessly bag them. This would be a better use of taxpayers' money.

Mr. D'Amico, as our representative, we are counting on you to convey our sentiments to the council and professionals at city hall. In keeping with the spirit of this consultative process, we who took the trouble to try to respond on the Zoom would like you to make sure that the repaving of sidewalks and roads on Lexington does not become an Urban Planning make-work project. If our message was not loud or clear enough on the Zoom tonight, please set up another Zoom next week for those of us copied on this email. Present as well should be the city professionals who need to “stop the press” and serve the needs of the residents of Lexington Ave.

We await your response.

JEWEL & PAUL LOWENSTEIN,
LEXINGTON AVE.

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**Citizen Cynthia**

CYNTHIA LULHAM

Westmount has been my home for over 35 years. It is a wonderful community of dedicated caring citizens, is a place of outstanding physical beauty and has a unique architectural heritage. I have never wanted to live anywhere else. I love Westmount!

I've been taking a much-enjoyed break from municipal life since the election last November. It's still hard for me to believe that I served for 26 years! For my son, Harris, this is the first time in his life that his mom is not on city council. I was pregnant with him when I was first elected. He was always my greatest supporter – attending anti-merger rallies as a toddler, distributing my election flyers, waiting patiently while I answered questions ... I couldn't have done it without him!

It was truly an honour to serve and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the residents of Westmount and particularly of District 7 for their support and encouragement, including following the sudden death of my late husband Max Pompili (2006) and Harris' severe accident five years ago. It is impossible to convey how much

Thank you, Westmounters – Let's work on community building

you helped us heal and move forward.

Building community

Having been first elected in 1995 on a platform of "building community," I'm proud of my accomplishments over the years, starting with chairing the renovation of Victoria Hall that included the addition of the art gallery to promote and encourage our local artists. It also returned Victoria Hall to a community-centre use, after a period as a rental hall. Other initiatives I fostered included the creation of the two public squares (Greene and Prince Albert); the walking path at Summit Woods; creating garden walking tours; adding splash pads, exercise equipment and table tennis tables in parks; expanding the city's community gardens; and refurbishing all the playgrounds and dog runs. Creating spaces for people to meet and interact is an important element in community building.

An important part of a community is local business. In my role as commissioner of economic development, I secured budget funding for merchant support, including holiday decorations on commercial streets, the parkettes and street seating during COVID and support funding for social media and creating merchant associations.

All these initiatives were only possible with the support of past councils including mayors Peter Trent, Karin Marks and Christina Smith, along with our city administration, past and present. I have had the pleasure of working with many talented and dedicated employees and directors general. It was always interesting and sometimes challenging to work with the various interest groups and citizens – but in the end, the results were always positive and rewarding.

Learning from COVID response

The COVID pandemic has brought new challenges and highlighted the need for community. Neighbours looked in on each other, provided support services such as shopping and snow shovelling... It has brought out many of the benefits of living in a close-knit community. Let's not lose this momentum but rather build on it!

Over the past two years, there were enormous increases in the use of our parks and green spaces. Remember that half our population lives in apartments – many without balconies. While the initial influx in our parks caused many issues with garbage, noise and the need for many more benches and picnic tables, our Public Works and Public Security departments ad-

justed services and last summer was much smoother. The addition of the outdoor, refrigerated rink in Westmount Park and a newly designed toboggan run at King George (Murray) Park were positive additions resulting from the need to be outdoors. How else can we use this opportunity to community build?

During my time on council, we have had several local newspapers. We are very fortunate to have this newspaper that is dedicated to local issues and offers residents the opportunity to comment on their concerns and offer their opinions. Research has shown that strong local journalism builds social cohesion, encourages political participation and can inform and improve city council decision making.

Moving forward, I plan to use my years of experience and city knowledge to contribute a monthly column focused on community building – new initiatives by other municipalities, individuals... I look forward to sharing and hearing back on your thoughts and experiences.

For now, I wish you all a Happy Spring!

Cynthia Lulham is the former city councillor for District 7 (south of St. Catherine from Glen Rd. to Hallowell). She was in office from 1995 to 2021.

Resident Sampson: 'We aren't asking for a rocket ship'

Residents still bothered by Metro store's rooftop units, inspectors on the case

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Why does noise continue to emanate from rooftop mechanical units at the Metro grocery store a year after complaints from nearby residents were registered with the city? This was a question asked to city council at the meeting March 21 by one of those affected.

