

My name is Harvey Lev and I have a long connection to the neighbourhood. I have been in the neighbourhood since 1963. I employ between 15 and twenty people in my paper business and have been a resident of this neighbourhood I am an active supporter of community and art projects.

My family and I have grown and prospered in the old Griffintown. We continue to prosper financially due to the incredible land values caused by the rampant speculation of the last 6 years.

I will divide this memoire into 4 distinct sections.

The Destruction of the Democratic Process

What makes a Successful Neighbourhood

Patrimoine-Heritage

Hope ; Inexpensive suggestions for improving the neighbourhood

## The destruction of the democratic process.

Like the little boy who cries wolf Montreal has held meetings upon meetings concerning the neighbourhood and its' redevelopment. I participated in one as long ago as 1990. In March 1990, after a series of meetings, studies and public forums. There was a document published called " Synthèse des forums des 12, 13, 14, et 19 mars 1990. Some of the recommendations included;

- a) a plan to build affordable and subsidized housing
- b) a plan to respect and valorize the patrimoine and architecture of the area
- c) Turn the Lachine Canal into a park, including a marina and cafe-terraces while encouraging the re-use of the industrial buildings for industry. The concept being to have jobs located near to where people live.
- d) build a bridge to connect rue Guy with rue Bridge to improve the access to the Pont Victoria and ease the congestion on Peel and Wellington
- e) the improvement and addition of green spaces.

There were many more recommendations but the following stand out ;

" compte-tenu de la situation socio-economique de la population du sud-ouest, l'accessibilite au logement social et l'amelioration de la qualite des logements demeurent des objectifs essetiels;"

"Les programmes actuels en habitation sont souvent inadéquits, insuffisants ou difficilement applicables;"

"L'expertise des organismes du milieu doit etre reconnue et milite en faveur d'une gestion decentralisee et partigee des interventions en logement;"

From all of the above recommendations - only the Canal was turned into a park which operates from May until October. The creation of this park has had the effect of gentrification of the canal.

The city made a deal with Divimco 5 or 6 years ago. In exchange for the new PPU of Griffintown which allows for construction as high as 60 meters, The developer was to invest 50 million in infrastructure, public transit, and green spaces. This investment has not happened. Why not? There has been no call to account There has been no oversight. The politicians we have hired to represent us have failed in this function.

The city engaged the conseil de patrimoine to advise on a plan to protect the heritage of the entire sector governed by the

PPU. The plan was critical of too much redevelopment, advised that the existing buildings be protected, refurbished and recycled to maintain the character, heritage and quality of life. The document was referred to by city officials when a question of heritage was asked. The comment was along the lines of ' we have engaged our experts'. The document lies somewhere gathering dust and has been completely ignored. Our elected officials have failed us.

The OCPM held hearings regarding the tri-postal and the Bonaventure project.

Against my advice, (I suggested re-using the existing building for either a senior's complex or for an educational and international center for the development of peace and for a sculpture park-green space). The OCPM gave the green light to Canada Lands to demolish and rebuild. The site will have 8 or 9 structures ranging from 8 floors to 22 floors, new asphalt streets and will include green space reserved only for residents. To now I have seen no indication of any affordable or social housing to be made available at this site. The price range for the recently announced Basin du Havre Quai-Pier 2A ranges from \$354 to \$450 per sq.ft or between \$350,000 and \$450,000 for a small family unit. I believe we have now solved the problem of affordable housing for the privileged.

The Bonaventure hearings were very passionate. Over 60 citizens including myself and groups made excellent presentations to the Commission. These people, community groups, engineers, city politicians, transportation experts, and residents wrote and then addressed the commission. The commission released its report. The city waved it once at a press conference again ' we have engaged our experts' and then hid the report underneath that of the conseil de patrimoine in the belief that out of site is out of mind.

