

Mme MARTHA BOND :

120 That's so much better.

LA PRÉSIDENTE:

125 Sorry. Thank you for telling me. Alors, on vous écoute.

M. ROSS STITT:

130 Bonjour. Premièrement, I'd like to say our thoughts go out to the flood victims and all the people that have helped. It was quite a huge disaster. And I won't get too much into flood plain, it's not part of my brief, but I think this should make us really rethink what we're doing as far as development, including this project, and specifically this project, since it seems to be surrounded by a flood plain and in a flood plain. And we look forward to receiving a *nouvelle carte*, a flood zone *carte* and flood map on behalf of the City. That should be a priority.

135 I have been a resident of Pierrefonds for the last twenty-seven years and have been a witness to many changes in this area during this time and unfortunately, many of these have not been for the better. My main concern would relate to a diminishing quality of life caused by two factors.

140 The first is the ever-increasing volume of cars and thus traffic on our roads along with the accompanying congestion that this causes; and this being, not only on the main road arteries that travel north-south and east-west (for example Sources, St-Jean, St-Charles, Pierrefonds and Gouin boulevards) but also on the side streets that pass by our homes where speeding and safety concerns, parking and traffic are ever-increasing problems.

145 This also affects our quality of air and therefore, our health. The reliance and the dependence on the automobile and the ever-increasing number of them (per family) has

indentured us to them and this, despite the implementation of more rush-hour bus routes and dedicated bus lanes.

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The second area of concern for this reduction in quality of life would be the loss of natural green space and the densification of our neighbourhoods and streets. The population of Pierrefonds, twenty-seven years ago was well under 50,000 persons whereas now, with the inclusion of small Roxboro, it is over 70,000 people. We have witnessed the build-up of and encroachment by new housing and commercial units throughout Pierrefonds/Roxboro as well as other locations on and off the island.

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But one of the main reasons that myself and others, chose to live here is that we are so close to nature. We have the two regional parks at Cap St-Jacques and L'Anse-à-l'Orme as well as the 185 hectares in question which are the former farm fields which abound with nature (on the east side of Chemin L'Anse-à-l'Orme). If one continues west, you will continue to be surrounded by nature and green space as you pass through Bois-de-la-Roche into Senneville (home to Carya Farms) and then Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue. There still exists a vibrant farming community in this Corridor with Carya, les Trois-D-Pierres, Bois-de-la-Roche and MacDonald Campus of McGill University. Biking, hiking, swimming, bird watching, nature-loving, cross-country skiing and snow-shoeing are available here for all to enjoy and not just inside the two parks but in the entire area. I personally have done all of these activities. Many people come out here to escape from the city to experience nature.

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To allow the construction of a huge housing development of almost six thousand (6 000) new doors along with three (3) new schools and commercial units, with this area will permanently change its nature in a totally negative manner. It will destroy animal, bird, and plant habitat by destroying the green space in which they live and reproduce. Since this space purifies our air and helps cool the temperature, with its loss, the air quality will be much worse, the temperature will increase. This loss of natural space combined with the addition of over ten thousand (10,000) more vehicles will increase carbon emissions dramatically and thus add to the greenhouse effect and global warming.

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180 More does not mean better and in fact, in this case, will mean the opposite, which is worse! More houses, more roads, more vehicles means less green space, less biodiversity and poorer physical and psychological health (due to poorer air quality, less exercise and freedom, and more stress).

185 Why must this 185 hectares of green space be preserved?

1. The Need for Natural Green Space:

190 The land in question “en friche” is the last, largest, unprotected area left on the island of Montreal and is a huge parcel on the east side of the Corridor L’Anse-à-L’Orme. It is part of a natural green belt that runs from Lake of Two Mountains south to Angell Woods in Beaconsfield. It passes through Île Bizard, Pierrefonds, Senneville, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, Kirkland and Beaconsfield. This land is the habitat to over two hundred and seventy species (270) of birds, animals, plants/vegetation including approximately sixty (60) deers (Footnote # 1 David Suzuki Report # 1, # 2 on Pierrefonds West. Marie-Eve Roy et Jérôme Dupras. University of Quebec at Outaouais. Feb. 2015, 2016.). Some of these species are listed on the Environment Canada Public Registry of Species at Risk (Footnote # 2: “Avian Species of the Kestrel Fields”. Richard Gregson, June 2015.) The birds use this land as their reproductive habitat and migrate to and from the area as do other species. Where will they and the other species that live here go to survive if their habitat is taken from them?

