

MEMO

Concerning the Proposed Development by Allied for
"Terrains Nordelec"

Re: Proposed Development by Allied for Terrains Nordelec

Introduction

I am a long-time resident of Pointe-Saint-Charles and have been an active participant in the evolution of our beloved neighborhood. I wish to address certain directions put forward by the developer for the Nordelec site. I have attended both the "Information Evening" on September 18 and the "Question and Answer Session" on September 25, and my concerns stem largely from the lack of clarity and transparency surrounding the project's specifics.

Ambiguity and Lack of Details

The developer, specializing in managing office spaces, has proposed a project which is highly ambiguous. The potential to create housing, offices, or shops exists, but without concrete plans. A developer requesting such extensive rights should present a concise and transparent plan. Their broad spectrum approach without defined proportions or specifics, leaves our community in uncertainty. This lack of clarity is unsettling, and we urge the City not to authorize the regulatory changes without clear definitions and limitations in place.

Housing Crisis and the Need for Residential Spaces

Montreal is currently grappling with a housing crisis. Rental vacancy rates have plummeted to below 2%, and housing prices have surged due to high demand and low supply. At such a juncture, the primary focus should be on creating affordable housing options for residents. While the developer mentions a potential maximum of 1,185 residential units, they are under no obligation to create any housing. The housing crisis demands a clear commitment, not ambiguity.

Given the evolving work dynamics post the 2020 pandemic, many businesses have shifted towards remote working, leading to reduced occupancy of commercial spaces in Montreal. With this trend showing no signs of reversal, it becomes essential to question the need for more office space when there's an evident surplus. Instead, a distinct emphasis on residential spaces, particularly affordable ones, is the need of the hour.

Heritage Preservation and Building Heights

Pointe-Saint-Charles boasts iconic structures like the Nordelec, Redpath, and Belding-Corticelli buildings which are testimonies to the industrial history of the area. Any new construction should be in harmony with these historic landmarks, preserving their stature and significance. Proposing buildings that potentially overshadow the Nordelec, which stands at 43 meters, seems disrespectful to the neighborhood's heritage. Furthermore, breaching the 25-meter height rule would set an unwanted precedent, potentially transforming the unique character of Pointe-Saint-Charles into a generic urban landscape.

Mobility, Traffic, and Parking

Increasing the density with this proposed development would undeniably amplify traffic woes. The inclusion of an underground car park with 865 to 965 units hints at a significant influx of vehicles. Given the already congested streets like Saint-Patrick, Wellington, Des Seigneurs, and Bridge, this would exacerbate mobility issues. Such traffic increment is not only inconvenient for residents but also undermines the City's goals for a greener, pedestrian-friendly environment.

Public Spaces and Environmental Concerns

While the promise of public spaces sounds appealing, the project's preliminary designs suggest these will be mostly concrete, lacking in natural appeal. The mockups are misleading, painting a brighter, more inviting picture than what might materialize. The proximity to existing green spaces like the Lachine Canal and Joe Beef Park makes these proposed areas redundant. Moreover, the proposed buildings' shade will reduce natural sunlight in these spaces, rendering them desolate and unwelcoming.

Construction Impact

A project of this magnitude would mean years of construction, affecting the peace and quality of life for residents. Noise, air pollution, and disruption to daily activities are inevitable repercussions of such large-scale projects.

Conclusion:

While development and progress are integral to a city's growth, it should not come at the expense of residents' well-being and the neighborhood's character. The proposed project by Allied presents more uncertainties and detriments than potential benefits to our community. I urge the OCPM to consider the concerns presented and re-evaluate the Allied proposal for the Nordelec Property in the context of the genuine needs of the Pointe-Saint-Charles community – one that aligns more harmoniously with our community's values and needs.

Thank you for your attention to this crucial matter.

Sincerely,

Florence Chevalier