It will be curious to see how many memoires you will receive from the various large developers. As far as I know, none participated in the meetings this past month. None participated in the Bonaventure OCPM hearings and only Canada Lands participated in the Tri-postal hearings with a designed project. It was clear to me that at the time Canada Lands was trying to act in a responsible manner. It is also clear to me and I expect to everyone else that the project would go forward no matter. Canada Lands is a crown corporation and is not subject to any other regulatory agencies. In other words, they are the federal government and we are not subject to our rules.

At the meetings in January 2012, at the ETS, I did notice that almost all of the tables were peopled by volunteers whose desire it is to preserve and create a neighbourhood with a quality of life. These people are to be congratulated and valorized for their passion and efforts. Many of them lost their days wages. If history repeats itself they will be ignored. They will be ignored because the city of Montreal has become co-opted, the democratic process polluted. I might note again that there was not any representation from any of the developers.

All too often we see studies and public hearings used by politicians for their own benefit. I think that we need to institute a follow-up on each and every study. The citizens can then determine what

issues are addressed and which are ignored. The politicians must be held to account. They must listen to what the citizens are saying. When dossiers are passed to different advisory boards, expensive and exhausting studies made only then to be ignored it is unacceptable and it is both insulting and cynical to tell the public that the city has done the necessary studies. Our paid politicians have no right to be cynical. They have no right to waste our money. They have no right to dictate to us. I suggest that whenever a study is authorized and carried out that there must be a follow up. If the recommendations are not acted upon or the studies are shelved then the politicians need to explain why, perhaps before an official tribune. If the answers are not forthcoming, frivolous or contemptuous as is often the case, then I believe that the offending parties should be forced to repay the costs to the public purse. It would be time for someone to be held accountable for wasting public monies and adding to the cynicism that Montrealers feel about the political process. The citizenry feels ignored, only 1 in 3 votes, not because they do not care but because they feel cheated and disenfranchised. The mayors and the counselors are in a position to be elected by 1/3rd of 1/3rd (Approx 11%) of the voters in Montreal. They make decisions on our future and spend our money, without a legitimate mandate and are arrogant and unaccountable.

We must demand an end to secretive societies such as the SHM which are funded by public monies and which have no legal obligation to report or account to the citizens.

As a romantic I would hope that the recommendations of the OPCM will be accepted and acted upon  
As a realist I fear for romance.

At this point, as I have tried to make clear I am quite tired of the lies, half truths and hidden agendas of our elected officials. I suspect that I am not alone

## What makes a Successful Neighbourhood

There seems to be a question as to who owns our streets, the citizens or the city

There seems to be a question as to who owns the canal. Parks Canada or the citizens

A successful neighbourhood is one in which the residents like to live, work and play in.

A place where people like to spend their leisure time. Montreal has a number of such urban centers. The plateau, Rosemont, N.D.G., lower Westmount, the village at St Catherine & Amherst, Hochelaga- Maisonneuve and some others. In the above mentioned areas the buildings are 2-3-4 stories high. The streets abound with life. Ball hockey on the side streets, masses of people along the shopping streets. Boutiques and chef owned restaurants and cafes, book stores, clothing stores etc. etc. We do not see this in neighbourhoods of 15 story buildings.

Griffintown is becoming an example of the suburbs moving downtown. Montreal trying to copy Laval, Nun's Island and Brossard . People do not walk in these neighbourhoods. The commerce is almost totally limited to national & international chain stores located in shopping malls surrounded by monster parking lots. The jobs are all low level, the profits all taken out of the area. At best some of this commerce will sponsor a hockey team's shirts. They do not and will not contribute to the life of the city. The proof lies in the participation of the developers in processes like this. The developers have no interest or intention in living amongst us. They will build the buildings with only one goal, which is to maximize profits. They do not care about how the community develops. The Southwest Borough has insisted that the developers build a percentage of low cost and social housing. Most of these will appear around Monk Street or some other future ghetto, and will not be incorporated within all the luxury projects in Griffintown. The shame however does not lie with the developers; it lies squarely in the hands of the politicians who enable rampant uncontrolled development. The city has no plans for a community. There is not one school in the planning; It appears that it is strictly a tax grab. Jean Dore made an urban plan and the next administration ignored it.

