

**Brief for presentation to the Office de Consultation Publique de Montréal
November 26, 2003**

Presented by the NDG Recreation Services Committee

Benny Farm Redevelopment Project:
Position of the NDG Recreation Services Committee

Rationale

Presentation of the Recreation and Services Committee

The NDG Recreation Services Committee, which is supported by numerous residents of NDG, exists to promote the provision of fully accessible sports and recreation services to the entire population of NDG. The committee gets in touch with its growing number of supporters through public meetings, interviews, internet and word of mouth.

The Committee has considered the recently published *L'Avant-projet "LA POLITIQUE MONTREALAISE DU SPORT ET DU LOISIR "* (7 October 2003), done by the city of Montreal, which says: "Le loisir contribue largement au développement et au maintien de cette qualité de vie essentielle à la santé, à la richesse, à la sécurité et au bonheur des personnes." The Committee supports the orientation of this paper.

The Committee agrees that sports and recreational facilities must be provided at the local level, with the full and active participation of residents as principal players in the process.

This policy is clearly appropriate in terms of the desire being expressed to the Committee by NDG residents for a recreation complex that is tailored to their own needs, which are huge as expressed during our last public meeting.

Accessibility

In NDG, basic public services for large segments of the population, such as the elderly, the handicapped, those lacking financial means, children, youth and families are seriously underdeveloped.

A large part of the population, who would benefit most from the proximity of the sport complex, live within walking distance of the Benny Farm site. In addition to that proximity, this location is well served by public transportation and centrally located and is easily accessible to all residents of NDG.

The Recreation Complex on Benny Farm site should also eliminate physical barriers for the elderly and the handicapped.

Finally it should be fully accessible to people with all levels of income. Consequently, the Committee is opposed to management of the facilities by private health clubs, in what should be a universally accessible service to all residents of NDG.

Association with the CLSC

The NDG Recreation Services Committee recommends the adoption of the Benny Farm rezoning proposal because, through the inclusion of the Recreational and Institutional (CLSC) elements, it offers something to the entire community.

This very welcome improvement in public services will help to foster a positive attitude within the neighborhood towards the Benny Farm redevelopment plan. Locating the Recreation Complex and CLSC near the housing development will provide a friendly point of integration for current and new residents.

The positioning of the CLSC adjacent to the Recreation Complex is an enlightened idea, that will encourage the highly regarded “Wellness Approach” to health care.

In essence, the proposal presents an integrated approach to the development of the Benny Farm site, and to the future development of the health and well being of the entire community of NDG.

Recommendations

1. The NDG Recreation Services Committee recommends that the City of Montreal accept the proposed zoning change for the Benny Farm site.
2. The Committee recommends that in adopting the proposed zoning change, the City of Montreal acknowledge the fundamental importance to NDG of providing fully accessible indoor public sports and recreation facilities.
3. The Committee recommends that in the context of discussing the provision of services to the community, the City of Montreal recognize the fundamental importance of supplying quality services (related to exercise, health and recreation) equally to ALL residents of NDG.
4. The committee recommends that the City act promptly to purchase the land and to conduct any appropriate survey or study towards the development of the sport and recreation center, in consultation with the residents of NDG.