

Municipal election 2025

In:

incumbent Shamie (District 3), p. 3

coverage to come:

- incumbent Antonio D'Amico (District 1)
- new candidate James Murphy (District 5)
- new candidate Jeremy Jonas (District 6)
- new candidate Paul Levine (District 6)

Out:

Cllr. Bostock (District 5), p. 5, 8

Southeast plan

Back-and-forth dominates council meeting, p. 12

Mayor: Let's revitalize southeast, p. 7

Trent: City has exemption from density requirement, p. 18

Lot of other opinions, p. 18

Firefighters rescue their first kite! And it is Eva's!



Eight-year-old Eva was flying her kite in Westmount Park August 3 when, *oops*, it escaped and drifted off over de Maisonneuve. Worse still, it got tangled in a hydro wire and wrapped around the branches of a tree. Montreal firefighters from Station 76 on Stanton St., including Kevan Beaumont, pictured, happened to be nearby and Eva's father approached them. Without hesitation, they maneuvered their fire engine, extended the ladder and retrieved the kite. By cutting the cord, they were able to release it from the hydro wire. Beaumont said "We have two sons but if we had a daughter, we'd name her Eva. It's a very nice name." The firemen confirmed that this type of rescue was a first for them. The commander said with a chuckle: "It was a slow day."

PHOTOS: RALPH THOMPSON.

Filing deadline is Friday, October 3

How to run to be a councillor, mayor

BY JENNIFER BALL

The city of Westmount needs a new mayor and at least two new councillors, and time is of the essence if you are considering throwing your hat into the ring.

The Quebec government website Quebec.ca/gouvernement/gestion-municipale holds the lion's share of information on how to file a candidacy and it reads "You must submit a completed nomination paper to the returning officer of your municipality between September 19 and

October 3, 2025, no later than 4:30 pm."

The city's returning officer is Paule Geoffroy-Béliveau, its city clerk.

A person meets the following criteria:

- be 18 years of age or older on the date of the election, and
- be a Canadian citizen on the date of the election, and
- not be incapacitated from voting, and
- not have been convicted of an electoral corrupt practice, and
- be in any of the following situations:

continued on p. 17



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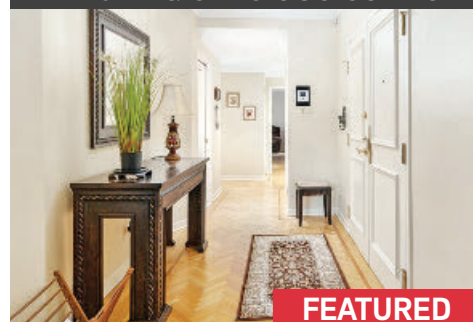
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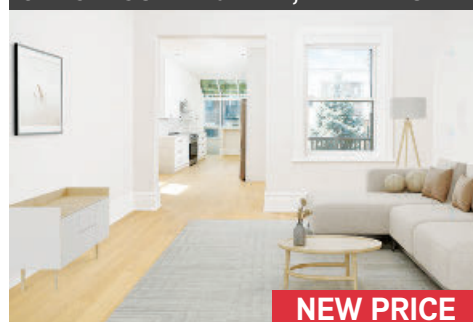
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Cllr. Shamie launches campaign for third term in District 3

Calls for SE & infrastructure renewal, tighter police control

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Councillor Jeff Shamie began ringing doorbells and knocking on doors August 7 in the city’s District 3, which he has represented for two terms and for which he is seeking a third mandate November 2. This is the area directly north of Sherbrooke to Westmount/Cedar and from the eastern border west to Aberdeen and Church Hill.

In a letter he is distributing, he states that “as your representative and your neighbour (on de Casson), I have helped many of you navigate city hall and been available to answer your questions on topics ranging from building permits to garbage collection and roadwork.”

In chairing the city’s Finance and Administration Committee, Shamie addresses three “major topics.” These are the re-development of Westmount’s “run-down” southeast area, which would provide needed tax revenue, he contends; ongoing work on city roads, streets and general infrastructure; and he advocates for greater Montreal police intervention to control disruptive protests regarding Israel and Hamas.

He assures constituents the city is mak-



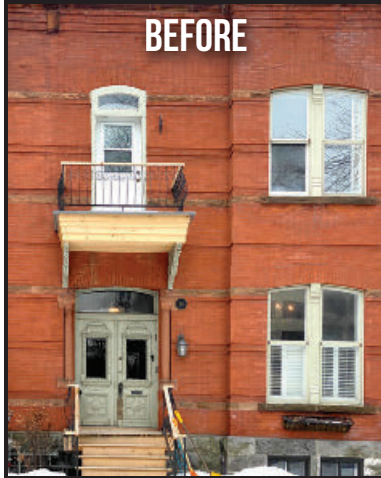
Jeff Shamie at the August 4 city council meeting.

ing progress in managing financial challenges “in a fiscally responsible manner by maintaining existing tax rates for our operating budgets, while borrowing for long-term projects.”

“In our neighbourhood,” he adds, “we completed the Mount Pleasant reconstruction project after we listened to you. This project has vastly improved traffic, road configuration and pedestrian safety in an environmentally friendly manner.”

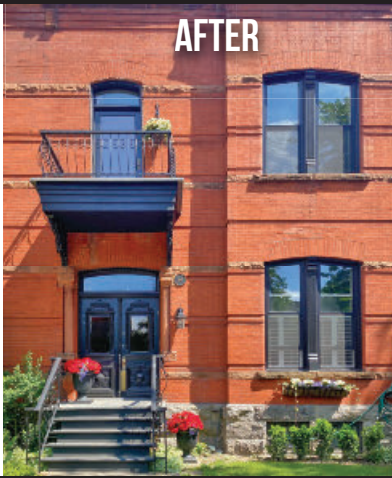
Concluding “there is still work to do, I believe I have the experience and know-how required to contribute and effectively serve the residents of District 3.”

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- Letters to the Editor (general), p. 7
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RH opens at Royalmount, p. 21



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Kami is good on leash but nervous around strangers still, which is being worked

When searching on the shelter's website at www.sPCA.com, you can swiftly find her information page by her identification number, 2000269421, then click on the "Fill out the form" black rectangle to open the adoption information form. You can then present your contact information and note your family's interest in adoption for Kami.

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Your neighbour, Lysanne



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Cllr. Bostock won't run again

Recalls tackling complex files on accessibility & Public Works

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Retiring councillor Anitra Bostock was thanked for her eight years of service at the council meeting August 4 by Mayor Christina Smith and individually by all the councillors present. She plans to devote herself to work at Elizabeth House on Marlowe with youth and young mothers “at risk.”

Looking back on her two council terms representing District 1 previously, and now District 5, Bostock told the *Independent* “one of the accomplishments I’m most proud of is our work with the Westmount Accessibility Committee.”

The committee “emphasized how essential it is that our community evolve and adapt to meet the needs of everyone,” she said. “This has truly been the highlight of my two terms on council. I’ve always strived to be a fair and thoughtful advocate, working to represent all residents and find practical solutions to local issues.”

Bostock, who was also commissioner of Public Security during her first term, sat on the city’s Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Accessibility Advisory Committee in that mandate.



Anitra Bostock at the August 4 council meeting.

Scale of work

In her current term as commissioner of Public Works, she said she has discovered the “incredible” scale of work that goes into keeping the city running “while balancing, aging infrastructure, limited resources and growing expectations.”

Despite major obstacles such as the pandemic, a blue-collar strike, inflation and the increasing effects of climate change, “we moved forward on some of the tougher and long-ignored portfolios.” These included the greenhouse, aging roads and underground infrastructure as well as “a range of costly, complex files that were easy to delay because they weren’t always visible or were considered too polarizing to tackle.”

While capital works spending and project completion rates were higher, she explained, “these decisions weren’t always popular, but they were the right ones for the long-term well-being of the community...We weren’t able to tackle everything (but), we’ve laid a strong foundation to help guide the next council in setting clear priorities for the future.”

For a farewell column by Anitra Bostock, turn to p. 8.

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EDITORIAL

Would the next mayor please turn out the lights?

Hamlet. The king doth wake tonight and takes his rouse,
Keeps wassail and the swaggering upspring reels,
And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.
Horatio. Is it a custom?

Hamlet. Ay, marry, is 't.
But to my mind, though I am native here
And to the manner born, it is a custom
More honour'd in the breach than the observance.
This heavy-headed revel east and west
Makes us traduced and taxed of other nations.
They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
Soil our addition; and indeed it takes
From our achievements, though performed at height,
The pith and marrow of our attribute.

Act 1, Scene 4 of *Hamlet*
*

We will have a new mayor in November. I urge that person not to perpetuate the tradition of putting lampposts with Westmount crests in front of his or her house. I had this editorial all written out when resident Lucien Savard took up the issue and opposed the tradition at the August 4



May Cutler's former office on Sherbrooke at Mount Stephen on August 5.

PHOTO: D. PRICE.

city council meeting. I agree with him and think we should differentiate between the private lives of our elected employees (i.e. politicians) and their public lives, for which we hire/elect them. I had not planned to take a photo of Mayor Christina Smith's lampposts, but I learned in her reply to Savard that they were gone. She has moved and opted not to have them put up again at her new resi-

dence for the short time remaining in her term. You can get the idea of what was there from the lampposts still in front of late former mayor May Cutler's office on Sherbrooke at Mount Stephen above. They were put up when Cutler became mayor in 1987 and were somehow left

behind, without the Westmount crests, afterwards. I also remember these posts at the houses of former mayors Brian Gallery and Peter Trent, and, I think, Karin Marks, but those were taken down when they ceased mayoring.

- Reasons to change the custom:
1. Mayor Smith has complained about city workers targetting her house during a strike. I agree with her. A person's residence has nothing to do with their employment or work as a mayor or councillor. But how can future mayors say that their houses are private when public property is being used to say: "I live here"? Let's be consistent.
 2. The lampposts serve no government purpose. Plus we can save a few bucks in what promises to be a cash-strapped era. We can honour the custom by putting the lampposts in a park somewhere with a plaque explaining the former practice. Unlike the character Hamlet, I am all for wassailing and carousing, and toasts and trumpet blasts in the night, but I nevertheless recommend his preferred course on past customs when it comes to mayoral lampposts. Let the tradition be breached.

David Price is the editor of the Independent.

Errors in editorials

1. A reader wrote in to say that, contrary to what I wrote in my editorial "Rest in peace, Marc Garneau" (June 10, p. 6), the correct name of the riding that Garneau first ran in was Westmount-Ville Marie. He was right. In my latest mega-editorial, "Put the southeast plan to a referendum (spoiler: I would vote 'no') of July 8 (p. 6), I made (at least) these three mistakes:
2. Another reader caught that "Could they [Westmount-style duplexes on the city's Tupper parking lots] be built for less than the construction costs and the price of the land?" should have read: "Could they be sold for more than the construction costs and the price of the land?" (If I ever find a way to build "for less than the construction costs," I will cease editing and become a developer.)
3. In the accompanying boxed story "What the city is planning" (July 8, p. 8), I wrote that new city zoning is planned for the *south* side of Dorchester west of Atwater. It is, of course, the *north side* that is a major subject of this discussion, as was written in other places in that issue and many times previously.
4. Most seriously, in the same boxed story, I erred when I wrote that that city council vote at its May 27 special meeting was 6-2 in favour of the southeast project. (That vote was a preliminary/preparatory one, with the final one currently slated for September 8.) In fact, the May 27 vote was 5-2 in favour, since District 1 councillor Antonio D'Amico was not present. When reached August 6 by telephone, D'Amico preferred not to comment on how he would have voted had he been there.

*

Two self-criticisms:

Less beer for David? – DP.

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT
We are Westmount

Editor
David Price: 514.935.4537
editor@westmountindependent.com
Chief reporter: Laureen Sweeney
Graphics: Ted Sancton
Advertising sales
Arleen Candiotti: 514.223.3567
advertising@westmountindependent.com
Accounting: 514.223.6138
office@westmountindependent.com

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR – GENERAL MAIL

'PRO-PALESTINIAN' DEMONSTRATIONS ECHO EXTREMIST GROUPS, DISRUPT PEACE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD

A letter for Mayor Christina Smith, via the Independent

Dear Mayor Smith,

I am writing to you not only as a concerned resident of Westmount, but as someone who is deeply alarmed by the changes unfolding in our community.

The ongoing “pro-Palestinian” demonstrations, with their high frequency, high volume and increasingly aggressive tone, are not just disruptive – they are eroding the very sense of peace and security that has long defined this neighbourhood.

These demonstrations are not occasional protests – they have become a regular, disruptive presence. The loudspeakers, drums and shouting often go on late into the evening. For a neighbourhood like ours, where many residents are elderly, this is not just a nuisance – it’s intimidating. It creates an atmosphere of anxiety and tension that no one should have to live with in their own home.

In addition to the noise and disruption, sidewalks are constantly being defaced with aggressive and hateful political slogans written in hard-to-remove chalk. I often find myself going out with buckets of water to wash these messages off. But this should not be my responsibility. When I reported it to a police officer, his response was: “It’s just chalk. The rain will wash it away.” That kind of dismissive response is deeply troubling. I told him: today it’s chalk; tomorrow it’s paint; and the day after, it might be blood. We don’t need to be prophets to see where this is heading. Just look at what’s happening in Europe – cities have been transformed, cultures diluted and public safety undermined – all in the name of tolerance gone too far.

What is happening in our streets is not simply free speech. These are organized political campaigns, many echoing the rhetoric and symbols of extremist groups, including those influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood. We are watching, in real time, an intolerant foreign-motivated agenda attempting to re-shape our public spaces through intimidation, disruption and the slow normalization of radical ideas.

I fully support the right to peaceful protest. But freedom of expression should not mean surrendering our public spaces, our sense of safety or our values as Canadians.

Jewish residents, secular Muslims and many others feel their voices are being drowned out by a combination of fear, political correctness and inaction by authorities.

I urge you to take meaningful steps:

- Enforce existing laws: Noise regulations, curfews and public safety by-laws must be applied consistently, without fear or favour.
- Better yet, exercise your authority to amend the noise by-laws to reflect the needs of the community. Changing the permitted hours from 9:30 to 7:30 pm will be welcomed.
- Protect the vulnerable: Our elderly and minority communities deserve to feel safe and respected in their own neighbourhoods.
- Investigate extremist networks: We must not allow foreign-influenced ideological agendas to take root under the guise of protest.
- Stand for unity: Real leadership means drawing the line between peaceful dialogue and ideological coercion.

Canada must remain a place of freedom and pluralism – not one where tolerance becomes a path to submission. I sincerely hope you will take this seriously and show the leadership that Westmount needs right now.

RACHEL YANE, ST. CATHERINE ST.

ACTION NEEDED NOW TO PROTECT PUBLIC SAFETY, CIVIL PEACE

As a resident, father and entrepreneur leading a Westmount-based company, I feel compelled to speak out about the alarming decline in public safety and order in our neighbourhood.

On the evening of July 22, my team and I were confronted by a pro-Palestinian protest that once again escalated far beyond peaceful demonstration. In front of Westmount Square, protesters waved large flags, blared music, shouted inflammatory slogans – including chants for an “intifada,” and held up graphic images designed to provoke. Diners at nearby restaurants were harassed. Some left. Staff scrambled. The atmosphere turned hostile and unsettling.

Sadly, this was not an isolated incident. Days later, another demonstration took place on Greene Ave., this time in broad daylight. Protesters once again used megaphones and disturbing language, under passive police supervision. They also wrote inflammatory slogans in chalk on the sidewalks, further contributing to a climate of intimidation. One of my children walked by and felt deeply uncomfortable.

I’ve raised these concerns directly with Mayor Smith and SPVM [Montreal police] leadership. While they acknowledged the situation and promised action, the core question remains: *How far must this go before a firm response is enforced?*

Westmount is not a war zone. It is not a stage for intimidation or ideological bul-

Let’s revitalize the southeast – starting now



Mayor’s Column

CHRISTINA SMITH

For ages, various city councils have been examining ways to improve the southeast area of our city. The ongoing decay and decline of St. Catherine St. near Atwater have reached a critical point, with a block now characterized by abandoned or underutilized buildings and surface parking lots that served institutions that are now long gone or empty.

In collaboration with urban planning experts, the council has undertaken steps to initiate a Special Planning Program (SPP/PPU) for this area. The goal is to develop a cohesive vision that ensures the long-term success and integration of this neighbourhood into our community. This area remains the last undeveloped parcel of land in the city, which presents both challenges and opportunities for positive transformation.