Recently it comes to pass that the city may have the intention of a large park bordered by William, Ann, Dalhousie and Ottawa street. This is to be shared with a bus corridor running 1400 buses per day through said park. This park is supposed to appease us for the destruction of the important heritage building " Rodier" which the city intends to destroy. Will this park be a space for residents to enjoy tranquility? Will the vegetation co-exist with the fumes of 1400 buses? Will the lungs of the parks users, families, the elderly, and teenagers profit from the air quality? I suppose that there will be no soccer field or hockey rink as that could cause conflict with the buses. Where are the city planners? Is everyone on holiday or sick leave?. The future Bonaventure Urban Blvd will be a fence that divides Griffintown. We will be forced to cross 11 lanes of commuter traffic a road wider than Rene Levesque, to go from one side of Griffintown to the other. This is all being orchestrated by a secretive society within city hall.

On a personal note I have been served by the 2nd reserve on my properties within 3 years. I am not allowed to build or rent on the reserved section, when I endeavour to discover what it is that the city wants to do with my property I am met with silence. The lawyer from the city sent me to ask the SHM about their plans. They do not respond. I am investing in the community. I have my business in this location for 30 years, I employ between 12 and 25 people, only one comes by car, I pay my taxes, yet I am not allowed to know what they have planned for me, if anything. I have been told that I will be compensated if they take my property and I will receive no compensation if they don't. I cannot make plans. The city does not care if they imperil the New City Gas concert hall development. The city does not care about my business, my employees or me. The city only reminds me to continue to pay my taxes on a timely basis. My city does not care about me and if my city does not care about me then your city does not care about you.

# Patrimoine-Heritage

The city treats its history as a joke to be disposed of as quickly and efficiently as can be done. The City orders up studies by well paid professionals and then hides them.

Our institutions act with impunity. The Dow Planetarium moved to another borough. The ETS demolished the chimneys of the Dow Brewery without permits. They were built when Peel street was Colborne and Mountain street was McCord. These chimneys towered over the neighbourhood for a century. They viewed the traffic on the Lachine canal, added smoke to the polluted air and watched as Place Ville Marie and Expo 67 were built.

Too much trouble to maintain let's tear it down. Who really cares about our past? The ETS wants to rename our district. Did they ask us? Will they ask us? Some romantic name like "District d'innovation" Doesn't it makes you feel warm and fuzzy. Don't you want to go for a walk?

The Lachine Canal was the motor that created modern Canada. Ten years ago it was bordered on all sides by the remnants of the factories that built this country. Names our children will recognize from street signs or cute Condo projects without reference. The Canada Sugar Company, the first Canadian sugar refinery founded by John Redpath in 1854 The Ogilvie Rolling Mills, , Northern Electric, Molson, The steel Company of Canada (Stelco) and another 600 odd companies. Everything has been torn down or gentrified without regard to patrimoine.

In 1990 the canal was lined with operating business including warehouses, machine shops, a paper mill, a lumber yard, steel mills, a major mail sorting centre, mechanics shops, flour mill, and various sorts of manufacture. There were almost no condos. Today all that is still functioning are the flour mill and a clothing manufacture. Everything else has been or is being transformed into luxury condominium towers ranging from 6 stories up to 22 floors. The average apartment price = \$400 per sq,ft or \$400,000.00 for a small family unit. There is not even 1 apartment that has any of the criteria continually recommended in this or any study since made that addresses the criteria of affordable housing. Each industrial building has either disappeared, has been converted into expensive housing, or will be soon. The artist's lofts have disappeared, the business incubator factory buildings now all gentrified. Before the Lowney,s project, the buildings on the site hosted 165 small businesses, some established, some start-up. Where have they and the local jobs gone. The heritage aspect has been totally ignored. Even parks Canada moved locks on the canal to new locations for its' convenience, ignoring their history. The ETS moved into the first Dow building and covered the red bricks and the arches with cement stucco.

# