LA PRÉSIDENTE :

Au revoir. J'inviterais maintenant monsieur Robin Doak, s'il vous plaît.

M. ROBIN DOAK:

Alors, je peux commencer.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

Vous êtes prêt? Bonjour, Monsieur.

M. ROBIN DOAK:

Oui, bonjour, les commissaires. Je peux parler en français, mais je…

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

As you like.

M. ROBIN DOAK:

Je peux expliquer ma passion plus en anglais parce que sinon, je vais prendre une demi-heure au lieu de dix minutes.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

Si vous êtes plus passionné en anglais, go for it.

M. DAVID HANNA, commissaire:

Go for it.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

Donc, Monsieur, je vous demanderais de présenter votre collègue parce que… pour la sténographie.

M. EPHRAIM HERNANDEZ :

Bonjour. J'opère le PowerPoint. Mon nom, c'est monsieur Hernandez.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

Bon. Monsieur Hernandez. Allez-y.

M. ROBIN DOAK:

Thank you for your time today.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

Fine.

M. ROBIN DOAK:

I'd like to introduce myself as myself and my brother as the owners of 785, Mill Street which is the only private property in the Pointe-du-Moulin to be developed. And it is right at the entry into Old Montréal.

We'll give you a second picture now.

So, here, you can see the actual location of 785, Mill and you see Mill Street crosses the new bridge and runs down southward. My brother and I are machinery dealers. I'm actually trained as a geologist and him as a mathematician. We became machinery dealers back in the 70's and because we had a passion for machinery, and particularly what has developed also antique machinery. And we have sold machinery, bought and sold machinery all over the world since the 1970's. And we acquired this building from Agriculture Canada back in the 90's, and we have property along the Canal and we have become passionate about the history of the Canal.

So, I would like to make this comment that a lot of people look at the Pointe-du-Moulin and they see the silos and they say: « oh, old silos ». I see the silos and I say: « oh, new silos », because there were no silos there in 1900 and our interest really is in what happened on the Canal.

I get emotional, by the way. So if I start crying, don't be surprised.

Our interest, really, is in the history of the evolution of the Canal between the period 1820 when I didn't exist and 1920. So, I'm gonna give you something that I've condensed from an hour of lecture. So, I'll try to make it quite quick. So If I can have the first picture.

This represents the start of the Lachine Canal. It is stated 1826, we're not sure if it's an exact image. And, to give you an idea of what happened, there was a big party on the 17th of July in 1821. There was a live band and they said: « let's dig a canal ». So, imagine what you do after a party. Somebody gives you a shovel and says « go 15 kilometers that way ».

Let's just move ahead here. What's important to see in this picture, we know the gates are approximately correct, the depth gauges are approximately correct. And if you look in the upper left, you'll see the windmill, which is windmill Pointe-du-Moulin. Okay, we'll go to the next picture.

So, this is a map from 1836 and you'll see the canal exist at this point and if you look carefully, you'll see the two windmills that are on the point. So, it can be pretty sure that the picture that we saw previously actually is the right view. And what else is important in this picture? Notre-Dame cathedral was under construction. We can see the farms of James McGill, McTavish, Louis-Joseph Papineau. We can see the original location of the very first foundry in Montréal, vehicle foundry, which is now occupied by Cité Multimédia, which I should have remembered.

And this is a fascinating, fascinating, fascinating map to look at. This is the sort of thing that we want people to be able to examine and understand. Let's look at another picture.

So, the canal was to small at the beginning and in 1844, they decided to enlarge it and get it deeper and wider. And this is an image of what was happening at that time. it's hard to see the details, but you will see a lot of horses and a lot of people with picks and shovels and... David's Black Bridge which has been rebuilt four times since then. You'll see it's on pilings. You will see 785 Mill, which is our property just behind the bridge and you'll see, on the right end side, locks under construction. We'll go to the next.

So, this is our property in 1853. We own, presently, lot number 1 and half of lot number 2. This property was rented by Frothingham and Workman. And was is really important about what happened in 1844, was that when the locks were increased in size, they put a series of what they called hydraulic lots which was the start of manufacturing, serious manufacturing in Montréal. And there was a whole road of hydraulic lots, it fact, there were 20 of them. And Frothingham and Workman had lot number 1 and half of lot number 2. There was a 7 foot drop in water level between the water in the canal and the water in the river and that was used to power machinery. There was no electricity, then, of course. That was used to power the machinery along the hydraulic lots. Let's go to the next.

