

April 11, 2011

A Citizen's Proposal
to improve the quality of the living environment
de l'ouest du centre-ville

Proposal

To install trees on one or both sides of Rue du Fort between de Maisonneuve and Rue Ste. Catherine.

Benefit

This will add vegetation to a section of du Fort, which suffers from a relative lack of shrubs and trees, and will provide a source of pleasure to both the residents of that immediate area (many of whom are retired, but still voting) and those who pass through it on foot each day on their way to and from work.

Background

Rue du Fort is a one-way street, which leads south from Rue Sherbrooke to the expressway entrance just below Boulevard Rene Levesque.

1. There is no vegetation of any kind on either side of rue du Fort in the block between Lincoln and Sherbrooke. However, there are no doors to civic addresses on either side of du Fort in that block. Instead, on the west side, there is the east side of a building that opens onto Sherbrooke. On the east side of du Fort, there is a parking lot and the west side of a building that opens onto Sherbrooke.
2. There are mature trees in the (extra-wide) sidewalk on both sides of du Fort between de Maisonneuve and Lincoln.

However, there is no in the public space (boulevard) that borders du Fort.

The houses that front on the west side of du Fort in that block maintain lawns in their small front yards. One property (2030 du Fort) is enclosed by a hedge and has additional vegetation on either side of its entrance.

3. **However, in the public space (boulevard) on du Fort between de Maisonneuve and Ste. Catherine, there is no vegetation of any kind.** There is no shortage of vehicles, cement and asphalt.

The apartment building at 1425 du Fort on the east side of the street does have six, extremely small (bonsai-like) trees in planters on the du Fort side of the building's property just below the balconies of its second floor apartments.

There is also a hedge on private property in front of the townhouse at 1419 du Fort (east side of the street) and, in recent years, carefully tended flowers, many of which have been provided by the borough.

There is no vegetation on the west side of the street in this block, except for a tree and a small, grass lawn on the private property at 1428 du Fort at which a daycare centre has recently opened.

4. This pronounced lack of vegetation contrasts markedly with Rue Ste. Catherine where trees line both sides of the street , as in such other great cities as Barcelona.

Properties

The civic addresses of properties on the east side of du Fort between de Maisonneuve and rue Ste. Catherine and opening onto Du Fort are:

- ???? (a small, modestly-priced) hotel
- 1445 (an apartment building that has inside mail boxes)
- 1425 (a residential townhouse that has been converted to the Dragon Grocery (Chinese) grocery store.
- 1419 (a residential townhouse)
- 1417 (a residential townhouse that was converted 15 years ago or so to a law office (Danielle Oknine).

The civic addresses of properties on the west side of du Fort between de Maisonneuve and rue Ste. Catherine and opening onto Du Fort are:

- 1420 (P-A Supermarket)
- 1428 (a single dwelling that has been converted to a daycare centre.
- 1434 (a 2-unit building)
- The other structures are the (long) east side of a high-rise apartment building that opens on de Maisonneuve and the back (north) side of the building that opens on Ste. Catherine and which, it is understood, will be converted into a sports bar.

Traffic

The width of du Fort between de Maisonneuve and Ste. Catherine is sufficient for four lanes of four vehicles. In fact, there are only two lanes of traffic as one lane is used for parking on each side of the street. Occasionally, there is only

one lane of traffic if a delivery truck or automobile illegally double-parks near Provigo.

Parking

The cars that park on both sides of the street during the day belong largely to shoppers at P-A, the supermarket, it is believed and, to a lesser degree, customers of the Dragon (Chinese)) grocery at 1425 du Fort.

However P-A maintains a parking lot at the rear of 1426 and 1434 du Fort where its customers can park without charge for 45 minutes. (P-A owns these two properties.) . This free parking area seems to be sufficient for many autos.

Both sides of du Fort between de Maisonneuve and Ste. Catherine are used for overnight parking. Some of these parked cars at night (particularly on the east side of the street) are owned, it is believed by residents of the apartment building at 1425 Rue du Fort.

Most trucks park on the east side of the street – from 1419 Du Fort and southward to Ste. Catherine. The trucks typically are suppliers who are making their daily or less frequent deliveries to the Provigo at Ste, Catherine and du Fort and/or Dragon Grocery at 1425 du Fort.

The Proposal

1. Reduce the number of lanes on Rue du Fort from four to three between de Maisonneuve and Rue Ste. Catherine and:
2. Restrict parking to one side of the street, maintaining two lanes (as at present) for moving vehicles.
3. Widen the sidewalks on one or both sides of Rue du Fort in that block and:
4. Plant (transplant) trees in the widened sidewalks.

Impact

1. During the day, persons who wish to shop at P-A (and who account for a large proportion of the parked cars) will be forced to park in the parking lot provided by P-A.
2. The number of (free) overnight parking spaces lost will be in the neighbourhood of a dozen. However, it is believed that there is available indoor parking space for rent in the district (e.g., at the hotel just south of Ste. Catherine) and, of course at Plaza Alexis Nihon.

Submitted by George and Ann Robinson