

M. SAMUEL VANZIN :

925

Oui, bien merci à vous, puis bonne journée.

Mme MONIQUE LING, citoyenne

930

LE PRÉSIDENT :

Merci. Vous aussi, bonne journée. Prochaine intervenante, Monique Ling. Bonjour.

935

Mme MONIQUE LING :

Bonjour. C'est correct si je parle en anglais ?

LE PRÉSIDENT :

940

Oui, vous pouvez parler en anglais. Vous avez dix minutes, puis ensuite on a un autre dix minutes d'échanges avec vous. On vous écoute.

Mme MONIQUE LING :

945

Parfait, merci. Dear commissioners of the OCPM, thank you for the opportunity to present my opinion on the proposed changes of the plan d'urbanisme, concerning Montréal's Chinatown.

950

My name is Monique Ling and I have been a resident of Montreal for the past four years during which I quickly found a place to call home.

One of the things I love most about Montreal is its ability to be at once a big city with diverse arts and culture as well as a place of close knit community and vibrance on a human

955 scale. Something that I find distinguishes it from other large Canadian cities such as Vancouver or Toronto.

960 Over the past four years, Chinatown has become an incredibly meaningful part of my Montreal life as a place of gathering, learning, connecting and reconnecting. Because of Chinatown, I have met a wonderful community, established a deeper connection with my personal heritage. And become more engaged as a community member, not only in relation to Chinatown, but as a citizen of Montreal.

965 In this past year, I have also seen what it means to others as numerous group have come together to fight to protect Chinatown and insure its permanence and vitality as the last remaining Chinatown in Quebec.

970 As such, I am here today to express my strong support for the proposed changes to the plan d'urbanisme with reduced height and density limits for the neighbourhood, expanded boundaries and heritage designation.

975 However, with these proposed changes, it is also imperative that we do not think of Chinatown as merely a towards destination or relic of the past, but as a living breeding community, which is deeply rooted in the area.

975 We must think of Chinatown considering its history, its present and its future. While I am not a lifelong resident of the city, I can quickly recognise the importance of Chinatown and the threats facing Chinatowns in other parts of Canada, including in my hometown of Calgary.

980 I am particularly concerned with the types of businesses currently opening in Chinatown. Much like in Toronto, many family run and historic businesses are being pushed out by larger international chains who can afford increasingly high rents.

985 And that well fit the general culture and visual esthetic of Chinatown, add nothing to the unique character of Montreal's Chinatown. They can be found in Chinatowns anywhere and even Europe and informal so called secondary Chinatowns like the area around Concordia University.

I would like to see rents of cities and other incentives for local businesses that contribute to the distinct character and heritage of Chinatown.

990 Another one of the major aspects that I believe sets Montreal Chinatown apart, is the pedestrianization of the la rue de La Gauchetière, which allows people to freely wonder through Chinatown well exploring the unique array of shops, restaurants and businesses. Or sit for a moment without the noise and stress of car traffic.

995 It also creates a favorable environment for local businesses and human scale development and makes visitors really feel the living history and significance of the streets and buildings.

1000 I believe this pedestrianization has played a large part in distinguishing Chinatown as a destination rather than a quick stop on the way from downtown to Old Montreal.

As such, I think it is really important to maintain this level of human and pedestrian's centric scale and ensure Chinatown does not lose this defining characteristic.

1005 I would also like to speak about the need for responsibly internally like development and improvement in quality of life.

1010 What I mean by this is that I am in favor of a Chinatown that is not only preserved, but developed. I am in favor of continued investment in the area, increased service delivery and a wide diversity of shops, restaurants and other businesses, as well as investments into greening and beautifying the space but not at the expense or displacement of this existing resident.

I would like to see measures in place that ensure senior and long time residents, are able to remain in their homes and are able to afford to live, shop and eat in their neighbourhood.

1015

I would also like to see measures in place to ensure that any investors and developers with larger projects are contributing to the community in a meaningful way. This could be something like community benefit agreements being attached to construction projects, perhaps to develop green and leisure spaces that benefit the public and to contribute significantly to social and affordable housing.

1020

If we allow for irresponsible development to happen now, there will be no turning back. We will not be able to recover what we have lost. We have already seen mass land expropriation of Montreal's Chinatown for large scale developments such as the Guy-Favreau Complexe and Complexe Desjardins, which now permanently box Chinatown in.

1025

As well as the cultural and historic value, the community aspect is integral to the neighbourhood. There are many vulnerable residents in Chinatown who lack the cultural and/or linguistic fluency to thrive in other parts of the city. And pushing them out of Chinatown will only serve to isolate them; seniors in particular.

1030

There are also shelters and housing services for those facing situations of homelessness, both within and at the borders of Chinatown. I believe that allowing for higher and luxury housing and towards rentals to take over Chinatown, the City would send, it would send a clear message and a violent message over which residents the city views as disposable and which residents are seen as desirable.

1035

Beyond affirming the proposed changes for the plan d'urbanisme, I join with others in their concerns that the current measures alone will not sufficiently bring about the desired results mentioned.

1040

1045 I appreciate the time taken to listen to the community today and I am hopeful that the city of Montreal and the borough de Ville-Marie, will further consider a more realistic development plan for Montreal's historic Chinatown that aims to protect, preserve and promote the history and culture of its historical populations. Thank you.

LE PRÉSIDENT:

1050 Merci. Thank you very much. We have ten minutes for questions with you. Vous en avez parlé sur le lien entre l'histoire, le patrimoine et la vitalité, que ce ne soit pas en conflit, si j'ai bien compris, avec la vitalité et le développement du quartier.

1055 So my question is : how do you see the reconciliation between the history and what is the, to put forward the history of Chinatown and le patrimoine with the fact that you say you want to be able to continue the development and not being like a museum, I guess, that is what you are saying. And how do you see that happening?

Mme MONIQUE LING :

1060 I think a big part of that is just realising that there are still residents here that have been here for a long time, but are part of history and are still living in the city; there are not a closed chapter.

1065 So really being sure to talk to residents and for example, I think this has already been a, something's that has been brought up by having more accessibility for the public consultation, that residents would be able to come in, speak in Chinese and really make them feel like they are a part of the neighbourhood and of the future of the neighbourhood.

1070 I think there is room for housing development, maybe not luxury per se, but like, newer developments that do bring in a type of gentrification but doesn't come with displacing residents.

But it does, you know, increase service delivery and increases the diversity of types of businesses in the neighbourhood. It redefines the space but it doesn't push people out.

LE PRÉSIDENT:

1075

O.K., je comprends. Alors, collègues? Maybe one last question, you mentioned public spaces and green spaces, what do you feel like, is there a need for more like public spaces and if so, where would you see that ?

1080

Mme MONIQUE LING :

I think we could even start with the park Sun-Yat-Sen which, it does provide seating, there is a space for gathering, but it's very gray, it's very hard. It's not a comfortable place to come sit, especially if you are a senior, you know, there is like little concrete stools, like it's not really comfortable or a beautiful place to sit en enjoy the neighbourhood.

1085

So even, yeah, added greenery, more comfortable seating would be a good start.

LE PRÉSIDENT:

1090

O.K., thank you very much. Merci beaucoup.

Mme ESTELLE MI, citoyenne

1095

LE PRÉSIDENT:

Prochaine intervenante, Estelle Mi.

1100