"Why has no work been done?" asked Conor Sampson, a resident of Grosvenor. He suggested the city administration was not equipped to deal with noise.

Pointing out that it was April last year when sound readings were registered above the limit and early this year when a permit was issued for the installation of baffles around the units, he could not understand, therefore, why Metro, a private business, was not being fined or served with an injunction.

"We aren't asking for a rocket ship, but noise baffles."

City director general Hadi Hakim said "we did go through the process" and that the city did have the legal tools to deal with the issue. He said he would get back to Sampson by the end of the week with a timeline.

Inspectors had been working with Metro last week, Mayor Christina Smith said March 23.

Coiffure Jean John

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Homme Men Femme Women Enfants Children

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Postcards from Rome: Stage zero – Getting ready



City Views

VERONICA REDGRAVE

For the past five years, I have gone to school in Florence to study Italian.

I love the ease of the city and always took the road less travelled: March. Usually fewer tourists. (Of course, I never consider myself a tourist!)

And I loved the idea of homework (again!) while immersing myself in a different culture.

All roads lead to Rome

This year, I decided to go to Rome. I contacted Westmount's VCD Travel and talked to Tony Fragapane, general manager of the VIP travel department.

Yes, I realize many people book online, but I had a history with VCD. Pre-COVID, on returning from Florence, the plane left early – without me. I was not notified that my flight's departure date had been changed to a day earlier! I had no option but to buy a one-way return just to get home.

Later, VCD Travel worked diligently on

my behalf, proving the airline's fault and I was fully refunded.

Therein lies the reason why I booked again with my trusted travel partner. Easy peasy.

Tony was more than helpful, especially considering the constant confusion about COVID travel requirements: type of mask, necessary departure/arrival tests, etc.

Readers will know that restrictions have eased so I was able to cancel my appointment at Diagnostics Lilium in Alexis Nihon Plaza.

Other helpful sources included the Istituto Culturale di Montreal located downtown, where I refreshed my Italian. Strangely, with so many Italians living in Montreal, there is no direct flight Montreal-Rome.

But I'm hoping that *Indie* readers will be moved to sigh vicariously through my weekly reports, and that local businesses –



Tony Fragapane of VCD Travel on Victoria Ave.

Gentile, Vago, Bacaro and Donato among others – will recall their *bellissimo* land. Stay tuned!

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Postcard from Rome #1: Eternally busy



City Views

VERONICA REDGRAVE

Checking last-minute COVID restrictions, I was confident that my *über*-efficient Quebec VaxiCode would work. Also, I had to fill out a passenger location form. This is a time-consuming effort whose goal is to trace travellers in case of an illness on a flight. It makes sense, but here's a tip. Have all your travel and vaccine information on hand. It takes a bit of time and automatically "clocks off" quite quickly so you have to start all over.

At the airport, all wore masks, but social distancing was non-existent. Ditto the flight. In-flight, we were informed that proper masks (not cloth) must be worn at all times except for eating and drinking. I had to show my vaccine pass to check in. So far, so good.

Flying to Rome via Zurich, I thought perhaps I would have to show my documents again in Rome. Nope. Before departing from Montreal Trudeau, I had my suitcase "wrapped" for the very first time

in my life. A very effective system that not only traces but helps with delivery and covers insurance. However, I realized, after almost an hour of waiting for my luggage at Rome's airport, that I could not roll it. Of course: the wheels were wrapped!

I am staying in a former convent. Well, from the 1960s. Now, it is a lovely hotel-residence, with kitchen *et al.* Located in a tranquil embassy row area, it is far away from the madding crowd. For ages, I have gone to study Italian in Florence and March is usually a quieter time. I thought I'd be in luck.

But Rome is, after all, Rome.

The Spanish Steps were packed, complete with smartly dressed *polizia* clearing people from sitting on them. Sometimes they give out tickets for this.

Yes, crowds (no masks) are starting, complete with umbrella-carrying guides who wave their flag high above their flock. Curiously, one of the most famous piazzas in the world – due to Caravaggio's works in the Chiesa di Santa Maria del Popolo – was almost empty.

Wandering through the streets, the jigsaw of stucco and travertine, the splashing



The twin churches of the Piazza del Popolo: Santa Maria di Montesanto on the left and Santa Maria dei Miracoli – not to be confused with Chiesa di Santa Maria del Popolo, another church on the same square.

of the nasoni fountains (there are 2,500 in the city, all with drinkable water), the visual rhythm of the roofs, and the ever-present grandeur, makes one forget the crowds.

Almost.

Having bought fresh flowers, a bottle of delicious Italian wine and buffalo mozzarella, I leave them behind and relax in Rome's massive Villa Borghese Gardens. They were created for Scipione Borghese to enjoy, and the villa to house his art collection. He was a cardinal.

Did they not live quite nicely in that era?



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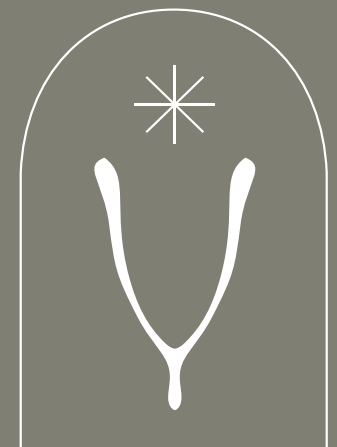
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LYSANNE FOWLER

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Please enquire about Bruno at the Montreal SPCA website, at www.sPCA.com, referring to his information page under his identification number, 49394694, and clicking on the "Fill out the form" button at the top of the text, to then be referred to an information section in order to start the adoption process with a counsellor.

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Lysanne



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Attack on woman on de Maisonneuve at 3:15 am

PSOs pursue, detain man now charged with attempted murder

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

It was just after 3 am on a darker and quieter than usual Sunday, March 20 when a Westmount public safety officer driving south on Victoria spotted a woman wearing dark clothing and walking east on the south sidewalk of de Maisonneuve.

As he kept his eye on her, he noticed another person, described as a man “wearing dark pants and a black-and-white sports coat,” pick up his pace as he walked behind her on the bike path, said Public Security director McBain in relaying the incident.

Suspicious of the situation, the officer began watching them but was not sure whether or not the woman was aware of the man until it appeared that she noticed him as she started to cross Grosvenor.

The officer positioned his car to be able to observe both when he suddenly spotted “a struggle” on the sidewalk just west of the apartment building at 4800 de Maisonneuve at the foot of Roslyn.

He called for back-up and turned on his car’s emergency flashers. As he approached, the man began striking the

woman “wildly,” reportedly looking up in surprise when the officer jumped out of his car, McBain said. This was around 3:14 to 3:15 am.

The suspect “got spooked, and began to flee but tripped and fell.”

Woman helped, knife found

The pursuing officer detained him and “within seconds,” two back-up officers arrived. One tried to calm the woman and provide first aid. She had blood on her face and heavy jacket. The other officer assisted with the arrest of the man, who was cuffed and seated on the sidewalk. He was searched and a knife was found.

Police and Urgences Santé arrived quickly. The woman was taken to the Montreal General Hospital. Police took custody of the man, described by Public Security as being probably around 45 years of age. He was charged with attempted murder as the SPVM major crimes unit continued its investigation.

The woman was identified as 25 years of age and not a resident of Westmount or living nearby.

“It’s incredible how quickly it all hap-

pened and that the officers were at the right place at the right time,” McBain said. “It’s another example of just how important it is to have patrols 24 hours a day. They likely saved this woman’s life. I feel we can say they are heroes.”

Officers thanked at council

Mayor Christina Smith referred “to the tragedy that happened in the early morning hours Sunday,” at the March 21 city

council meeting, saying, “our hearts are with the young woman.”

She also thanked Public Security and police. “Our Public Security are our eyes on the street” and they deserve “an enormous amount of gratitude.”

At the end of the public meeting, the officers involved in the incident along with the dispatcher met with the council members at city hall and were thanked personally.

Hello, I am Ruby,
a Mini Pinscher-doberman, 4 years old, black and tan, in need of a caring and active family. I am affectionate, active and love to play with toys. I am healthy, with inoculations up to date, neutered, and microchipped.

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Desmarais curates Pendleton premiere of canvases, video, choreography

Adam Pendleton: These Things We've Done Together, the Canadian premiere of New York artist Adam Pendleton, was launched on March 14 at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA). Present were the MMFA's director Stéphane Aquin and Westmounter Mary-Dailey Desmarais, chief curator.

