

Alors, je vous remercie beaucoup, Madame, Monsieur.

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M. DINU BUMBARU :

On vous remercie de votre attention et on vous souhaite un bon succès dans cette consultation dont nous bénéficierons tous et toutes.

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LA PRÉSIDENTE :

Merci beaucoup. Je propose qu'on prenne une quinzaine de, une pause de 15 minutes et après il y aura deux personnes qui seront invitées à présenter leur mémoire. Merci beaucoup.

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- SUSPENSION DE LA SÉANCE –
- REPRISE -

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

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Bonsoir, Madame.

MME FRANCES DE VERTEUIL :

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Bonsoir madame la présidente et les commissaires. Je ferai ma présentation en anglais. Mais je comprends assez bien le français, so, je suis prête.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

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We can ask our questions in French.

MME FRANCES DE VERTEUIL:

Chaque personne dans leur langue maternelle.

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LA PRÉSIDENTE :

Parfait, allez-y.

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MME FRANCES DE VERTEUIL :

Mont-Royal Park is part of Mont-Royal Mountain which I will refer to as the “Mountain” in my presentation. And the Mont-Royal Park as the “Park”.

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Camillien-Houde / Remembrance Road the city’s most scenic traverses the Mountain connecting the East and West and runs along the northern perimeter of Mont-Royal Park and not through the Park.

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Pedestrians and cyclists have several car-free paths in the Park notably Chemin Olmsted. These car-free paths have several access points from the perimeter of the Park and are well used by pedestrians and recreational cyclists. Over the years, on Camillien-Houde, I have seen elite cyclists training but very rarely pedestrian traffic. This is not surprising. Why would they choose to walk on a shoulder of a very steep road when a pleasant wooded path with more gradual inclines are close by?

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The pilot project stops cars from using Camillien-Houde / Remembrance Road as a tourist route. Presumably to improve access for those who use the Park and to reduce pollution on the Mountain. The results of the pilot project as presented by the city on November the 8th, showed that despite the fact that there was a use reduction in cars using the road, there was no increase in cyclists or pedestrians or a reduction in pollution. In fact, there was an increase in pollution and more traffic on the roads around the Mountain where there is several universities, schools and hospitals. Thus, making it more dangerous for those pedestrians and cyclists who are far more numerous than those on Camillien-Houde / Remembrance Road. They also noted that there was a reduction in the number of cars using the car parks compared to 2017. They link that to the fact that 2017 was Montreal’s 375th anniversary.

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Given that the weather this summer 2018 was much better than in 2017, I think it is reasonable to attribute the decrease to the pilot project. The city could have looked at the 2016 data.

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Another point noted on their report was that on six Sundays during the pilot project Camillien-Houde was shut to all cars and buses including public transport for Cyclovia. From 7:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. usually the road was closed until 1:00 p.m. A total of 1 500 people participated in the six events. An average of 250 participants per event. Sundays are one of the busiest days at the Park. Is it right to deny Montrealer's access for the benefit of so few elite cyclists?

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Now, for my personal observations on the pilot project. I have lived very close to the Mountain since I arrived in Montreal in 1977 and have regularly walked and skied in both Mont-Royal Park and the Mountain as well as enjoying the beautiful drive over the Mountain. I live on the west side. The problems, major accessibility for visitors arriving by car from the West on Remembrance Road on weekends, as the parking lots on Beaver Lake are often full with long lineups of idling cars queuing.

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Total parking capacity at Beaver Lake is 176 places whereas at Smith House, its 549. The first weekend, the police just directed this motorist back down the hill despite the fact that the parking lots at Smith House were not full. Later on, once the parking lot was full, the security interviewed each motorist one by one before allowing them to proceed to Smith House parking. This created long lineups on the left-hand side of Côte-des-Neiges at the turn off for Remembrance Road.

