

Comme vous le savez, la commission tient à ce que le climat demeure serein. Je rappelle donc que les propos malveillants ou les interventions qui portent atteinte aux droits fondamentaux ou à la réputation d'autrui sont irrecevables.

Comme il est de coutume en matière de consultation publique, si pour une raison ou une autre il y avait des inexactitudes qui se glissaient dans les propos tenus ce soir, les représentants de l'arrondissement ou encore du promoteur pourraient user de leur droit de rectification.

Je leur accorderai la possibilité d'exercer ce droit à la fin de la séance. Il s'agira, bien entendu, de rectifier seulement un fait et non pas d'émettre un commentaire ou un avis sur ce qui aura été dit au cours de la soirée.

Alors, j'invite maintenant monsieur Robert Hajaly à venir faire sa présentation.

**MONSIEUR ROBERT HAJALY:**

Good evening.

**MADAME NICOLE BRODEUR, PRÉSIDENTE:**

Good evening.

**MONSIEUR ROBERT HAJALY:**

Did you get my brief?

**MADAME NICOLE BRODEUR, PRÉSIDENTE :**

Yes, we did.

**MONSIEUR ROBERT HAJALY:**

You read it, yes?

**MADAME NICOLE BRODEUR, PRÉSIDENTE :**

And we read it.

**MONSIEUR ROBERT HAJALY:**

Okay, good. So I'm just going to read it, because other people here haven't read it, and then you can ask me any questions.

So, good evening. My name is Robert Hajaly, and I am a long-standing resident and worker in the Peter-McGill district.

In brief, I wish to oppose the building of the Prével project on the former site of the Franciscan monastery. My reason for this is that this land is needed to provide a local public outdoor recreational sport facility for the

local community. There are now no such recreational  
facilities in the neighbourhood and, in fact, in all of  
Peter-McGill district, and this land is the last available  
vacant land in this neighbourhood that can be used to  
provide such a recreational facility. It is large enough to  
provide, for example, a mini soccer field, and in winter a  
skating or hockey rink.

Bear in mind that there are now more than 34,000  
residents in this district, and more than 4,000 children;  
that is according to the 2011 census. There would probably  
be about 40,000 now. The reasons given by the City, and in  
particular by Mayor Denis Coderre, for not having such a  
recreational park on the Franciscan site, are not  
convincing.

Mayor Coderre, at the Ville-Marie Borough Council  
Meeting of May 12th, 2015, claimed that this site was too  
noisy and polluted for such a park because it is near the  
CP commuter railway and the Ville-Marie Autoroute. If this  
is so, why is it not too noisy and polluted for a hundred  
million dollar condo project, and its future residents who  
will be there all the time?

In comparison, there are four city parks east of the

Jacques-Cartier Bridge squeezed between the traffic light  
on Notre-Dame Street and the Port railway, and no one has  
complained about them. These are City parks.

Mayor Coderre also claimed that the Franciscan site was  
too small for a park, but this did not prevent the  
Ville-Marie Borough from drawing up its own plan for a  
possible mini soccer field on a Franciscan site, which,  
according to the Borough, satisfied both municipal and  
provincial norms for such a sport field. This plan is  
contained in one of the documents listed by the OCPM under  
the Franciscan site dossier, and it is dated April 1st,  
2014.

Mayor Coderre also claimed that residents in the area of  
the Franciscan site could use a soccer field at Rutherford  
Park. However, this park, which is now being developed by  
the Ville-Marie Borough, is in the northeastern corner of  
Peter-McGill district, two and a half kilometres from the  
Franciscan site going along the streets, and it will be  
available to local residents only half the time, being  
reserved for members of McGill University the other half of  
the time even though it is a public park and public land.

Therefore, few residents in the area of the Franciscan site, and certainly not young children, are likely to use this Rutherford Park. And note that, by comparison, in the eastern part of Ville-Marie Borough there are eight differently located sports fields offering fifteen different sport facilities; so, there is also an issue here of equity regarding Peter-McGill having only one sports field.

