

Consultation publique

Expansion de L'Hôpital Général sur l'avenue Cédar

Présenté à
L'office de consultation publique de Montréal
Mme Hélène LaPerrière
Présidente

Présenté par

Derek Burrows

Le 27 juin, 2011

The planned expansion of the Mountain Campus of the MUHC has a history of irregularity, lack of transparency and misrepresentation. The MUHC has embarked on a series of steps to systematically undermine the intention of laws, bylaws and regulations in order to serve its own purposes, in contempt of the protected zone and the Mountain, the residents and the best interests of all Montrealers.

This history of irregularity, lack of transparency and misrepresentation has led us to this latest public consultation where interested parties are being consulted on details such as densities and heights when the larger picture and the systematic encroachment by the hospital on the Mountain and on the homes of residents has been largely unexamined and intentionally overlooked.

At the June 6 public information session as part of the consultation process, a city official even had the temerity to state that getting signatures for a petition and holding a referendum on the density derogation would be largely useless because the MUHC would simply change the property line southward in order to reduce the project density in theory without reducing it in fact. If this is not clear contempt for the process of public consultation and for the residents of the affected zone and protectors of the Mountain, we don't know what is.

We would like to make the following observations:

- The Montreal General Hospital came to its current location subsequent to the Golden Square Mile residences with which it shares the zone. Part of the appeal of the area since that time has been the combination of institutional, detached, semi detached and multi-unit residences in the area. The hospital's rights are not larger or broader than the rights of others simply because the institution is a health care facility. The obligation to practice good citizenship applies to the individual, corporation or institution equally. No one is exempt.
- Presumably the hospital located where it did to be amid the community it serves. Now, the hospital wants to effectively change the face of the area to largely institutional, even converting what was to have been a residential development at 1750 Cedar into part of the institution itself, specifying it should have the look and

feel of the hospital, essentially part of a monolith that will overpower the street and this very important approach to Mount Royal.

- It is highly irregular to change the zoning of an area from residential to institutional while a building is under construction on the site, because institutional use far exceeds the maximum site coverage. The rear and side setbacks were granted for a residential project, not an institutional one. Having a moveable site borderline in order to circumvent density maximums is unheard of.
- It is highly irregular to build a new hospital building that is not set back from the street as are the other buildings on the hospital site. 1750 Cedar is actually built right to the property line on the west side of the lot, and the building is approximately 25 feet from the existing residence at 1754/1756 Cedar.
- One would have us believe that the opportunity to take over 1750 arose while the construction was proceeding. However, plans show the intention to take over the space actually pre-dated the agreement made by the MUHC that they would not expand the Mountain campus beyond its current footprint. This demonstrates contempt for the rules, collusion between the former owner and the MUHC and that the word of the MUHC, even in writing, means nothing.
- It is highly irregular to want to incorporate a “new” building, 1750 Cedar in this case, into the existing fabric of the hospital, without any regard to incorporating it into the residential landscape it actually abuts to the west and which is in fact in much closer proximity than the hospital complex as it currently exists.
- It is highly irregular to proudly state in a previous proposal that one of the prime considerations has been keeping development away from the Mountain and in a subsequent one claim that this is no longer important and in fact will not affect the Mountain despite diverting traffic and emergency vehicles there, and making the Cedar side of the hospital the *de facto* main entrance.

- The *Ministre de la culture* has said they do not want the exterior to change and has worked with the neighbourhood to ensure this. It is highly irregular for the MUHC to develop an institutional building without any consultation regarding that aspect, knowing as they do that it would be rejected by all and any able to comment freely.

- The reason the Shriners Hospital is moving to the Glen site is because that institution could not have permission to expand on the Mountain. One wonders about the conditions that apply for one institution but not for another. If it was wrong for the Shriners to expand, which it was, why is it not wrong for the General Hospital, like the Shriners, a health care institutions

- The city, on the one hand, wants to attract residents to the city. Our crumbling infrastructure makes commuting difficult and sometimes nearly impossible. 1750 represents a prime residential location and a semi-completed construction. It would appear highly irregular to say on the one hand the city is trying to stanch the flow of citizens out of Montreal and at the same time is eliminating a prime residential opportunity of significant appeal.

- It would seem highly irregular that the city would provide solid protection for the Milton/Park area and Shaughnessy Village and leave a protected heritage zone to the whim of an institutional developer whose current assets show no indication of proper stewardship, maintenance and respect for the properties it currently manages nor any tangible effect on the neighbours.

In a democratic country and in a city that purports to listen to citizens, understand their needs and make their city into a great place to live, it seems highly irregular that the will of the people has no consideration in the expansion of the hospital, destruction of the character of a mixed-use community, contempt for neighbours and their property values and the important deleterious effect this will have on Mount Royal.