

Brief for the Redevelopment of the Children's Hospital Site

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Who We Are:

We are long-time residents (over 20 years) of Shaugnessy Village, specifically of a small street, Seymour Avenue, toward the western border of the Peter McGill sector of the Ville Marie arrondissement. The street is a jewel of Montreal's traditional Victorian architecture with well-kept houses that are occupied, and for the most part owned, by couples and families with young children.

The Positive Aspects of the Planned Project

- we appreciate the fact that the developers have addressed the need for a community centre in the neighbourhood that would welcome intergenerational activities or volunteer possibilities for students or seniors, the possibility of a community kitchen, a gallery space for emerging artists and the potential of including social re-insertion programmes such as a community café for those in need
- the developer has somewhat taken into consideration the fact that the neighbourhood needs more green space/ recreational space
- the developer has included social housing, though the units would not be large enough to accommodate families, a growing need in the neighbourhood

What Worries Us about the Planned Project

- during demolition of the existing building, the possibility and the risk of toxic dust, including asbestos, released into the air
- the vibrations and noise of the pylons during the digging for the foundations of the towers that may cause damage to the foundations of our historical homes
- the volume of new residents in the neighbourhood in a downtown sector that is already populated by over 34,000 citizens (according to the 2011 census). We are

already one of the most densely populated neighbourhoods in Québec. This substantial increase of citizens in the neighbourhood will undoubtedly increase traffic on some of our secondary and tertiary streets (including Seymour Ave.), fewer parking spaces for residents (already there are fewer parking spaces for residents on Seymour than for non-residents)

- increased traffic from delivery trucks for the commercial sectors of the proposed projects
- the fact that the sector already lacks services for residents and that this has not been satisfactorily addressed by the proposed plan (green spaces, recreational/play spaces for children as well as a school)
- the traffic issues that will ensue (and hence risk for children and seniors) from the addition of so many new residents as well as those who will be temporarily housed in the hotel that is proposed
- the height of the proposed buildings, one as high as 32 floors (!) which will cause substantial blocking of sunlight and serious wind issues (this is definitely an issue for those of us who live on Seymour)
- the lack of respect for the architectural heritage and aesthetics of the neighbourhood by building huge highrises that don't at all recall or reflect some of the characteristics of the historical importance of the surrounding built environment. (on this issue, the low reliefs by Henri Hébert on Pavilion D should be preserved and kept on public view in our neighbourhood)
- the potential noise from ventilation systems on the roofs of the towers. We already have issues with Lasalle College whose ventilation system frequently creates deafening noise at certain times. We had problems with the Children's Hospital's system several years ago and after many complaints from us, the issue was resolved. The potential noise from ventilation systems should be considered before construction begins.

What We Would Like to See

- buildings that are not so tall
- buildings that are aesthetically pleasing and not the ugly concrete and glass towers that we have so much of in Montreal
- more social housing for families
- more attention to green spaces (accessibility to everyone, more space)
- consideration to the quality of life of current citizens- limiting traffic flow, increasing residential parking for residents and decreasing non-resident parking, informing us how you will address noise and pollution issues both during and after construction
- Attention to the architectural heritage of the neighbourhood in the way of materials and style - preserving the Hébert low reliefs and perhaps incorporating them into the community centre

In Conclusion:

Many of our friends and neighbours are feeling that we do not have a voice in the decision-making concerning the evolution of our neighbourhood. The recent example of the development of the Franciscan property is case in point. Despite the great need for recreational and play space for the families in the neighbourhood and the Franciscan property being an ideal space for this, our wishes fell on deaf ears. Mayor Coderre assured us that many of our questions would be answered with the development of the Children's site. This, we have yet to see. It is indeed unfortunate that the provincial government sold this public property to the private sector in 2015, thus giving citizens even less control than we might have had otherwise.

The recent discussions by the city and provincial governments to do away with citizen-led referendums (Bill 122) that would give us more possibility to voice our opinions about real estate plans once again threatens to stifle our democratic rights. Many of us also feel that the OCPM hearings are simply for the form, and that for the most part the decisions have already been made. We hope that the outcome of this hearing will prove us wrong.