At the information session of May 12th, we were told by Ville-Marie civil servant Marc Labelle that there could be created a recreational facility in and around the former Children's Hospital site. I agree that an equivalent outdoor sports field could be built there, but to do so, the City would have to alter somewhat the local street grid and spend money to create the field, and so far Mayor Coderre has refused to commit the City to doing this, even when asked explicitly at Ville-Marie Borough meetings whether he would do so. I was one of the persons asking him that.

So such an alternative site is now merely a hypothetical possibility, which means we are left only with the Franciscan site as a real existing possible location for a recreational sports field for the neighbourhood.

In my view, the chief real reason why Mayor Coderre and the  
Ville-Marie Council under him, but not our local  
Councillor, favour the condo project over a recreational  
sports ground for the Franciscan site was to save and make  
money, specifically avoiding paying to buy this land and  
create a public park, and instead receiving the condo tax  
revenues that the City would receive from the condo  
project.

And underlying this decision is the lack of democratic  
accountability of the mayor to the people of Peter-McGill,  
since, unlike other borough mayors, he is not elected by  
the people of Ville-Marie to be Ville-Marie mayor, but  
rather gets automatically to be Ville-Marie mayor because  
he is the Montreal mayor.

My hope is that if your Commission advises against this  
condo project, this might add to the public pressure of  
Mayor Coderre to change his position on this issue and be  
more responsive to local residents desire for a park on the  
Franciscan site.

I now want to comment briefly on certain aspects of the  
proposed condo project in case it gets the ultimate  
go-ahead. First, I think the height of the proposed towers

greatly overwhelms and diminishes the adjoining Masson  
Judah houses so that instead of enhancing their value as  
the Ville-Marie Sommaire Décisionnel claims, this height  
really diminishes their value. The tower height is also  
greatly out of scale with all the other buildings  
surrounding this project, and it should also be remembered  
that the Franciscan Monastery was only four floors high.

It was claimed by the Promoter at the May 12th  
information meeting that this greater height enables more  
green space to be preserved. However, I fail to see why,  
say an eight-storey project allowed by the present 25 meter  
height cannot preserve the same green space; that is,  
except for the Promoter's desire to build more units and  
make more money, the desire of the Franciscans to get more  
money for their land, which depends on the number of units  
that can be built on it, and of the City to get more tax  
revenues.

Your Commission should not allow this financial greed to  
overcome harmonious urban design and integration, and if  
the developer wishes to build more units at eight floors,  
he can create a U by uniting his two buildings, thus  
recreating the plan of the Monastery and its chapel without  
sacrificing any adjoining green space.

My next concern is with the affordable housing to be built in this project. When I asked the Developer at the May 12th meeting what percentage of this affordable housing would be family units, he replied « none ». I consider this to be unacceptable. Everyone knows that housing for families downtown, or close to it, is expensive, making it impossible for most families to live there if they want to.

And yet, the City talks about the desirability of attracting families away from the suburbs to the city and of social mixity. I agree that these things are desirable, and also families with children are more likely to demand public facilities which improve the quality of the neighbourhood.

Therefore, please recommend that the Developer build at least half of his affordable units as family units at prices low enough to qualify for City subsidies for such units. There are City subsidies, and to help him do this, the City should raise the sale price at which a unit can qualify for such a subsidy, at least for the downtown area where the cost of land and therefore a building are higher.