However, the world and our local situation have evolved. We continue to face density requirements imposed by higher levels of government. This is not a new issue. This area has long been targeted as requiring higher density, and Westmount has not sought an exemption from these requirements. Additionally, we are confronting a nationwide housing crisis, which is an undeniable reality. Federal and provincial government support for housing projects is increasingly linked to initiatives that contribute to alleviating this crisis.

I have been aware of the challenges ahead since embarking on this project to update the vision and zoning for this area. I anticipated significant opposition, as is always the case with development initiatives. Yet, I firmly believe that delaying action or starting anew only worsens the situation. The solution, I believe, remains the same: embrace thoughtful design, density, especially around transit areas, and recognize that surface parking lots are outdated and unsustainable.

The detailed work has begun, including

lying. Our public spaces must remain safe and welcoming for everyone.

Freedom of expression is essential. But when speech becomes harassment, when fear replaces freedom of movement, and when local businesses suffer, that line has been crossed.

reconciling previous reports from past councils, engaging with stakeholders and conducting a series of public consultations within the context of the current economic climate. I have always emphasized that this project must be integrated with the surrounding residential neighbourhoods to the south and be realistic about what it will take to see actual development on St. Catherine St.

Since the last public consultation on the southeast, I have heard from many residents and stakeholders. One recurring message from residents that is not shared at council meetings is “just get it done.” There is a growing anger towards inaction, and I don’t blame anyone for feeling that.

A particular group of residents who are professionals in this field, whom we met with recently, offered specific suggestions; they didn’t oppose outright development but instead proposed alternatives to certain aspects of the plan. One of these recommendations was to limit the number of towers on Ste. Catherine. This group recommends fewer towers but larger buildings and greater height, advocating that this brings more of a mix of housing options. Another suggestion was to ensure accessible housing for seniors within the PPU.

Addressing some of these concerns may require additional time for the city to analyze their feasibility for both public and private land. An updated timeline outlining the next steps will be provided on our website. We must get this right to build more housing, welcome more residents and make this a safer and more livable area.

I strongly believe in this plan. Revitalizing this area is essential and integrating it with the existing towers on St. Catherine, the existing buildings and the residential sector of Dorchester are vital. This area must meet the density targets set by the agglomeration and CMM [Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal] requirements; denying these needs would be unrealistic. Trying to find exemptions and delays through endless consultations only exacerbates the existing problem.

Together, we can transform this area of Westmount into a vibrant, integrated part of our city that serves residents now and for generations to come. The real work will still be ahead for the next council.

Inaction signals acceptance. Silence emboldens those who would tear at the fabric of our community. We cannot afford to wait.

The future of our city depends on preserving both liberty and civility. Now is the time to act.

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A message of gratitude to the Westmount community



Councillor's column

ANITRA BOSTOCK
DISTRICT 5

After careful reflection and thoughtful discussions with my family, I have made the difficult decision not to seek re-election in the upcoming municipal election. This decision will allow me to fully dedicate myself to my role as executive director at Maison Elizabeth House, explore new professional opportunities and pursue graduate studies.

It has been both an honour and a privilege to serve Westmount as city councillor over the past eight years, under the exemplary leadership of Mayor Christina Smith. I am deeply grateful to the residents who entrusted me with their support in the last two elections.

Thank you for the opportunity to represent you and for the chance to collaborate with the city's dedicated staff and administration.

The past two terms have presented significant challenges, including a global pandemic, but I take great pride in the work

we accomplished together. Throughout, council displayed resilience, innovation and an unwavering commitment to the well-being of our city. We successfully completed more capital works projects than ever before and continued to advance our initiatives, even in the most difficult of times.

I fully understand and share the concerns of our residents regarding the state of our infrastructure.

While council consistently made sustained investments and expanded maintenance efforts, the reality is that the needs are vast and resources remain limited. The work to address these challenges must continue.

What candidates should consider

To those considering a run for council: I encourage you to bring forward your ideas, integrity and a genuine willingness to listen – not only to the loudest voices but to the full diversity of our community. Leadership is not about rejecting every proposal; it's about making informed, thoughtful decisions that serve the long-term interests of the entire city, even when those decisions may not be popular.

A platform based solely on criticism or negativity does not serve our community. Effective leadership requires constructive dialogue, collaboration with city staff and a commitment to understanding the intricacies of municipal governance.

Serving as an elected official involves much more than attending a few meetings each month. It demands a deep understanding of governance, by-laws and budgets; an active presence at community events; participation in committees; and, above all, being prepared, engaged and accountable.

We are fortunate to live in a beautiful city with exceptional parks, invaluable services, historic buildings and a strong sense of community.

Westmount thrives because of the

engaged and committed individuals who contribute their time, energy and passion to making it better.

It has been an absolute privilege to serve, and I will carry the lessons and experiences from this role with me for the rest of my professional life.

Anitra Bostock is the city councillor for District 5 (Victoria village south of Sherbrooke)

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Council provides special exemption

Spirulina restaurant receives okay for side terrace at 392 Victoria

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Approval was granted by city council July 7 to a request for a minor exemption from the city’s zoning by-law to allow for building “a free-standing deck” for the Spirulina restaurant on the side lot beside 392 Victoria.

The space is described in the resolution

as allowing for the parking of two cars and that the previous space for six “cannot be used...due to its configuration posing a safety risk for pedestrians and traffic” on Victoria. Two parked cars on the part of the lot near Victoria would block the four other possible ones despite the fact that they would fit.

Allowing a terrace or deck, it states,

would “have a positive impact on the activities of the restaurant” for which there are “no possible alternatives to permanently set up a terrace.

It would also contribute to the area’s economic activities.” Such a deck would occupy the entire side yard, eliminate the parking spaces and was approved as a minor exemption.

A free-standing deck was described as one that would “not be supported by posts or walls but structurally separate and connected to the building only by a walkway or staircase” along with other specific details.

Proposed by Councillor Conrad Peart as commissioner of infrastructure, the resolution was adopted unanimously.



The Spirulina side lot on the west side Victoria just south of Sherbrooke August 5. PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

Council moves to compensate creator of stolen ‘Mother and Child’ statue

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

City council July 7 approved a payment of \$450,593.38 to the owner of the large bronze “Mother and Child” (*La mère et l’enfant*) statue reported to have been stolen November 27, 2024 from Prince Albert square (see story December 10, 2024, p. 21 and 23).

It had been created by internationally renowned artist Léa Vivot and loaned to the city in the spring of 2022. It was bolted in place.

The payment resolution, moved by Councillor Jeff Shamie, stated that the

statue had never been recovered, and that the city “wished to compensate the owner.”

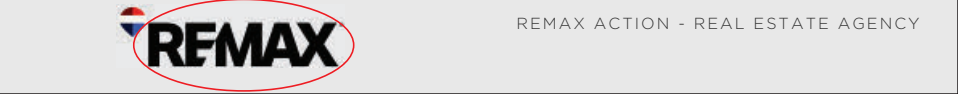
At the time of its disappearance, copper and bronze were among the most commonly stolen metals because of their value. This led police to surmise that the perpetrators may have stolen the sculpture for its scrap metal value.

A statement on the city’s website, reported that the city first became aware of the Prince Albert square theft when merchants noticed it missing. As well, police had responded to an attempt to steal copper piping at the Westmount conservatory and greenhouses next to the public library.

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762 AV. UPPER-LANSDOWNE, WESTMOUNT
5 BEDS, 4 BATHS | **\$2,375,000**



4293 AV. MONTROSE, WESTMOUNT
4 BEDS, 3 BATHS | **\$2,295,000**



481 AV. ARGYLE, WESTMOUNT
3 BEDS, 2+2 BATHS | **\$1,748,000**



486 AV. ARGYLE, WESTMOUNT
4 BEDS, 2+1 BATHS | **\$1,575,000**



5 PLACE PARKMAN, WESTMOUNT
3 BEDS, 2 BATHS | **\$1,150,000**



49 RUE YORK, WESTMOUNT
3 BEDS, 1 BATH | **\$875,000**



432 CLAREMONT, WESTMOUNT
3 BEDS, 1+1 BATH | **\$735,000**



376 AV. REDFERN 21, WESTMOUNT
2 BEDS, 1 BATH | **\$595,000**

‘Packed house’ hears many questions

Council asked to defer decision on S/E development

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Many attendees at the overflowing city council meeting August 4 asked for the final decision on the controversial south-east development to be deferred from the proposed approval date of September 8 and even until after the November municipal election. The opening question period lasted some two hours.

At stake is the area predominately around St. Catherine, Greene, Atwater and Dorchester for which a Special Planning Program (SPP) has been under discussion for close to two years. This includes zoning changes to enable the construction of some high-rise buildings, including some on the municipal parking lots south of Tupper.

“How can we get our voices heard?” asked one opponent.

Many of the questions involved lengthy answers, to which Mayor Christina Smith summarized in conclusion that “this plan is not ready now... We will tweak it.” (See June 24, p. 1 and 26 for extensive coverage of special public consultation meeting June 18.)

The recent questions from August 4 covered a wide range of related issues such as whether any members of council or

their families had “pecuniary interests” or association with developers who could be involved, to which a poll was quickly taken resulting in none. Councillor Mary Gallery, a declared mayoral candidate, clarified her husband’s professional work also involved none.

The other declared mayoral candidate, Lynne Casgrain, was at the meeting at the back of the council chamber but did not speak.

Other “southeast” concerns included what studies had been undertaken on the impact the proposed development might have on the “unhoused population” in the area near the Atwater Metro station.

Still others included whether the city would be “taking advantage” of federal funding for the project, to which it was replied that this legislation was a regulatory framework not a permit for a given building.

“We are at the planning stage,” explained Councillor Conrad Peart whose commissionership includes urban planning.

A possible referendum was also proposed.

Kathleen Kez, the councillor for District 8, which contains the controversial areas of the SPP, was absent, and Mayor Smith

referred many of the questions to adjacent District 7 councillor Matt Aronson.

The re-development area includes the city’s Tupper parking lots, on which the city would have more control of developers’ projects.

Aronson said he had been concerned about the affordability of the proposed high-rise development in today’s housing market, and was especially open to suggestions for a seniors’ residence on municipal property. He referred to the building some 45 years ago of the not-for-profit Manoir Westmount by the Rotary Club “on public land.” In fact, two private houses, 383 and 385 Lansdowne, were purchased and destroyed in order to build the bulk of the Manoir, which opened in May 1979. A narrowly won (48 to 45 votes) zoning referendum was required. The Manoir does lease its dining room, which is part of Victoria Hall, from the city and always has.

On the possibility that the city could be exempted from Communauté de Montréal/agglomeration density requirements owing to its heritage status, the meeting heard that such exemptions had been refused by higher levels of government for Hudson, Pointe Claire and St. Lazare, for

example.

Councillor Antonio D’Amico, however, interjected that he believed Westmount would be “eligible” for such an exemption.

Former mayors Peter Trent and Karin Marks are of the view that Westmount has an exemption (see letters on p. 18).

The council was also told by questioners that a petition was being organized to defer the date of the September 8 approval, as was a pro-project one.

Even if passed, southeast project could be repealed: city

The *Independent* asked the city’s in-house lawyer, city clerk Paule Geoffroy-Béliveau, on August 5 if the Special Planning Program (SPP) for southeast Westmount could just be repealed by a later city council. Mugisha Rutishisha, city director of Communications, emailed back August 7, writing: “... council may, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations – including the Cities and Towns Act and the Act Respecting Land Use Planning and Development – adopt, amend or repeal any by-law it has adopted. For further details on this procedure, we invite you to consult a legal expert.” – DP.

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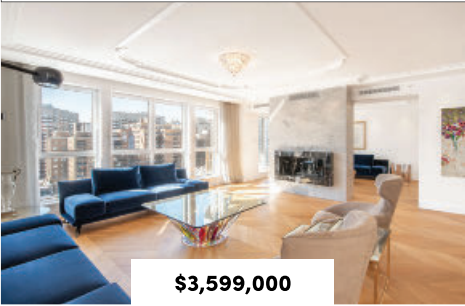
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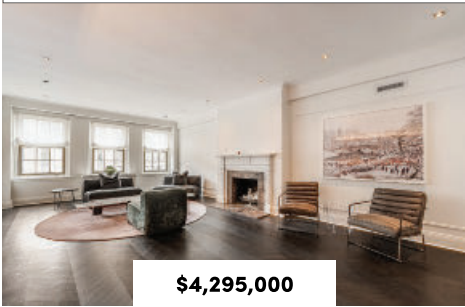
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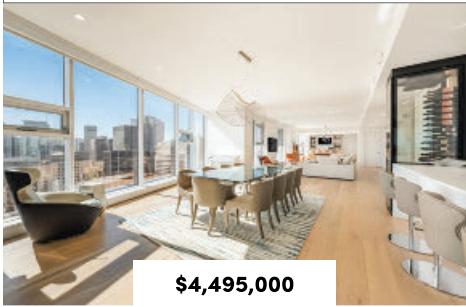
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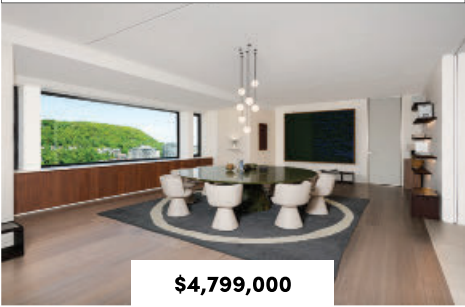
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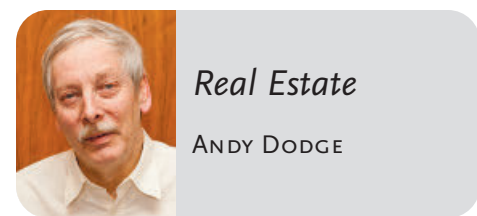


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Real Estate

ANDY DODGE

March transfers: Still under water



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sales in March and one January latecomer, creating a list of nine sales in the first quarter of 2025 totalling \$10,678,000 for condos valued at \$10,732,500, thus an average -0.6 percent, just about equal.

That list includes three sales at more than 20 percent mark-downs from valuation, only one with a mark-up greater than 10 percent.

The highest price on the list is one of the March condo sales, apt. 2003 at Château Westmount Square, 4175 St. Catherine St., which sold for \$3 million or 15.7 percent above valuation.

Meanwhile, apt. 202 at 1 Wood Ave. brought only \$715,000 for an apartment evaluated at \$966,300, the second-lowest price for a condo in the first quarter, and the biggest mark-down of the month, at -26 percent.

Also sold in March was 253-57 Melville Ave., an attached triplex on two floors sold by an estate for \$1,625,000.

The city also provided information on a number previous sales, including three condominiums of various types from last

year, two apartment buildings that sold in February for more than \$10 million each, and two more single-family homes that sold in February. In fact, the sale of 4850 Westmount Ave. for four percent more than city evaluation made it the highest mark-up of that month.

Commercial condos

Two of the three sales reported from last year involved commercial condominium space in the basement of 1 Wood Ave., which leads out to St. Catherine St. at 4055 St. Catherine.

The storefront space that opens into an interior lobby sat vacant for many years and is only now beginning to attract interest. It may be that difficulty defining each of the commercial properties (which sold to separate buyers) had to be clarified, and certainly the difference in price:valuation ratios indicates the confusion officials may have had.

The other very old sale involves a condominium at Westmount Park Towers, 4700 St. Catherine St./the former POM



4628 St. Catherine.

bakery, where the previous transfer had been transmission through an estate.

Two large apartment buildings sold in February, including the large, U-shaped building at the corner of Melville Ave. and St. Catherine St., a 37-unit building on three floors that sold for \$10,300,000; and the building on Sherbrooke St. between Lansdowne Ave. and Arlington Lane, 4643 Sherbrooke St., 27 apartments on four floors that sold for \$11,225,000, more than 15 percent less than its evaluation.

Also, as mentioned, two additional house sales from February were processed late, bringing the total for the month to eight, involving \$17,685,000 paid out for 18,629,000 of city assessment, thus an average mark-down of more than five percent, the first month to bring a total mark-down since April of 2024, and of course with another average mark-down in March, the total for the year comes to -1.8 percent.



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ADDRESS	VENDOR	PRICE	2023 VAL	RATIO (±%)
108 Abbott	Nancy Nelson	\$1,049,000	\$1,247,400	-15.9%
25 Burton	Helen Lewis & Richard Koestner	\$1,015,000	\$1,254,300	-19.1%
465 Côte St. Antoine	Vivian Sproule	\$1,740,000	\$2,004,600	-13.2%
476 Mountain	Jill Drummond	\$2,600,000	\$2,577,000	0.9%
4628 St. Catherine	Andrea Peplow & Robert Rahal	\$1,700,000	\$1,243,600	36.7%
76 Summit Crescent	Yanqing Yang	\$5,100,000	\$5,326,500	-4.3%
19 Thornhill	Chun Ni Xu	\$2,060,000	\$2,339,200	-11.9%
709 Victoria	Elaine Cappel	\$1,690,000	\$1,655,600	2.1%
CONDOMINIUMS				
4175 St. Catherine #2003	Fiducie Huguette Lafleur	\$3,000,000	\$2,592,100	15.7%
4160 Sherbrooke #402	Diane Bartlett	\$1,320,000	\$1,249,300	5.7%
1 Wood # 202	Joyce Leibov	\$715,000	\$966,300	-26.0%
TRIPLEXES				
253-57 Melville	estate Mavis Young	\$1,625,000	\$1,728,200	-6.0%
MORE FEBRUARY '25 HOME SALES				
596 Belmont	Abby Grant	\$1,950,000	\$1,931,600	1.0%
4850 Westmount Ave.	Yuedong Huang & Miaoqing Liu	\$2,200,000	\$2,115,700	4.0%
OTHER 2025 SALES				
Condo townhouse, Jan: 4860 St. Catherine	Kyle Pedvis & Lauren Kendall	\$1,060,000	\$996,600	6.4%
Apt building, Feb: 223-25 Melville/ 4485 St. Catherine	Tandel Group Inc.	\$10,300,000	\$9,111,100	13.0%
Apt building, Feb: 4643 Sherbrooke	4643 Sherbrooke Ouest, S.E.C.	\$11,225,000	\$13,300,000	-15.6%
2024 SALES				
July: 4055 St. Catherine #142	Propriétés Nickan Inc.	\$508,000	\$213,100	138.4%
May: 4055 St. Catherine #156	Propriétés Nickan Inc.	\$285,000	\$208,500	36.7%
April: 4700 St. Catherine #704	Ellen Henderson, Judith Henderson & Gary Ikeman	\$1,046,000	\$1,063,600	-1.7%

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We are also looking to recruit older adults with no neurological illness to be in our control group. This group will not have tDCS stimulation.

Study participants would be compensated for any out-of-pocket expenses (Taxi, Parking, etc...)

LEADING THIS RESEARCH PROGRAM:

Dr. Howard Chertkow, MD, FRCP, FCAHS, Adjunct Professor, Department of Neurology and Neurosurgery, McGill University; Professor of Medicine, University of Toronto.

PLEASE CONTACT:

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Tel: **514-340-8222**, ext. **23621**

Geriatric Medicine, Jewish General Hospital, Montréal, Québec

How to, cont'd from p. 1

- Be domiciled in the territory of the municipality and in Quebec for at least six months before polling day, i.e. since May 2, or
 - be the owner of an immovable or the occupant of a business establishment located on the territory of the municipality for at least 45 days before polling day, i.e., since September 18, and
- must reside in the municipality at the time of submitting a candidacy, and
 - must not be ineligible.

To be a candidate, you will need to submit a nomination paper. It is used to establish your identity, specify the position for which you are running, identify any recognized party or team you represent, and submit the required signatures of support. The rules below apply to municipalities with a population of 5,000 or more such as Westmount.

For the position of mayor, the minimum number of nominating signatures from electors in the municipality is 50. For the position of councillor, it is 25.

The *Independent* contacted Mugisha Rutishisha, director of Communications at the city, on August 6 and elections@westmount.org on August 7 to ask if there is a fee to become a candidate. Rutishisha responded "no" on August 7.

It is possible to run with a political party or independently. The *Independent* reported in its May 13 issue (p. 1) that mayoral and councillor candidates have, to date, run on their own without the backing of a political party or explicit slate, and the rules explained below focus on independents.

Authorization of a candidate and the control of election expenses are explained in Chapter XIII of the Act Respecting Elections and Referendums in Municipalities (AERM). Rutishisha alerted the *Independent* to the resource *Aide-Mémoire sur les dépenses électorales*, available on the city's website, for a summary of the rules.

The document was in French only and

translated by DeepL translator.

The information reads, "Anyone who wishes to collect contributions and incur expenses must first obtain authorization, in accordance with the act. Independent candidates must apply for this authorization from the returning officer..."

"An independent candidate or a person who wishes to become one may apply for authorisation as of 1 January of the year preceding the year in which the general election will be held..."

"To obtain your authorization or that of your party, you must appoint an official representative and an official agent."

An official representative is a person who is responsible for the party's campaign activities and who is authorized to sign documents. He or she is responsible for soliciting and receiving contributions and contracting loans. The official representative is also responsible for expenses incurred outside the election period.

An official agent is a person who authorizes and makes election expenses.

The official representatives of authorized independent candidates are also, by law, their official agents.

An independent candidate may be his or her own official representative.

Within 10 to 30 days of their date of registration, persons appointed as representatives must complete mandatory training on political financing. This training is provided by the chief electoral officer, whom the city lists as Jean-François Blanchet.

Once a candidate has obtained authorization, their official representative will usually open a bank account. All incoming and outgoing funds must pass through it.

Opening such an account is not mandatory if the money in the election fund comes exclusively from the candidate, up to a maximum of \$1,000.

Rutishisha said, "We invite all candidate to consult the municipal election page on the city's website at westmount.org/elections and email elections@westmount.org if they have any question regarding the 2025 municipal election in Westmount."

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR – SOUTHEAST BATTLE CONTINUES!

CITY OF WESTMOUNT HAS EXEMPTION FROM AGGLO/COMMUNAUTÉ DENSITY REQUIREMENT

The Independent was copied on these three letters to Westmount city council. It substantially publishes them here, but leaves out some portions. For instance, a résumé of the first letter in the first letter and all the footnotes are omitted.

July 20

As two former mayors who maintain a strong connection with, and commitment to, the city of Westmount, we are concerned about some serious misinformation that has been given out during the consultation process on the re-development plan for the southeast. We both feel that council – and especially Westmount residents – must be made aware of this misinformation.

Are density minima mandatory? This letter deals with one fundamental question: is the city of Westmount obliged to respect a minimum density of 480 dwellings per hectare for the southeast re-development plan? The mayor, Westmount’s civil service, and the Lemay Report have repeatedly and unequivocally stated the answer to this question is “yes.” In the *Westmount Independent* of June 24 (p. 8), Mayor Smith wrote:

Many of you have asked questions about density in the area. Is the proposed density a local choice or an imposed requirement? The revised Plan métropolitain d’aménagement et de développement (PMAD), adopted on June 9 by the Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal (CMM), imposes a minimum density of 480 dwellings per hectare for hypercentre Transit Oriented Development (TOD) zones such as the Atwater Metro station area. These aren’t suggestions. They are formal requirements that the agglomeration of Montreal must integrate into its land-use plan.

Westmount’s exemption We do not agree with the mayor’s statement above for the simple reason that the agglomeration land-use plan (SAD) allows the city of Westmount to be exempted from density minima owing to Westmount’s heritage designation.

We draw your attention to section 3.2 of the agglomeration land-use plan currently in force.

<https://mtl.ged.montreal.ca/constellio/?collection=mtlca&portal=REPDOCVDM#!displayDocument/00000014149> (p. 142, PDF version; p. 140, original print version):
LES SEUILS DE DENSITÉ (...)
Peuvent être exclues de l’application des

densités minimums : ...d’un secteur de valeur exceptionnelle ou d’un secteur de valeur intéressante, indiqués sur la carte 12 Patrimoine...
[...]

In Carte 12, Westmount’s entire southeast sector is classed as having exceptional heritage value.

Neither in the Lemay Report commissioned by Westmount nor during any of the public information meetings was it revealed that Westmount does not have to meet minimum density requirements owing to its heritage status. On the contrary, the public was told the opposite: that Westmount had to meet the new density requirements contained in the yet-to-be-in-force PMAD.

The PMAD and heritage
The metropolitan development plan (PMAD) covers Montreal island and the North and South shores. It is produced by the CMM. The revised version of the PMAD scheduled to come into force next year imposes an increased minimum density of 480 dwellings per hectare for “hypercentre” Transit Oriented Development zones. Nowhere does the future PMAD say that these density requirements will affect heritage sector exemptions in the agglomeration plan.

In fact, both the current and the revised PMAD give heritage-designation responsibility to the agglomeration. In the draft *Projet de PMAD Révisé* coming into force in 2026, we read:

Critère 3.5.1 Identification du patrimoine bâti d’intérêt métropolitain
Une caractérisation a été effectuée en vue de retenir des ensembles patrimoniaux de portée métropolitaine. Au total, 51 ensembles patrimoniaux de portée métropolitaine ont été retenus. Ceux-ci sont illustrés à la Carte 31. La CMM demande aux MRC et aux agglomérations d’intégrer à leur SAD les ensembles patrimoniaux métropolitains identifiés à la Carte 31

[Quotation from *Critère 3.5.2 Protection et mise en valeur du patrimoine bâti d’intérêt métropolitain* omitted]

The PMAD, therefore, identifies *very broadly* the areas to be designated heritage. Both the current and the future PMAD list, in the territory of the agglomeration, the same 24 large heritage ensembles (e.g., “Centre-Ville, Westmount/NDG”), inside of which the agglomeration must select specific heritage elements to be protected and enhanced.

Conclusion
While we would vehemently oppose it, city council can of course *voluntarily* adopt density minima of 480 dwellings per hectare for the southeast sector. What it can’t do is claim that it has no choice in the matter.

And if this council persists in forcing on itself the highest density thresholds on Montreal island, it will entail huge, but as-yet-unknown, up-front infrastructure costs. But it will also result in a cheek-by-jowl series of high-rise towers like the Square Children’s; a form, with the exception of the short-lived 1960s high-rise delirium, that is antithetical to Westmount’s built heritage.

In fact, Westmount’s own Planning Programme (p. 11) imposes on Westmount “the adoption of by-laws focussed on developing housing in areas targeted for revitalization with the goal of creating a typology of heights and densities compatible with Westmount’s character.” This requirement remained intact after the recent adoption of By-law 1638. Council will be flouting Westmount’s own planning by-laws.

In closing, let us make something clear. We are not claiming that members of council knowingly misled the public in saying their hands were tied regarding the southeast development’s density; it seems to be a matter of being misinformed. Westmount’s heritage designation clearly allows it to claim an exemption from density thresholds. You now have the obligation to correct the serious misinformation that was given to citizens.

KARIN MARKS AND PETER F. TRENT
*
August 3

Since we did not get an *accusé de réception** for our letter sent to each of you two weeks ago – nor any written reaction to the central matter raised – all we and the citizens of Westmount have to go on are the mayor’s quotes in the *Gazette*’s piece of July 31. In this piece, the mayor referred to heritage protection for Dawson College, thereby creating some confusion between heritage protection for individual properties in Westmount and heritage protection for entire sectors.

Let us re-state our conviction that Westmount can be excluded from minimum density thresholds by starting with the heritage map on p. 72 of the agglomeration’s land-use plan, *Carte 12 – Patrimoine*:

The colour-coding legend lists (inter alia):

- Grande propriété à caractère institutionnel
- Secteur de valeur exceptionnelle
- Secteur de valeur intéressante

On this map, Dawson College (and, for that matter, Marianopolis) is clearly and properly marked as a *Grande propriété à caractère institutionnel*. But the same map specifies each *secteur de valeur exceptionnelle* and *secteur de valeur intéressante* in Westmount. In fact, Westmount’s entire territory above the railway right-of-way – with two small exceptions that are still

rated *de valeur intéressante* – is designated a *secteur de valeur exceptionnelle*.

Then, on p. 142, we read:
LES SEUILS DE DENSITÉ (...)
Peuvent être exclues de l’application des densités minimums:

- La partie d’un terrain comprise à l’intérieur des limites
- d’une grande propriété à caractère institutionnel,
- d’un secteur de valeur exceptionnelle ou
- d’un secteur de valeur intéressante,
- indiqués sur la carte 12 – Patrimoine.

Our interpretation is clear, and we would appreciate a response to it. We are also convinced that your entire electorate also deserve a response.

KARIN MARKS AND PETER F. TRENT
***Editor’s note:** On August 4, the mayor’s assistant confirmed to people on the relevant email chain that both letters had been received. – DP.
August 5
Mayor Smith,

During yesterday’s monthly council meeting [on August 4], in regard to letters to council that former mayor Marks and I wrote on the matter of heritage exemptions, you referred to our “confusion” between the 2012 PMAD and the 2025 version that is not yet in force. There is no confusion. We have clearly been quoting from the latter PMAD.

You have not seemed to grasp that our argument does not rest on the PMAD. It is based on another document: the agglomeration’s Land-use Plan that came into force in 2015 and that remains in force until a new one is adopted. In fact, the agglomeration has two years to modify its Land-use Plan in order to render it “*en concordance*” with the new PMAD.

The agglomeration’s Land-use Plan is the only document that lays out in detail, with the aid of a map of the island of Montreal, those specific heritage sectors that can be excluded from density thresholds.

PETER F. TRENT
Editor’s note: Please see p. 7 for a column by Mayor Christina Smith on this matter, and, for a reply by Mayor Smith to these specific letters and then another reply by Trent, go to an Addendum to this Letters to the Editor section on p. 25 of the pdf of this edition of the paper (available at www.westmountindependent.com). Please note that this Addendum is not in the printed newspaper. The Independent is adopting this format due to space limitation in print and the tight time constraints of this debate. – DP.

SOUTHEAST PPU WOULD BRING ENERGY, SAFETY, SERVICES

Having recently purchased a home on de Maisonneuve and being a new resident

of Westmount, a parent of two children with a third on the way, I would like to express my strong support for the PPU and the much-needed re-development of St. Catherine St.

Density isn't the issue; it's the opportunity. Thoughtful development will bring new energy, safer streets and additional services for families like mine. It will also help small businesses to thrive, making Westmount an even better place to raise children. I have worked hard to be able to raise my family in a wonderful neighbourhood like Westmount, having lived in challenged parts of Montreal like the Sud-Ouest borough. I want to see Westmount thrive, not suffer.

I urge the city to move forward with this important project and planning.

DANIEL CERULLI, DE MAISONNEUVE BLVD.

BRING HOME THE WESTMOUNT CHILDREN

At the annual Westmount flower show for newcomers, I met the Westmount children I had displaced. They grew up here and still read the *Westmount Independent*, but in adulthood they cannot afford to call Westmount home. Instead, they volunteer, and wistfully tell me about their weddings at Victoria Hall and the nostalgia in their voice is deafening.

Police Report

Police make arrest after Sherbrooke St. window-smashing spree

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

Although the past few weeks of summer vacation time have been relatively quiet in Westmount with few criminal acts reported, a police spokesperson suggests there was an uptick in incidents involving individuals suffering from mental health problems.

"There's a lot of mental health issues right now. I don't know why. It's rough," said Station 12 community relations officer Cst. Emmanuel Provencher.

Over a period of four days beginning in late July, several merchants located along Sherbrooke St. near the Victoria village filed reports about their shop windows being shattered overnight.

The lone suspect, who was eventually arrested and deemed to have mental health issues, had been picking up loose construction materials he found inside a cordoned-off road repair site on Sherbrooke St. near Victoria, then heaving them at the front windows of businesses.

"He was just walking around at night talking to himself, getting angry, picking up stuff and throwing it at windows," said Provencher, while adding that the items thrown included bricks and street detour signage.

Communities like Westmount are up against the powerful whims of corporate landlords, who can buy up the limited residentially zoned homes and effectively turn them into commercial assets – ruthlessly run and available to the highest bidder.

We have one big card to play to keep Westmount an independent community for our children: Westmount's city council must approve the Westmount southeast sector SPP (Special Planning Program) to re-zone unused commercial space near the Atwater Metro station and enable more homes for Westmount families to be built.

Only with more competitive residential options can we overcome the corporate housing stranglehold. Let us make possible a Westmount flower show where we welcome the children of Westmount home – where they belong.

AMY ZHOU, SHERBROOKE ST.

SOUTHEAST PLAN MIXES PLATEAU PARKING WITH GRIFFINTOWN HIGH-RISES

I have been homeowner in the southeast since 1978 and enjoyed the palpable improvement in the local quality of life when the Montreal Forum moved from Atwater and St. Catherine to the Bell Centre.