Curated by Desmarais, the exhibition features Pendleton's drawings, a video and abstract works on Mylar created specifically for the show. His series *Untitled (WE ARE NOT)* features monumental canvases

pulsing with colour and letters, blurs and squiggles – pushing the boundary between language and abstract art.

His video *Just Before Los Angeles: A Portrait of Yvonne Rainer* showcases the avant-garde pioneer dancer, choreographer and film maker.

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From left, Mary-Dailey Desmarais and Adam Pendleton.

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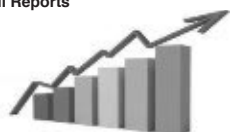


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9 Lives

LYSANNE FOWLER

Precious Stella



Stella is all charm and playfulness.

Yes, she is pretty with the bit of tortoiseshell colouring on her head and back through her white fur, which gives her the appearance of wearing a tortie cape, most fashionable. Such a delicate pixie face, huge green eyes and perfect pink nose. Just precious.

Stella is at the Montreal SPCA cattery, where everyone is most keen on her integrating into a welcoming family environment as soon as possible. She is very healthy at 12 years of age, up to date with her inoculations, spayed and micro-chipped.

Stella is available for adoption now and you can refer to the Montreal SPCA website at www.sPCA.com and scroll to her information page under her identification number, 49784009. Please click on the red square "Book a visit" at the top of the page to proceed to scheduling an appointment with an adoption counsellor at the shelter.