My last concern is with the social housing financed by the Promoter's donation for such housing where it will be



built. When I asked civil servant Marc Labelle at the May 1  
12th meeting whether such housing would be built 2  
specifically in the Peter-McGill district, he said he could 3  
not guarantee this. He could only confirm that it would be 4  
built somewhere in Ville-Marie Borough. 5

I consider this to be unacceptable. At the end of 2012, 6  
according to Ville-Marie Borough figures, there were 6 190 7  
social units, apart from old age units, in the Ville-Marie 8  
Borough outside of Peter McGill, and only 68 such units in 9  
Peter-McGill. Now, this is despite about 40% of 10  
Peter-McGill residents being below the poverty line, again 11  
according to the census, and there are a fair number of 12  
homeless people, including but not only aboriginal people. 13  
14

So please recommend that the social housing be built 15  
specifically in Peter-McGill to satisfy our greater need 16  
for such housing. 17  
18

In ending, I would like to avoid any possible confusion 19  
that might have been created by my last few recommendations 20  
by repeating that I am opposed to the building of the 21  
Prével project in any form, even if it satisfies these 22  
recommendations of mine, on the Franciscan site, and favour 23  
instead the creation there of a local public outdoor 24  
25

recreational sports facility. I added the last few  
recommendations only because of the fear that in the end  
this project will go ahead because of the financial  
interests involved, even if you recommend against it, but  
this should not prevent you from recommending exactly this,  
that this condo project should not be built in any form,  
and instead this site should be used for a public park to  
meet local residents needs. Thank you.

**MONSIEUR JOSHUA WOLFE:**

Thank you, Mr. Hajaly. You used the term « recreational  
sports facility », and people have given different ideas  
about that. Are you talking about, for example, a soccer  
field or a place for informal ball play? What would you  
like to see in terms of if it were a park?

**MONSIEUR ROBERT HAJALY:**

Well, I said it very specifically. A mini soccer field in  
summer, hockey, skating rink in winter.

**MONSIEUR JOSHUA WOLFE:**

And that's all?

**MONSIEUR ROBERT HAJALY:**

Oh, there could be other things. It could be a basketball

court, or something like that, depending on what the City  
wishes to put in it, but those are the obvious suggestions.

**MONSIEUR JOSHUA WOLFE:**

Okay, thank you.

**MONSIEUR VIATEUR CHÉNARD:**

If they would adopt your proposal for eight storeys, the  
configuration you see, would you still have room for the  
little parks that are in the current plans?

**MONSIEUR ROBERT HAJALY:**

Sure.

**MONSIEUR VIATEUR CHÉNARD:**

And how many units would you build or, I don't know, if you  
can figure this out? I mean, this is very technical; you  
may or may not have thought about this.

**MONSIEUR ROBERT HAJALY:**

No, I'm not a builder. I have no idea. I mean, it's now 19  
floors, so it is down to 8, so you can just proportionate  
it that way. I do suggest that right now you've got two  
buildings that are perpendicular to René-Lévesque. You  
could, if you wanted, tie them together to make a kind of,

well, actually it would be an N, depending on how you are  
looking at it, an N or a U, which would actually, more or  
less, reproduce the outline of the monastery and the  
chapel, and that could add a few units, but it wouldn't  
involve any more green space than it involves now, it's  
exactly the same imprint, it is just lower basically,  
except for the little bit that would tie them together.

So, if you look at the public parks that they proposed,  
they wouldn't be affected whatsoever by this suggestion.  
They would still be there exactly in their same form.

But I want to emphasize, since you raised that issue of  
their little public parks, that those public parks are not  
big enough for any kind of, you know, significant outdoor  
recreational facility of the sort I am talking about, mini  
soccer, hockey, whatever it is. They are not acceptable to  
us from that point of view. It's important that the people  
in Peter-McGill have some kind of place where they can be  
active, okay, apart from anything else, for health reasons  
and social reasons, and that the little parks, they  
suggest, don't provide that. They are not big enough for  
that.

**MONSIEUR VIATEUR CHÉNARD:**

Okay. I'm sorry, we received another written submission and they mention something like 378 affordable units project close to the project. Let me find it. But you mentioned that there is only, you mentioned earlier in your text...