Parking for residents and people we

invite to our homes was particularly nightmarish at every hockey game, concert or large-scale gig.

I therefore find that the current proposal to waive the requirement to build a parking space for every new residential unit to be unacceptably regressive – a total failure to learn from history.

My feeling is that the current plans are offering us the parking problems of Le Plateau coupled with the "crowding without community" that characterizes many of the recent higher-density projects around greater Montreal.

Why is council pushing a plan that amounts to making the southeast sector a clone of Griffintown but with the acute parking problems of Le Plateau? Where is our imagination? What has happened to our community identity? Our stewardship of Westmount's culture and history? Our civic pride in Westmount's well-earned international reputation for quality of residential life?

Given the taxes that the citizens of Westmount pay to the agglomeration, why is council not fighting harder for the "exceptional heritage" exemption to higher densification? The southeast already has one of the higher population densities in Quebec and our council just bending the knee to general policies promulgated by external

and disinterested bureaucrats gives rise to the perception of lukewarm determination to originate a re-development plan that is broadly acclaimed for its originality and excellence. If we are unable to gain an exemption through good-faith negotiations, perhaps the issue needs to be decided in the courts.

An interesting process is afoot as more and more citizens are becoming involved in the debate and consensus-building over the southeast re-development plan. The September 8 date for a council vote on the subject is an artificial, premature and counter-productive "deadline." The debate must be allowed to run through the municipal election period. More work needs to be done to reach consensus on 1) Westmount-centric legal and cultural requirements and preliminary cost/tax impact for southeast re-development, and 2) where the importance of this expenditure ranks against other pressing needs in our city – the state of our streets, for example.

I prefer the status quo until there is a plan that stands out from the ordinary – in which the citizens of Westmount can see their intelligence and humanity and that we are proud to support and advance.

RONALD DENOM, COLUMBIA AVE.

He said the businesses suffering damage included Dairy Queen, Running Room, James Perse and Goodee Westmount.

According to Provencher, Westmount Public Security played a significant role in helping police from Station 15 (downtown, but covering Westmount at night) make a late-night arrest.

"We worked closely with Mr. McBain from Public Security," said Provencher.

He said the police and public safety conducted a joint operation to check security camera images at businesses and speak to business owners.

Car rammed into RCMP

In a second but far more widely-reported incident, a man drove a vehicle through the front door of RCMP headquarters on Dorchester Blvd. on the morning of August 2. According to Cst. Provencher, the suspect in this incident also had an apparent mental health problem.

"He had been trying to get in contact with the RCMP, saying that he had problems with his family and other issues," said Provencher, while adding that staff at the federal force's Quebec headquarters declined to allow him to make a formal complaint and referred him to the Mon-

trealm police instead.

After threatening to drive his car into the front entrance of the RCMP building, he made good on it. According to the incident report, the suspect is believed to have been under the influence of drugs.

Cedar Ave. house burgled

While vacation time when homeowners are away often draws out opportunistic burglars, one of the few such incidents reported to Station 12 in recent weeks was at a home on Cedar Ave.

Sometime between 1 pm on July 30 and 5 pm the day after, thieves entered the home and managed to steal a variety of household goods, including items of jewellery.

The owners became aware they'd been burgled after being absent for more than 24 hours. To their surprise upon returning, they found the garage door open.

Surveying the site, the police were unable to find any signs of forced entry, leading them to speculate that the perpetrators found their way in through an unlocked point of entry.

Coin thief sought

Tenants in local apartment buildings where there are coin-operated washing machine rooms may take heart in the fact

the police investigate and try to track down those who commit even mundane crimes like coin box thefts.

Investigators at Station 12 are inspecting images gathered by security cameras to identify the person who pried open coin boxes on washers and dryers located at a high-rise apartment building on de Maisonneuve Blvd. at the corner of Wood Ave. on the afternoon of July 30.

"Sometimes people don't report it," said Cst. Provencher, suggesting that some people treat it as an annoyance rather than something more serious.



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Rev. Beryl Barraclough commences her ministry at Westmount Park United

By JENNIFER BALL

Westmount Park United Church has a new minister.

Rev. Beryl Barraclough is an ordained minister having served with the Summerlea United Church/Southwest United Church in Lachine/Verdun. Her first service was on June 22 at Westmount Park United, and she will be permanent as of August 17 (see June 10, p. 16).

Westmount Park United is found at Lansdowne Ave. and de Maisonneuve.

Rev. Neil Whitehouse had served there as minister since 2015 and on January 12 he delivered his last message to his congregation: one of hope and encouragement to never to despair (January 14, p. 14).

On June 22, Rev. Barraclough introduced herself to the congregation through a service that centered on grace and silence as she invited in the light and inspired the congregation to listen for God's presence.

She read from *The cup of our life* by Joyce Rupp. "Solitude is the empty space that we deliberately choose in order to be with the Beloved..."

"In solitude, we can savour this goodness and give ourselves space to really listen. It is when we are alone, uninterrupted, single-hearted that some of the wonderful inner fruits come to the service...it re-awakens us to the presence of God in every aspect of our lives."

Rev. Barraclough spoke with the *Independent* on July 30 and said she invites citizens of Westmount to attend one of her services. "The Bible has relevance today and spirituality – a belief in something greater – is important."

She spent over 50 years in the Anglican denomination, but it was the singing in chorus of a choir from the United Church that drew her in, and she made the denominational switch.

"[The United Church] seems to be much more open to participation of women in worship, and they seem to be



Rev. Beryl Barraclough in the sanctuary at Westmount Park United Church on June 22.

much more open to issues of gender identification...

"I felt more comfortable in the United

Church as it suited my way of looking at the world."

She acknowledges that ministerial work



9 Lives

LYSANNE FOWLER

The Montreal SPCA cattery is full – very full – with so many cats being presented for adoption at the moment. This is the busiest time of the year, and it would be wonderful if you could consider adoption from the rescue.

Here is precious Minouche, truly a stunning youngster. He is so handsome with his white fur and soft grey cap and mask, with a few more pearl-grey touches here and there on his back and tail.

With a cute grey-heart shaped spot on his pink nose and huge green eyes, Min-

Adorable Minouche

ouche is so beautiful. He is a very healthy two-year-old, up to date with his inoculations, neutered and microchipped.

To find out more about him, please refer to the Montreal SPCA website at www.sPCA.com, scroll to his information page by his identification number, 2000309048, and plan your visit at the cattery for a visit and a meeting with the adoption coordinators to discuss your family's interest.

The SPCA is open every day, Monday to Friday from 3 pm to 8 pm, Saturday and Sunday from 11 am to 6 pm. The SPCA is located at 525 Jean Talon St. West, Côte des Neiges, Montreal H4P 1X4.

A gentle reminder to bring your cat carrier if you have one. If you do not have one or the right size, you can also choose one

was a calling and told the *Independent* that she creates her Sunday services based on reflections and eschews both the words "sermon" and "preaching."

Moreover, she is simply fascinated by Jesus the man. "Whether he is a historical figure or a spiritual figure, whatever people choose to think of this man, this man was revolutionary..."

"He stuck up for the outsider, the unwanted, the unloved, the unwashed. The kind of person that I think many of us would like to be."

Rev. Barraclough said that it's possible to take the old stories – whether they're parables or truths – and apply them in ways that can help one to see the world in a more hopeful, positive way than we're experiencing now.

"In spite of all that we're hearing and seeing in the world today, spirituality – and a belief in something greater – is still important..."

"We may not always agree on how we come to believe things, but certainly the Bible has relevance today."



from the selection available at its onsite boutique, which also offers foods, accessories and toys galore. Please think of little Minouche and bring him home to share companionship and love.

Your neighbour, Lysanne

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Social Notes

VERONICA REDGRAVE

RH opens at Royalmount with delicious cocktail party



Andrew Lutfy, Gary Friedman and Melanie Cosgrove.



Sisters Erika Ludwick and Paulina Flores-Rutenberg.

Guests cosplayed cocktail party at a recent store opening. It was not just any opening. The evening premiered upscale RH – a multi-room design gallery starring a rooftop restaurant – so style choices made sense.

Designer dresses deluxe: sexy, short and sassy; backless and strapless. Flirty and floaty floor-length florals. Basic black formed a domino pattern against cool summer whites. Looks were elevated with glints of gold. Strappy stilettos jostled with the trendiest of trainers. (Thankfully, there were no outfits whose description starts with the word “leisure.”)

Far from the din of Decarie – although nearby – Royalmount is a mall on steroids. At this new shopping and entertainment destination, everything is massive – and marvellous.

RH (formerly Restoration Hardware) is no exception. Initially from humble beginnings (yes, hardware), today RH is an upmarket brand.

The RH collection of
furniture, lighting, baby *continued on p. 22*

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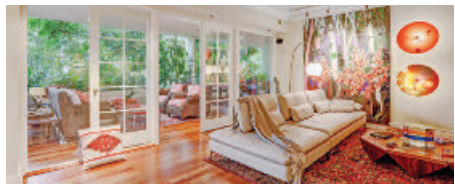
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Social notes, cont'd from p. 21

and child décor also encompasses a private plane (RH ONE) and yacht (RH THREE) available for charter. RH locations are called “galleries,” an astute marketing strategy that effectively establishes the chain’s new image.

Opening night was delicious. Black-clad servers offered Prosecco and Cipriani Bel-linis and *steak frites* – beef bites with fries dusted with truffle oil. Caviar blinis were

served from an ice bar, its translucent blocks (also massive) a cool sculptural sen-sation.

The RH year-round skylit garden sits in a dramatic atrium with sparkling chande-liers, heritage olive trees and a cascading water fountain. Restaurant diners sit amidst boxwood hedges.

Adding to the *soirée*’s chic were West-mont mayor **Christina Smith**, city coun-cillor **Mary Gallery**, **Erika Ludwick** and her sister **Paulina Flores-Rutenberg**, **Linda Smith**, **Daphne Tsadilas-Shamie** and city councillor **Jeff Shamie**, **Lisa Kaufman** and daughter **Alfee Kaufman**, **Heidi Hollinger**, and **Martha Franco** and **Joseph Montanaro**.

I also noted **Sophie Grégoire Trudeau**, **Carine** and **Barry Lorenzetti**, **Jessica Pathy**, **Amal Roy**, **Nannette** and **Philippe de Gaspé Beaubien**, **Nadia Saputo** and **Patrice Bris-bois**, **Eva Friede**, media celebs **Mosé Per-sico** (with his wife **Joanne**), **Leslie Roberts** and daughter **Lauren Fernandez**, **Aaron Rand** (with wife **Val**) and **Mitsou Gélinas**, as well as **Stephanie** and **Leonard Lighter**, owner of **Royalmount’s Prime Bar à Boeuf**.

Surrounded by fans were two vision-aries: **Gary Friedman**, CEO/chair RH, accredited with re-vamping the company



Daphne Tsadilas-Shamie and Jeff Shamie.

formerly known as Restoration Hardware and **Andrew Lufty**, owner/CEO **Groupe Dynamite**, board chair **Carbonleo** and the creative driving force behind **Royalmount** and other exciting **Montreal** mega-projects.

A famous architect thought that “less is more.” In this case, “more is marvellous.”

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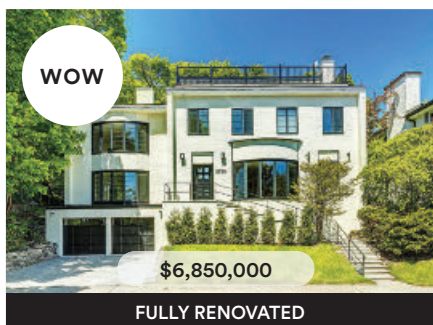
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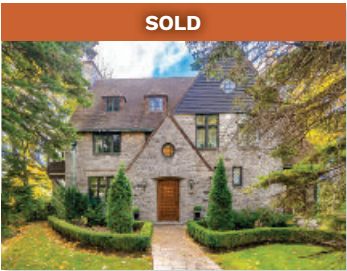
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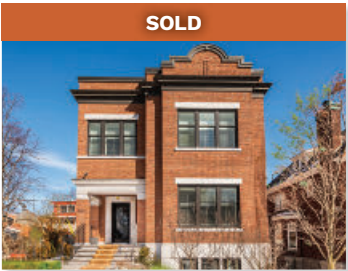
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MY LISTINGS**



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR – ADDENDUM

Emails between former mayor Peter Trent and current mayor Christina Smith, copying city council members, former mayor Karin Marks, the Gazette and the Independent.

August 9 – 1:03 pm

Hello Peter and Karin,

I don't usually reply all when the media is copied but I will in this case.

I am happy to clarify a few points, though I am aware that I won't change your mind on any of this, but I appreciate the perspective and information you have shared, which has been taken seriously by me. I am not writing on behalf of the council, and I leave it to them if they wish to respond.

The city and I have had ongoing and extensive discussions with the aggro, CMM, and outside legal counsel. We have continually asked many of the same questions that you have raised.

It should be noted that, since 2015, the southeast sector of Westmount has been included in the highest density sector planned for the entire CMM (150 dwellings/hectare, calculated according to the old parameters). Therefore, in the 10 years since the SAD was established, no request for exclusion for this sector has ever been made. We have known that this area is targeted as a high-density area, which was an important part of the public consultations and the discussions in the past few years.

If a request were to be made today, the agglomeration confirms that it could not be granted without the approval of the CMM. In fact, if we were to ask the agglomeration for an exclusion, and if it were in favour (which is highly unlikely, given the contextual review of the PMAD/SAD), the agglomeration *would still need to obtain a certificate of conformity from the CMM* in order to modify the density threshold for the southeast. Since the CMM has finally adopted its PMADR and its conformity from the *Ministre* is imminent, a highly hypothetical request for exclusion would most certainly be rejected if it did not

comply with criterion 1.1.4 of Annex 1 of the PMADR.

The density thresholds we must comply with were not the only part of the decision-making process, nor were they the only part of the lengthy consultation and development period for the SPP that preceded it. The residents and stakeholders that participated obviously don't dwell in the technical density calculations but were more concerned with how they would see revitalization of this area that has been in a complete state of decline, and what it would take to see this area come to life.

I know we may differ on many aspects of this, but I have full respect for your feedback and knowledge, and I am grateful to the citizens who participated in the public consultation process. It is not an easy problem to solve.

Wishing you a happy summer weekend.

CHRISTINA [SMITH]

August 9 – 4:23 pm

Dear Christina,

I do appreciate the tone of your email and the details contained in it.

You write that "since 2015, the southeast sector of Westmount has been included in the highest density sector planned for the entire CMM (150 dwellings/hectare, calculated according to the old parameters). Therefore, in the 10 years since the SAD was established, no request for exclusion for this sector has ever been made."

There are at least three reasons why no request has been made. 1) No plans (and, as you know, there were a few of them) had reached a presentable stage; 2) The former 150 gross density threshold was substantially lower than the new 480 net requirement and would likely have not required serried ranks of high-rises in order to meet it; and 3) Your council decided to resort to a PPU, a mechanism that takes away the long-held right of citizen approval by way of referendum. This extraordinary power that the PPU confers on council requires

it to be exercised most carefully and judiciously – and that flexibility can only be achieved by getting an exemption to the density threshold. Unfortunately, your council decided not to ask for an exemption, and additionally, not to inform the citizenry that an exemption even existed.

There will be new mayors and councilors across the aggro's territory in less than three months' time. As president of the ASM [Association of Suburban Municipalities], I had a front-row seat watching and participating in the adoption the 2015 agglomeration Land-use Plan (SAD) that took its broad-brush-stroke cue from the existing PMAD. A lot of horse-trading went on – not by Westmount particularly, but with the West Island cities unhappy with some of its draft provisions. The whole process took 32 months and even Westmount took another year before modifying its own Planning Programme. It's hard to believe that this next round will be completed within the planned 24-month schedule.

When the new, higher densities were first suggested a few years ago, Westmount civil-service representatives, along with those from Montreal and other cities, found them Draconian. But this year, since the political arm of Westmount did not ask for an exemption to the new densities – even though the aggro's map shows the whole southeast is a designated exceptional-heritage sector eligible for exemptions – the agglomeration (read Montreal's executive committee) assumed, naturally, that Westmount was going to live with them.

As you know, this is why I took issue with the idea that "we have no choice" in meeting the new density threshold. You have a choice. But this council decided they were comfortable with them and the high-rises they inevitably produce.

This is why so many of us are convinced that it is the next council who must get an electoral mandate to handle this most delicate problem.

PETER [TRENT]