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205 Connectivity is an important element in species survival. They cannot just remain in certain areas but they need buffer zones to protect them and allow adequate space to live, roam and hunt for food. In other words, you cannot destroy green space in one part of this Corridor (for example on the east side of L’Anse-à-L’Orme) without affecting all the species that use the whole corridor space (east, west, north and south). This is why Sylvain Perron, the Coordinator of the Mouvement Ceinture Verte,

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stated that the Pierrefonds Development Projector “Cap Nature” (so ironically names by the developers), should not be allowed.

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If allowed this corridor with its inherent species will be impossible to maintain. *L’Anse-à-L’Orme est manifestement un élément central de la Ceinture verte du grand Montréal. En détruisant 185 hectares de milieu naturel, l’établissement d’une infrastructure naturelle majeure sur l’île deviendra impossible* » (Footnote # 3 : Cité Nouvelles. January 4, 2017.)

2. Trains, Planes and Automobiles :

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This project will bring over ten thousand (10,000) more vehicles onto our roads. This is not sustainable development or *développement durable*, even with the addition of the Urban Boulevard that will go from boulevard Gouin to Highway 40 (north to south). What will happen once all these vehicles will arrive at Highway # 40? This route is presently congested during rush hours and accidents, but will become unmanageable if this project goes through. The highway # 40 will become a huge parking lot and will contribute to all the negative items mentioned above regarding the earth and our health. Montreal as stated its desire to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 30% below 1990 levels by the year 2020 (Footnote # 4: Global Warming Adaptation Plan for the Island of Montreal for 1=2015-2020. Montreal Gazette. November 24, 2015. Page A6). How can this target be achieved with more cars on the road?

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3. Urban Sprawl:

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The development of this project will increase urban sprawl. Despite the fact that the REM (i.e. *Projet de Réseau Électrique Métropolitain de transport collectif*) would aspire, hopefully, to take cars off the road and encourage public transit, we cannot be assured that this will occur. There can be no guarantee that these new arrivals in these 10,000 cars that live in Cap Nature will be going to the new Kirkland Station

240 (located north of highway 40 near rue Jean-Yves) to take the train rather than driving
into Montreal or elsewhere.

245 The REM will add to sprawl by making this new housing development more attractive
to potential purchasers who can purchase a housing unit near a train station. A good
marketing tool! This station, unfortunately, will add additional pressure and has to
develop L'Anse-à-L'Orme. I believe, however, that the overall use of the car will not
diminish but will increase.

250 More roads, more cars equal more traffic. People living nearby the station will
become hostage to transit users/neighbourhood invaders who will arrive from outside
areas (for example: Vaudreuil/Dorion) to drive through their streets to park at the
REM parking lot that will accommodate up to 2,000 vehicles.

255 4. Negative Impact on Neighbourhoods:

260 If this project is permitted, there will a large negative impact on existing residents in
their communities. Some reasons have been stated above. Do local residents want
this project? The answer is a resounding NO. Many, if not most, moved out to west
Pierrefonds and Timberlea in Kirkland to be closer to nature which would contribute
to a higher quality of life. Pierrefonds residents that live on streets off of Gouin (both
north and south) do not want it nor do the residents in Héritage-sur-le-lac. How do I
know? Because I have spoken with many of them over the last two years at their
homes, in their neighbourhoods, and at community events. Do the students and their
parents and their teachers at École Charlemagne want it beside them? The same
265 answer: NO. What will be the effects on the two existing parks at Cap St-Jacques
and L'Anse-à-L'Orme? Will the users of the parks (Montrealers) continue to use them
as before when they will now encounter a small city across the street from them with
all the negative aforementioned aspects? Perhaps not.

270 Do our neighbours in Timberlea, Kirkland want this project? No, because I have gone
door-to-door there and not one person among hundreds said that they want this
project.

275 As this Corridor passes through Kirkland, getting close to the Highway 40, the land
narrows considerably when it shifts to the West between the home on the west side
and the elementary school Margaret Manson on the east side. There is not room
here for a sixth lane, north/south Urban Boulevard. Will the Minister of transport have
to repossess the land and close down the school there? Have Mayor Gibson of
280 Kirkland and Mayor Beis of Pierrefonds adequately informed their citizens of this
project? If the residents do not want this, then why our Mayors not respecting the
wishes of their electorate? Whose interests are they advocating for? Local
neighbourhoods will be over-run with traffic which will dramatically affect their quality
of life. Traffic gridlock creates a trickle-down effect where road users use local streets
as short cuts to avoid congestion.

285 According to the City of Montreal's Master Plan (i.e. the PMAD), all future
development should be transit oriented development (i.e. TOD). By definition, this
means that all development should occur within a quarter mile or a five to seven
minute walk to a transit hub (Footnote # 5: National League of Cities Sustainable
290 Cities Institute). The Kirkland Station would not fit this definition. Despite the REM,
the Pierrefonds West Development is contrary to TOD.

5. Follow the Money. Who Pays for What?

295 Our Mayor Beis has been asked several times at several different Council Meetings if
the City or Borough has done a cost benefit analysis of this project. His answer has
been consistent by answering that, as far as he knows, no study of this type has been
done. He stated that it would be a good idea to have that information and hopefully, it
will be done and submitted. When? There are many examples of situation where the
300 tax-paying public are left paying for items that the developers were supposed to pay

for. This would be in regard to infrastructure costs of new roads, sidewalks, sewers, water pipes, hook-ups, etc. How do we know that the residents will not end up being on the hook for paying for these costs? What guarantee will the borough/city give us, "*les payeurs de taxes*"?

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What will happen in five, ten or twenty years when the new infrastructure begins to break down and need repair? Why should the taxpayers have to absorb these costs while the developers will be paying nothing and have been long gone with their massive profits from this project? Should they not pay into a future fund to cover these types of expenditures? While I understand it is not the mandate of the OCPM to rule or adjudicate on this, due to its political nature, I believe, however, that this is an important element to be considered. A detailed, unbiased, impartial cost/benefit analysis must be done on behalf of the borough. This would allow the residents a good idea of what this project would really entail from a financial point of view. A recent study by Juste Rajaonson shows the negative impact of the project.

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The REM Station will also create an inflationary impact on the surrounding neighbourhoods. It is a fact that the closer that one lives to either a metro station or other transit hub, the higher the property values and rents are. Within 500 metres, 13%; within a 1,000 metres, 5.8%; and within 1,500 metres, 4.7% (Footnote # 7: La Presse, January 13, 2015). This will lead to higher property taxes and prices for goods and services.

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6. The Big Contradiction:

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Mayor Coderre constantly states that he wants Montreal to have a minimum of ten percent (10%) of the land as preserved green space. The present figure is five point four percent (5.4%). Toronto, by example, has well over ten percent (10%). The only way to obtain this 10% figure would be to transform brown fields back to green. The recent cutting of over one thousand trees (1,000) at Parc Jean Drapeau and many on the Falaise St-Jacques as well by the Minister of transport makes one wonder if this

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335 is just more “lip service” by our Mayor. He wants to destroy the 185 hectares of green space by encouraging the development of L’Anse-à-L’Orme while pretending to be green. This is totally unacceptable. He talks out of both sides of this mouth. Unfortunately, being part of Montreal with our current Mayor being under Mayor Coderre, we have much less autonomy than if we were a demerged city.

340 I have said to Mayor Coderre at his press conference on June 26, 2015 and several times afterwards that “We, the residents, do not want this project.” I have asked on many occasions the same question: “so, who wants it and who will it benefit?” no answer was ever given by Mayors Coderre or Beis.

345 I’m a proud member and cofounder of Sauvons L’Anse-à-L’Orme - Save L’Anse-à-L’Orme, along with Sue Stacho and Don Hobus and others. We are a grass roots, citizens group founded in May 2015 whose sole goal is to stop this development of 5,600 housing units and to preserve and protect this 185 hectares upon which this new city would be built. Montreal Mayor Denis Coderre, accompanied by borough mayors Jim Beis of Pierrefonds/Roxboro and Russell Copeman of NDG/Côte-des-Neiges, announced this plan on June 26, 2015 at a press conference at the Chalet at Cap St-Jacques Regional Park.

350 We meet on a regular basis. We wrote a petition and started going everywhere whith it to get signatures and to make citizens aware of this project and ways to oppose it. We attended all City Council Meetings in our borough and at Montreal Hotel de Ville, and many at the Agglomeration Council meetings as well, and at adjacent cities and boroughs (for example: Pointe-Claire, Beaconsfield, Senneville, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, Dollard des Ormeaux, St-Laurent, etc.) We attended as many community events as possible and some forums and conferences, especially any that were environmentally related. We went door-to-door in Pierrefonds West, including Héritage-sur-le-lac and the Timberlea area of Kirkland. We lobbied politicians at all three levels of government, especially during the Federal election campaign of 2015.

365 We wrote briefs to the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement (i.e. the
BAPE) on the REM train station and the REM train and to the City of Ste-Anne-de-
Bellevue regarding their particular urban plan (the PPU) for their northern sector. We
spoke with and were interviewed by various media. We sponsored an Art Exhibit in
Plateau Mont-Royal and we even had a 30 kilometre pilgrimage from Mount Royal to
Anse-à-L'Orme. We started bringing people out to the land to show them what we are
370 fighting for and continue to do so. We set up a website and a Facebook page. We
along with our legal counsel filed two injunctions related to one parcel of land and to
the road. We spoke with and help organize students at CEGEP Gérald Godin and
Fédération des CEGEPS de Québec; also at Concordia, McGill University, John
Abbott CEGEP, Université du Québec à Montréal, École Charlemagne and
Pierrefonds Comprehensive High School, etc. We obviously participated in all the
375 recent events and hearings of the OCPM regarding Pierrefonds West.

Sauvons has received widespread support from local residents and citizens
throughout Montreal and off-island as well. Many local and international
environmental groups have supported us. Projet Montréal, the Official Opposition at
380 City Hall, has supported us and had officially asked for a moratorium on green space
development. This, unfortunately, was voted down by Équipe Coderre. Vrai
Changement, the official opposition party in Pierrefonds has also supported the
preservation of this land and its motion to this effect was also voted down by Mayor
Beis, Councillors Talbot and Gignac. Our famous petition presently has over eighteen
385 thousand signatures (18,000). When we mention this development, we often hear
"Enough is enough" or "What? More condos?" People are fed up with constant
development. To conclude,

390 Recommendation:

I suggest that the city purchase this land (this 185 hectares) and/or swap this land for
city-owned land that the developers (the five owners) could build on elsewhere.

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The City could ask Quebec and Canada for funds to do so – whether in cash or in long-term loans. Even the *Caisse de Dépôt* could have a financial stake in this joint venture. Under no circumstances should the value of this land be the future, foreseen value after projected development (that is the speculative value) but should be the current assessed value or even the past value of 2009 before the lots tripled in value in 2012 evaluation role. No real estate owner is legally guaranteed an increase in the value of their investment (that is guaranteed a profit). One who speculates is not entitled to a financial windfall. Once this land is purchased, it should be subject to the status of “Permanent protection” and a process can be initiated as to its future usage. This would guarantee for future generations, the right to access this beautiful landscape.

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I thank you, the Commissioners of the OCPM, for your consideration in this matter but I plead with you to make the right and just recommendations.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

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Thank you. Question?

M. JOSHUA WOLFE, commissaire :

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Yes. Mr. Stitt, you spoke of urban sprawl. At the end of your paragraph on that, you say that this train, the proposed REM station, will add additional pressure to develop L'Anse-à-L'Orme and that the overall... despite the station, that the overall use of the car will not diminish but will increase. Can you expand a bit on that, what makes you think so?

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M. ROSS STITT :

I believe that people will come from all over to access the train station, from neighbouring aligned regions and there's no... so there will be a lot of traffic obviously in that area. And I also believe that, like I said, there is no guarantee that the people in the new housing development will

425 be driving their cars to the Kirkland station or the Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue station and taking public
transit. Nobody can guarantee that that would be the case. If that would be the case, perhaps...
what is happening is there will be an addition of cars obviously on the road. Whether it is short-
term use to the train station, and taking the train east and west, or downtown, or wherever people
are going, but with the addition of 10,000 homes or 10,000 cars rather, you know, there is no
430 guarantee that the train is going to reduce traffic.

M. JOSHUA WOLFE, commissaire :

O.K. Thank you.

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M. ROSS STITT :

Is that it?

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M. JOSHUA WOLFE, commissaire :

Yes. Thanks.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

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On page 4, I think, of your brief, at the end of the fifth section on "*Follow the Money. Who
pays...*" you have some numbers saying that within five... the higher the property values and
rents are. Do you have the source of these numbers? It goes to *La Presse* but do you remember
where these numbers came from? - It is in the second paragraph. Yes.

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M. ROSS STITT :

Footnote # 7?

455 **LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

Yes.

460 **M. ROSS STITT :**

Yeah, it's from *La Presse*.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

465 But you don't know where...

M. ROSS STITT :

Where did I read? No, I didn't have time to research where they got the numbers from.

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LA PRÉSIDENTE :

Ok.

475 **M. ROSS STITT :**

But you have the date of the issue: janvier le 13, 2015.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

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O.K. we'll look it up. Fine.

M. ROSS STITT :

485 I know there are other reports too that say any development or creation of a metro or transit hub does have an inflation or an impact on the property value.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

490 On the value of the properties.

M. ROSS STITT :

495 On the value of the properties, and often what happens is, the people... lower income people sometimes have to move away from their neighbourhoods if they get too expensive obviously, gentrification.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

500 I see. Thank you very much, Mr. Stitt.

M. ROSS STITT :

505 You're welcome.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

J'inviterais maintenant monsieur Olivier, s'il vous plaît. Bonjour, Monsieur!

510 **M. ÉRIC OLIVIER :**

Bonjour!