**MADAME NICOLE BRODEUR, PRÉSIDENTE :**

68 units.

**MONSIEUR VIATEUR CHÉNARD:**

68, yes, only 68.

**MONSIEUR JOSHUA WOLFE:**

Yes, in your second-to-last paragraph you say only 68 such units in Peter-McGill, but perhaps the difference is for the, the 68 are not for seniors.

**MONSIEUR ROBERT HAJALY:**

Yes, that's right. The figures I have are 348 units altogether, 280 old age, 68 otherwise, yes, that's right, whereas the figures in the rest of Ville-Marie, it is 7 444 units, 1 254 old age, 6 190 otherwise. So the relative comparison, if you're talking about poverty, is the social housing units for other than old age people, 6 190 in the rest of the borough, 68 in Peter-McGill. It's grossly

disproportionate. We have 40% poor people according to, you know, using the standard low cut-off poverty line according to the 2011 Census.

We are as poor as they are, there is no difference in poverty. The difference is we have rich people, okay, but our district is kind of bipolar. There is a rich area above Sherbrooke Street, as you know, and there are a lot of poor people below Sherbrooke Street, so that overall, percentage-wise, our poverty rate is the same as the rest of Ville-Marie Borough, a fact that is not known by many people.

**MONSIEUR VIATEUR CHÉNARD:**

The other building, maybe the explanation is the senior citizens, but 30 lodgings at 2144 Tupper, and another one at 2165 Tupper with 200 lodgings, another one, 86, at 2191 René-Lévesque, and finally SHDM, 1975 René-Lévesque, 62.

**MONSIEUR ROBERT HAJALY:**

Yes, I don't know where they are. I got my figures from Ville-Marie, to be honest, and the figures are good as of December 31st, 2012, so it's quite possible that something has been added since then. But once again, the figures I got from them directly, because I asked them, 348 units

altogether in Peter-McGill, 280 for old age, 68 otherwise.

That was as of December 31st, 2012. Now, it's possible something has been added, but it wouldn't change the great disproportion between the number of units in Peter-McGill and in the rest of the Borough. I mean, it's a ratio of almost 100 to 1, 68 to 6 190, apart from old age. I mean, that is grotesque.

**MADAME NICOLE BRODEUR, PRÉSIDENTE :**

Yes. In the perspective of building of recreational sports facilities in the park, how would you reconcile these recreational facilities with the heritage of the Franciscans?

**MONSIEUR ROBERT HAJALY:**

I hadn't even thought about that, to be quite honest.

**MADAME NICOLE BRODEUR, PRÉSIDENTE :**

Yes, but you know, we will have to think about that.

**MONSIEUR ROBERT HAJALY:**

I don't think it poses any special problem because the problem with the towers is that they are a massive presence, I mean they virtually crush the adjoining houses.

What you have with a sports field is just a field,  
basically. There is a garden for the Franciscans, the  
Memorial Garden, which would be rather nice to have, there  
is enough space for the two.

But apart from that, I don't offhand, I mean I haven't  
thought about it, I'm going to be honest with you, I don't  
offhand see a conflict there, it is just it would be a  
pleasantly arranged sports field that could be surrounded  
by trees and flowers, for example, at the periphery of the  
middle lot, and it doesn't create any kind of imposing  
presence, which kind of, you know, puts the other houses in  
shadow.

That was my point about the towers, the scale of them  
overwhelms the houses, whereas a sports field wouldn't  
because a sports field is on the ground, you know. And as I  
said, it could be surrounded by some kind of suitable  
border that, if anything, would ameliorate the area. But I  
mean, I must admit, I'm just making this up to some degree,  
you know.

**MADAME NICOLE BRODEUR, PRÉSIDENTE :**

Yes, I was also thinking about the memorial aspect of this.



**MONSIEUR ROBERT HAJALY:**

Yes, that should be there. I mean, I don't see any reason why it couldn't be there. It should be there. There should be some memorial to the Franciscans; I mean, that is pretty obvious, but it wouldn't take up so much space that you couldn't have a mini soccer field or a hockey field.

I mean, just to go back to Mayor Coderre's objection, if we wanted a full-scale soccer field, yes, there isn't enough room for that, but we are aware of that. So we are just asking for something that, you know, where people can be a little active. The same thing would be true of a basketball court. These are not large facilities, they don't take up a lot of room; and the site itself is fairly large, in fact. It extends quite far from René-Lévesque Boulevard to the falaise.

**MADAME NICOLE BRODEUR, PRÉSIDENTE :**

In your presentation you were also referring to four City parks east of the Jacques-Cartier Bridge.

**MONSIEUR ROBERT HAJALY:**

Yes.

**MADAME NICOLE BRODEUR, PRÉSIDENTE :**

Could you tell us more about that?

**MONSIEUR ROBERT HAJALY:**

Well, I looked at the map. I can tell you their names, if you want.

**MADAME NICOLE BRODEUR, PRÉSIDENTE :**

Yes.

**MONSIEUR ROBERT HAJALY:**

Yes, sure, why not. Have I got them written here? Okay, so these are, if you look east of the Jacques-Cartier Bridge, you have Notre-Dame, if you're looking further south as it were, on the island; you have Notre-Dame Street, which there is quite heavily-laden with traffic, including the traffic from the Port, and immediately south of it you have a Port railway which carries the freight off the docks, I guess, and in between those two, the railway and Notre-Dame, there are four City parks, you know, at various intervals, and I mean, you know, they are not environmentally in a better situation than this park would be, I mean, squeezed between a highway with heavy traffic and a railway. I can tell you their names, if you want: One is called Bellerive, the other one is called Champêtre,

then there is Rolland-Gauthier and Jean-Baptiste Curato. 1

I mean, you could just look them up on the map, you 2  
don't have to take my word for it, that's how I found out 3  
about them, I just looked at this map of the city of 4  
Montreal. 5

Now, these are all City parks, I mean the City obviously 6  
didn't think that it was objectionable to put them between 7  
a heavy traffic-laden road and a railway carrying 8  
freight. So, if they can do that, what is the objection to 9  
this park? 10

Look, I think it is, excuse the expression, BS the 11  
reasons given for not having a park there. There are 12  
powerful financial interests involved, the Developer, the 13  
Franciscans, and the City. That's the reality of the 14  
situation, plus the fact that the City doesn't really have 15  
to account to us because we can't, bottom line we can't get 16  
rid of the mayor. 17

In any other Borough, we could threaten the mayor, if 18  
you don't provide us with the services we deserve, we need, 19  
you're out. We can't say that to him, and he knows it, he 20  
knows it. 21

In the original version of the mega city, the Borough  
mayor was elected as all the councillors were elected by  
the people, but that was changed, and not only is he not  
elected by us, he gets to appoint two other councillors to  
create a blocking majority on the Council. That was a  
deliberate deal between Tremblay and the Quebec government.

**MADAME NICOLE BRODEUR, PRÉSIDENTE :**

So thank you very much, Mr. Hajaly.

**MONSIEUR ROBERT HAJALY:**

Okay, you're welcome, thank you.

**MADAME NICOLE BRODEUR, PRÉSIDENTE:**

J'inviterais maintenant madame Hélène Cornellier. Bonjour.

**MADAME HÉLÈNE CORNELLIER:**

Bonjour. Dans la présentation, je ne voulais pas, de toute  
façon le mémoire est très court. Je ne voulais pas refaire  
le mémoire et j'ai plutôt inclus des petites citations de  
l'actualité très récentes, c'est-à-dire des choses dans Le  
Devoir de ce matin et dans La Presse de la fin de semaine  
qui touchent justement le développement du Centre-Ville.

J'avais pas ces informations-là quand je vous ai rendu