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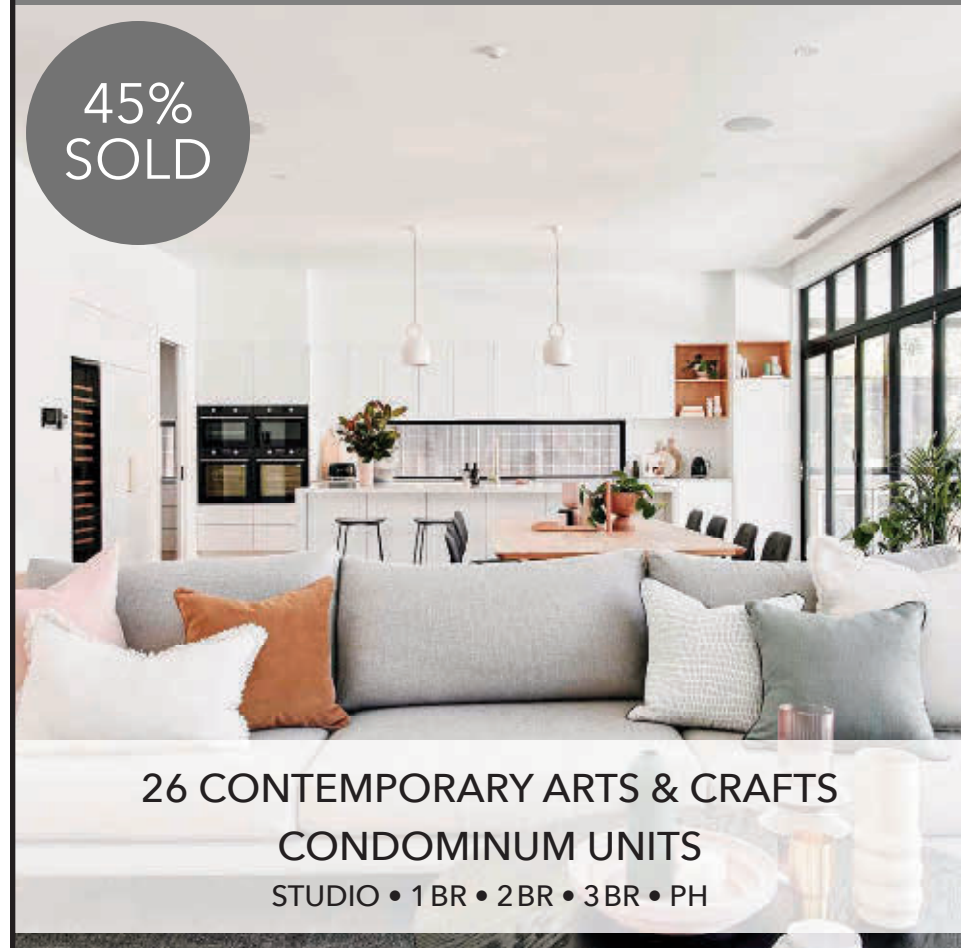
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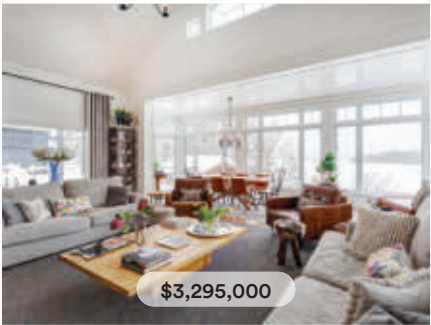
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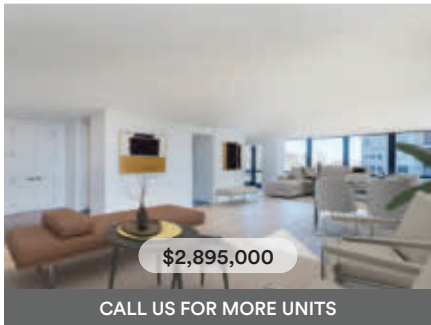
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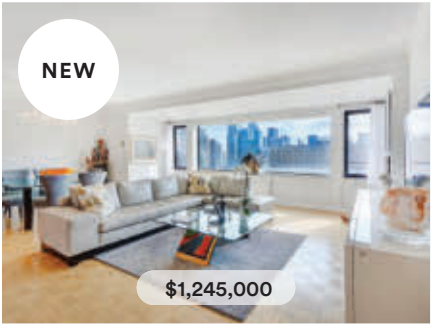
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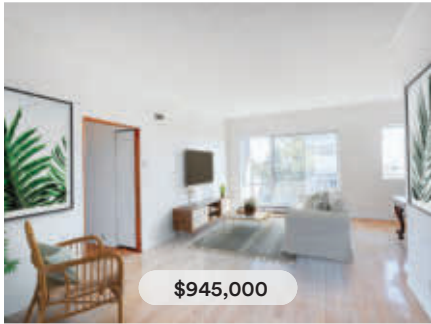
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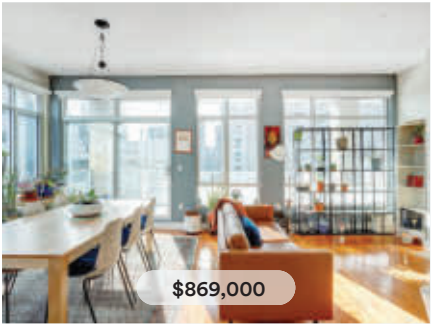
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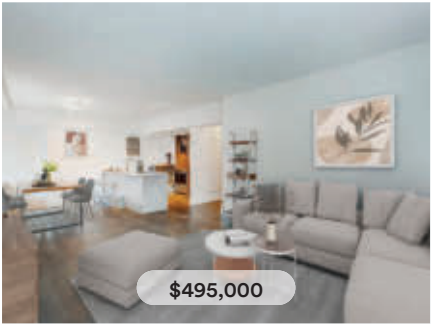
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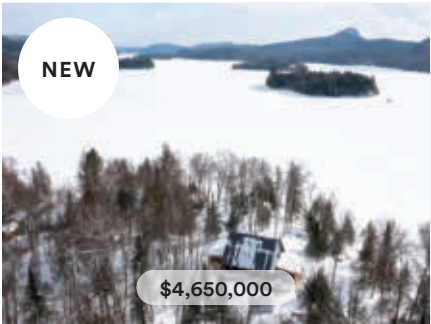
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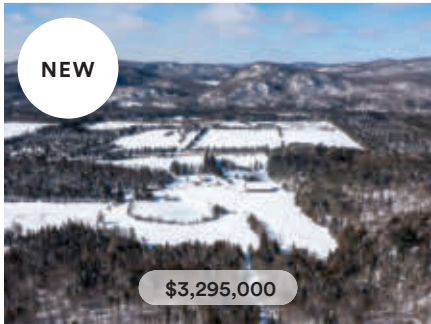
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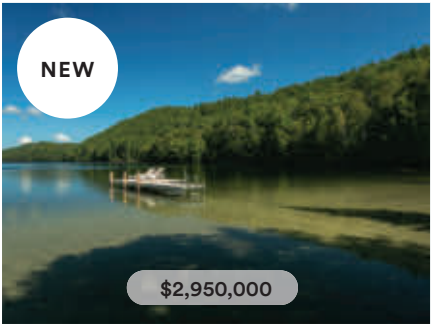
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