So, this is what the turbines looked at the time. The ones that would have been there would have been in the lower left and the one on the right, is one that has been dug out since then by Parks Canada, presumably, at one of the locations. And we'll go to the next.

So, who are these guys? This is mister Frothingham. As you can see, he's a rather elegant gentleman and he ended up owning the largest distribution company of hardware in all of Montréal. This is what he did for Old Montréal. So this is the Ostell building built in 1852 and it was the base of Frothingham and Workman. Part of it burn down next door, so he's moving me faster than I want to go. So, part of the Frothingham's operation burn down and he built this building in 1871. And if you look at it, it's magnificent. All in cut lime stone and he put this building up in two months. If you can imagine doing that today, it would take two weeks just to decide where to put the orange cones.

Here, you can see the Frothingham and Workman complex which is right behind Place Royale, which is an iconic location in Old Montréal. Most of you have been there and you can see how significant what he contributed to Old Montréal was. Let's move ahead to the next.

This is mister Workman. So who was mister Workman? Mister Workman was his partner. He originally came from Ireland. He joined the firm in 1830 after working with his brother on Tooners Papers in Montréal. The company grew and grew and he became, he was the president of City Bank in Montréal. He thought... this was a very empathist individual. He thought it would be a good idea for workman to be able to save, even small amounts of their wages. He cofounded the City and District savings Bank so that workman could save their things and that City and District eventually became the Bank Laurentienne. And what happened in 1868, he was elected mayor of Montréal. And he did such a good job that he was re-elected in 89 and he was re-elected in 1870, as well, sorry 69 and 70.

Before he died and while he was still alive, he was very positively directed towards improving the lives of all Montrealers. He gave a lot of money to charity, and he helped the working people save their money and take care of themselves. And it's a very good legacy to look forward, to look toward for the future of Montréal. So we'll move to the next.

So, this is a map from 1859 and it's a very significant map because it has a lot of things on it that are important for the history of Montréal. So, you will see the emigrant sheds, which everybody has heard about, where 3 500 people died, effectively, of typhus and ship fever. And a lot of people in Montréal tried to save their lives and died as well. 6 000 people all total in Québec died and this is the source of the Black Rock, which most of you have heard of. You'll also see Grand Trunk railroad is now established, The Victoria Bridge in the bottom right had not yet been opened. It won't be open until... of the following year.

And if you look at the, if you look along the canal itself, you'll see hydraulic lots. So, this was the driving force of industry in Montréal. And if you look at the right end of the hydraulic lots, you will see, in fact, that if you want to built silos there, there's nothing to build them on. The point being that, there was no Pointe-du-Moulin, as we understand it today. Okay, we'll go to the next.

Frothingham and Workman grew, they became a very significant country company, as I mentioned. This is the front cover of a book, which is in the collection of the University of Alberta. It is actually the catalog from 1872 and I've read a lot of it and it's rather remarkable because it gives you a serious understanding of how people lived. We'll go to the next.

This is a fascinating document from 1880. This is the Frothingham and Workman complex, which at this point, had expanded and grown. At the Cote-St-Paul locks, I can explain all the hydraulics and everything works here, which I don't have time to do. But it's interesting to look at these drawings from 1880, which are magnificently done. These are insurance drawings, drawn by insurance companies to describe for themselves how the companies protect themselves from fire. So they can calculate their risks. And if you look at the fine print on the left, you'll see descriptions of where the piles of water are, where the hoses are, where the fireman are, whether they paid for their uniforms or got free uniforms. It's really a remarkable document.

And if you look at the bottom - go back to that one for a second - If you look at the images at the bottom, which I should go through because I can't see what's on the screen. Anyway, you will see that... I'm gonna see what I can remember here. You will see that each of the buildings of

Frothingham and Workman were dedicated to the production of particular items. So one was making shovels and one was making scythe, and one was making hammer heads and one was making other things. The little red one above was making just axe handles. And when you realise the size of plants that made these things, you realize how people lived. This was really important. If you look in the catalog, if you go to Rona today and you ask for a shovel, you got three choices. If you look in their catalog, you have 40 choices. Similarly for size. This was an agrarian economy, but it was supported by manufactories in Montréal... yeah, I'll just finish on that one.

If you look to the bottom left, you'll see also two little red buildings that made cut nails and horseshoe nails. Cut nails were the nails that we had before we had round nails and cut nails could be the topic of a 20 hour lecture and in fact there's an entire book written on the history of nail making in Montréal. There were 4 000 tons of nails shipped out of Montréal every year and these were the - excuse me - these were the nails that held Montréal together. Similarly, everybody had horses, so they all had horseshoes. And so whole plants were dedicated to these things. The idea here is to communicate how we lived. Okay, we'll go to another one.

Sorry I get so emotional. So, here we are back on Mill Street and the idea is to look quickly at all the hydraulic lots, which actually exist, and what I'm trying to communicate in here is that there is a very very rich history. As I look at my own copy here, Frothingham and Workman was still renting lot number 1 and they were providing a 150 horse power of hydraulic power to a flour operation, which was right beside.

If you look farther to the left, you'll see an engine works and I will get to that in a minute, because we seem to have jumped... where's the boat? We jump it, no? We did? Did you cut me down on time? Sorry.

Let's just look at these. So, in the middle, we also see Peck Benny which was the last rolling mill that was ever operating with water power in Montréal and to the left of that, you'll see Pillow Hersey which was also a major, major manufacturer of cut nails. If you go home and

Google cut nails on the Internet, you will find some very interesting things. Plants working still in the US with machinery manufactured in the 1870's and producing cut nails. We'll go to the...

Okay. So, here I'm moving to an absolutely magnificent document. This is a documentation of the Montréal Water Works. And if you look at this document, you will realize what a remarkable state of engineering capability we had achieved by the 1880's. And we are still operating without electricity and with very crude machine tools.

On the right end side, there's a water wheel which is used, which is consuming a 1 300 000 gallons a day to operate the pumps. To pump Montréal's water to the top of the mountain, actually to the McTavish reservoir. On the left, you'll also see a turbine doing a similar thing with a subversive pump and on the bottom, you'll see pipes which were actually made on Mill Street, which are 12 100 feet long, pumping water to the top, almost to the top of the mountain, pumping water to the reservoir.

If you look at this drawing of Montréal, you see the white dot in the upper left? That's the reservoir. That's the McTavish reservoir to which this water was actually pumped in 1870. And those pipes were excavated under the Lachine Canal... where are we now...

Apparently, I'm overly consuming time, here. So, this building is a building at McGill University called the Workman building and this is a photograph taken in 1901 which shows the type of machinery that was used at the time and as you will see, all machines are running from what's called line shafting on the roof. This is the type of equipment which interest us enormously and now we will go to the last photograph.

So this photograph is taken off the Internet. I can't tell you exactly where it is, but our object at 785 Mill is to put in the ground floor of the building a Centre d'interprétation which will allow people to see and understand and actually play with machinery made at the turn of the century.

And my brother and I have accumulated this type of equipment, we have actually examples of pretty well everything in this photograph and other examples from the late 1800's. And we would like to make it accessible to the public as part of an interpretation center of the industrial industry of the Canal during that period, from 1820 to 1920. And we feel that it is important for people to... well, you heard a lot of patrimony and restoration. And there is a huge resurgence and interest and hands on understanding how things were done.

And when I say that mister Frothingham put that building up in two months, we stand on the shoulders of giants, effectively. So, the objective in visiting, I thing the object in visiting this place is to be able to: number 1, understand, not only how things were done, but what a challenge it was to solve the problems that were faced and if you look back in history, you'll find that things were blowing up all the time, and boilers were blowing up, ships were sinking, nobody knew really what happened and they would go ahead and build another one and try again.

And now, when I started my story, I think we had 1.6 billion people on the earth. And now we have 7.3 billion people. So we have to think where we're going and we have to look where we came from and this is a really, really important concept for all of us to absorb. I'm a scientist and I believe in global warming, totally. And I think that the, I think it's incredibly imperative that we, not only know where we came from, but we know that we solved problems in the past that we can solve them in the future.

So, apparently, I've burned most of my time if not all of it. So, if you have any questions, I should be happy to even try to answer them in French. And that's it.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

Merci beaucoup, Monsieur Doak, de nous avoir présenté… fait cet historique-là et de nous avoir présenté, aussi, ce projet-là qui vous tient très certainement très à cœur. Une première question, c'est où en êtes-vous dans votre… dans les travaux de mise sur pied de ce Centre d'interprétation là? Quand est-ce que, est-ce que ça va ouvrir à un moment donné, à court terme?

M. ROBIN DOAK:

On est assez bien avancé, disons…

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

Oui?

M. ROBIN DOAK:

Dans le sens qu'il y a des propositions qui sont déjà déposées avec la Ville.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

Oui.

M. ROBIN DOAK:

Et puis, ça va être présenté beaucoup plus par monsieur Vianney Bélanger, lundi.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

Oui. Ah oui, c'est vrai.

M. ROBIN DOAK:

Mais notre but de vous présenter ça aujourd'hui, c'est de vous expliquer notre passion, effectivement.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

Vous nous l'avez communiquée.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

Question?

M. DAVID HANNA, commissaire :

I guess I'm tented to ask, given the passion, given the collection which sounds...

M. ROBIN DOAK:

Can I answer in French?

M. DAVID HANNA, commissaire :

Yeah, sure. Alors, étant donné la collection…

M. ROBIN DOAK:

Non, non, mais ça va, ça va, dites-le en français.

M. DAVID HANNA, commissaire:

Étant donné la collection, j'estime, sans doute, impressionnante, la passion, le site, qu'est-ce que vous voulez communiquer à la Commission, au juste, par rapport au projet? Qu'est-ce que vous cherchez de nous, au fond?

M. ROBIN DOAK:

Mon objectif effectivement, c'est de vous transmettre le concept qu'on doit inspirer du monde dans le sens qu'on manque la connexion de faire des choses physiques avec nos mains, maintenant. Aujourd'hui, il y a beaucoup de monde qui pense comme ça et, en même temps, on manque de compréhension des choses, des solutions qu'on avait trouvées quand on manque de manières de régler les choses, on avait essayé ça, on avait essayé ça, on avait essayé ça. Puis, maintenant, hein, on a la chance, avec la science, on a la chance de trouver des solutions à ce qu'on doit faire pour le futur. Et on doit être inspiré par ce qui vient de se passer.

M. DAVID HANNA, commissaire:

The reason I ask is because you were here for A3B, which we just heard.

M. ROBIN DOAK:

Yes. I was.

M. DAVID HANNA, commissaire:

Yes. Perhaps you weren't here a couple of days ago for Les Forges?

M. ROBIN DOAK:

No, but I know them, I know the history of the building and I know the previous tenant and I know the pumps that were removed from that building that should have never been removed, but not by the Forges.

M. DAVID HANNA, commissaire:

Right. Understood. You realize then there's a kind of critical mass that's developing in terms of traditional machinery?

M. ROBIN DOAK :

And I am a hundred percent behind it. Absolutely.

M. DAVID HANNA, commissaire:

So, your vision is therefore... for Mill Street?

M. ROBIN DOAK:

Yes. My vision is for Mill Street. particularly my property, obviously. And to contribute to the resurgence in interest in how things were done and we talk about restoration, which is critically important for me and I regard the Silos - hugely important, don't get me wrong, I wasn't making a joke. I regard them usually important, but the period before de silos, the word is a berceau. This was the foundation of Montréal. And there was 600 companies, hundreds of stories, and we can communicate. I left out a big part of my presentation because I'm bla bla bla. But, come see me later and I'll talk for five hours.

M. DAVID HANNA, commissaire:

Will do. Thank you very much.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

Alors, on aura l'occasion de suivre votre projet, lundi, avec une autre…

M. ROBIN DOAK:

Oui, c'est ça.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

… Présentation.

M. ROBIN DOAK:

C'est ça. Exact.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

Parfait. Alors, je vous remercie beaucoup, monsieur Doak.

M. ROBIN DOAK:

Merci bien.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

Je suggère qu'on prenne une petite pause de cinq minutes et qu'on revienne par la suite avec les représentants de l'Administration portuaire de Montréal.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

Merci.

SUSPENSION ET REPRISE DE LA SÉANCE