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By September, some people at given up as there were fewer lineups. There were fewer families and people in the Park even on good weather days on the weekend. Picnic tables were available, my own observation corroborated by several in my circle. It created an East-West divide. I used to shop and dine out frequently in the Plateau and on the Park Avenue. But

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stopped during the pilot project. It just took too long to go around the Mountain even in off-peak hours.

1360 In effect, the pilot project created probably the world's largest roundabout around the Mountain. Lots of people I spoke to going from East to West and vice et versa, unless, they stopped. It privileges the super-fit cyclist who traverses the Mountain has part of their training routine. Often riding above the speed limit and racing through stop signs and traffic lights on Côte-des-Neiges. I had observed the same behaviour on Camillien-Houde section before they started the pilot project. I am surprised that they had not been accidents as I have seen nemesis
1365 between cyclists and pedestrians. The report and accident on the Camillien-Houde / Remembrance Road submitted by the city only documents accidents involving at least one car. It discriminates against the elderly with reduce mobility and people with compromised immune systems. Example, patients receiving chemotherapy, as they cannot enjoy the beautiful drive over the Mountain or as cycling, walking or taking public transport is not an option for them.

1370 I really miss not being able to drive over the Mountain and taking the beautiful everchanging panoramic views. Stopping at the Camillien-Houde lookout when I had visitors, or it was a very clear day. The belvedere Soleil. What an ill-conceived idea. The report by CIMA noted multiple problems. I cannot understand why it was installed in the first place as there is
1375 already a pedestrian path in the Park. Not on the shoulder of the narrowest section of the road that allows people to walk from Camillien-Houde lookout to the escapement that overlooks the Belvedere Soleil where the view is even better. It was horrible to watch pedestrians trying to cross, cyclists coming across and the cars. Belvedere Camillien-Houde, I did not visit during the pilot project. However, I did note that the structure put in place for the café, before the start of the
1380 project, effectively blocked a lot of the view from the cars.

In my opinion, closing Camillien-Houde / Remembrance Road, the city's most iconic to transit traffic because of one tragic fatal accident last year, the only one since the road was built
1385 in 1961 was an overreaction. I agree that steps need to be taken to improve the safety of all who use the road. Installing a barrier to prevent U-turn and improve signage in French were a good

first step. However, the signs should also be in English as this is an area frequented by tourists. And clear instructions on how to access Camillien-Houde coming from East would be helpful.

1390 Regarding the STM buses. The majority of the users are descending or boarding at
Beaver Lake and Smith House. I would recommend that the city reconfigure the Chemin Sud,
the two-lane road that runs between Beaver Lake parking lot 115 and Smith House parking lot
P117 so that the STM buses can stop at Beaver Lake and Smith House in both directions
instead of having transit users having to access Remembrance Road. This road is currently only
used by the park's maintenance vehicles. This would certainly improve access to the Park for
1395 people would reduced mobility and those with the young families. The pedestrian's walkways
would be in place for those wishing to access the cemeteries.

1400 I would also allow cars to enter the P16 parking lot at Beaver Lake from the road on the
south side of the road which is currently blocked. I would remove the additional stop signs and
bus stalls that were installed during the pilot project and instead use photo radars to ensure that
speed limits are respected.

1405 I would suggest that the city licenses bicycles so that cyclists could be more easily held
accountable for their actions. I sincerely hope that Camillien-Houde / Remembrance Road will
remain open for all transit traffic and not turned in a training tracks for elite cyclists.

Thank you.

LA PRÉSIDENTE:

1410 Merci, Madame de nous avoir fait part de vos observations et votre expérience. Une
question que j'aimerais vous poser parce que vous avez référé souvent à votre l'expérience des
piétons. Qu'est-ce qui pourrait être fait en termes d'aménagement ou d'organisation pour
améliorer l'expérience des gens qui veulent se promener sur la montagne?

