

I am a resident of the Peter McGill city district in which this project is located, and a member of the Urbanism and Habitation Committee of the Peter McGill Community Council/Interaction Peter McGill; though the views expressed here are only my own. Here in brief are my comments on the Cadillac Fairview project on St. Antoine St.:

1. Residential projects in Montreal of more than 200 units--this project has 383 units--are supposed to make a contribution towards social and affordable housing. This project in particular, being given an exemption from municipal by-laws which makes it more profitable, has even more of an obligation to assist with these types of housing. Specifically, it is permitted to raise the building height from 65 to 120 metres, and its density from 6 to 9. Therefore the developer should either build some social housing, equal to 15% of its total projected units, on the land that it owns in the area of this project for its future projected phases of building. Or else it should help finance the building of an equal number of social housing units elsewhere in the Peter McGill district. It should be noted that according to the community profile of the Peter McGill district issued by the Peter McGill Community Council in 2009 and based on the 2006 census, 45% of the residents of Peter McGill live below the low income cutoff line. And there are many vacant buildings in Peter McGill that could be suitably redeveloped for social housing (see the Inventaire des batiments vacants published by the city of Montreal in 2012 for the Ville-Marie borough for information about such vacant buildings).

2. Similarly, this project should contain some affordable housing units, particularly suitable for families, within its first projected tower building, equal to at least 15% of the total number of its units. By affordable units I mean units cheap enough to qualify for municipal subsidies for such affordable units, and which satisfy the other requirements of such units. For example, affordable family units must have 3 bedrooms and a minimum of 1033 square feet, and cost no more than \$400,000, taxes included. If these financial limits to qualify for a subsidy are too low to build such units downtown then the developer and the city should both be willing to negotiate more realistic and mutually acceptable price limits, bearing in mind that not all units in this project have to be finished to the same expensive standard, and that units lower down in the tower can be priced less (it's usual that lower level units are priced less, and subsidised family units are supposed to be located no more than five stories high).

At the OCPM information session for this project, the presenting architect, in private conversation with me after the session was over, questioned whether anyone with children would want to live in a downtown tower condo apartment, that is, whether this was suitable for the children. However, there are several resources downtown especially suited to children. For example, both the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts and the Redpath natural history museum have days and sessions especially for children, there are the facilities of the YMCA and the Women's Y, the nearby building at 1000 De La Gauchetiere Street has an indoor skating rink which is chiefly used by children all the year around, movie cinemas downtown show some films suitable for families and children, and the Ville-Marie borough presents events especially for families. It's true that we lack a local public school, local public library and community centre, but community organisations such as the Peter McGill Community Council are fighting for these, and the more children that live downtown the more of an argument we have for such public facilities. And note that, despite the absence of such public facilities, there were already 3275 children aged 0 to 19 years old living in the Peter McGill district according to the 2006 census (from the same community profile referred to above). So the developers of this project should consider building and marketing some of their units as affordable family housing, and the city should help them to do so by raising the prices at which such units built downtown can qualify for municipal subsidies, subsidies both to the developer and to the first time purchaser of such a unit. This would increase the development of downtown, retain more families within the city and reduce traffic congestion, all municipal objectives.

3. To further make this project attractive to families, the city should enclose the vacant land on the south side of Torrance Street, between Torrance and the Ville-Marie Autoroute exit to Jean-d'Estrees Street, and transform this into a small local park suitable for use by families and children, and immediately accessible from the towers to be built in this project on the north side of Torrance. This park could be used not just by the residents in the towers to be immediately built according to this project, but also by residents in all the future phases planned by Cadillac Fairview in this area on the land they have acquired, as well as by anyone else. This could increase the attractiveness of all these new residential towers, especially to families. And if the autoroute exit leading to Jean-d'Estrees Street were closed (which would still leave open the other exit to de la Montagne Street) then the whole block between Torrance and St. Jacques Street and between de la Montagne and Jean-d'Estrees Streets could be turned into a bigger park. But even if the Quebec Ministry of Transport does not agree to this closure, the land between Torrance and the autoroute exit to Jean-d'Estrees should still be enclosed and made into a local public park. And in whichever case, the chief entrance into the towers, and the garage entrance, should **not** be on Torrance, to avoid car traffic interfering with and possibly endangering the easy access of residents of the towers to this local park.

4. My last suggestion concerns the proposed passageway above St. Antoine Street linking the Bell Centre and the south side of St. Antoine Street adjacent to the proposed towers. I do not think this passageway should be allowed as it would spoil the view along St. Antoine Street, especially eastward towards the downtown centre. Assuming there will be attractive towers built all along St. Antoine between de la Montagne and Peel Streets, this will create an attractive vista which is not worth spoiling just to erect a completely unnecessary above ground passageway over St. Antoine Street. If a tunnel linking the Bell Centre and the proposed towers is not acceptable to the developers then let people simply exit the Bell Centre at ground level on the north side of St. Antoine Street at or near the corner with de la Montagne Street, so that they can then cross St. Antoine at de la Montagne if necessary. If the point of the passageway is in part to help brand the new tower as the second phase of the Tour des Canadiens, it's totally unnecessary for this purpose and for the commercial success of this project. The fact is, the projected tower is right next to the Bell Centre and built by the same people who are building the Tour des Canadiens, so they can convincingly present it as the second Tour des Canadiens without any passageway. Additionally, allowing an above ground passageway establishes a bad precedent of sacrificing city views for the sake of the commercial success of a private project, even supposing this allowance had any bearing on the commercial success of this project.

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