1415 **MME FRANCE DE VERTEUIL :**

1420 Mais, moi je me promène beaucoup sur la montagne. Je sors directement. J'habite à
Blueridge Crescent qui était très proche de la montagne, so, c'est très facile pour moi. Pour les
personnes qui voulaient piétonner, la partie d'asphalte sur le bord de la route, c'est pas le plus
reposant. On avait des excellents paths on the mountain itself...

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

1425 You can answer in English.

MME FRANCES DE VERTEUIL:

1430 There are excellent paths on the mountain. They are not well sign posted. I am often on
the mountain and I am often directing people how to go to A, B, C. For example, there is a lovely
path that goes right from the belvedere on Camillien-Houde up a few steps and on to a circuit
that takes you right above the escarpment which I spoke about, which overlooks where they put
up that Belvedere Soleil. The view is better, they have a bench up there. Its lovely just to go and
sit there and watch. Maybe these should be publicized. The pedestrians should be walking in the
1435 park where it is wooded, pleasant and quiet. You do not hear cars, even when there was transit,
you do not hear cars once you are inside the mountain.

1440 The cross-country ski trails are absolutely beautiful. There are also available in summer.
To me, it's very sad that this is not publicized more. The city, a few years ago put in the cycle
path that allows access from Remembrance Road that goes up to Hill Park Crescent and then
joins up with all the trails. You have the new route that was put in alongside Côte-des-Neiges
that's very pleasant and it's actually fairly well used. And of course, we often walk in the
cemeteries, particularly the Mont-Royal's cemetery which has very interesting lectures
sometimes on the different trees, et caetera. And I have walked right around onto the University
1445 of Montreal's site, the old ski jump site. And I think the gentleman's idea that that be turned into a
place for particularly off-road cyclists and training cyclists is excellent. Because, unfortunately, a

lot of off-*piste* cyclists are damaging the mountain by doing the mountain biking on the Mont-Royal Park itself. Maybe another area of the mountain would be more appropriate.

1450 **LA PRÉSIDENTE:**

Merci.

1455 **MME LUBA SERGE:**

You talked about the Belvedere Soleil. You seem to have a strong, you're having strong reaction to it. Was it the access to it, was it the construction?

1460 **MME FRANCES DE VERTEUIL:**

The construction of it looks like garbage. It looks extremely tacky. We had visitors from away twice and I mean, they could not believe that such a beautiful. One of them had been in Montreal in the 60's, they could not believe that a structure like this had been put up in such a beautiful public park.

1465 **MME LUBA SERGE:**

So, it's not the idea of having something there?

1470 **MME FRANCES DE VERTEUIL:**

1475 Well, I think of having something there is terrible. It's at the narrowest part of the mountain. Very close. Very close also to the, not that far from the entrance for people to enter the Mont-Royal cemetery and I mean, it encourages cars to park on the pavement. You had the pedestrians trying to cross, the cyclists who didn't take on anything, you know, we had people dodging the pedestrians, the pedestrians dodging them, people running across and a lot of very

young people just occupied, this is fairly small. And the steep access was bad. I mean it's really inappropriate. I mean, that to me was the worst installation of the pilot project.

1480 **MME LUBA SERGE:**

Thank you.

1485 **LA PRÉSIDENTE:**

Well, thank you very much.

MME FRANCES DE VERTEUIL:

1490 Thank you and I will be sending in the rest tomorrow.

LA PRÉSIDENTE:

1495 J'inviterais maintenant monsieur Noah Stevens, please, s'il vous plaît. Bonsoir, Monsieur, good evening.

M. NOAH STEVENS :

1500 Good evening. Good evening Mrs. Brodeur, good evening Mrs. Serge, good evening Mr. Lebeau. Thank you for according me this time to be able to address your commission. I would like to share with you, forgive me while I adjust the microphone.

1505 I would like to share with you and with the people present in this room, my feelings about the mountain and about the very ill-conceived proposal to block circulation on Remembrance Road / Camillien-Houde Way.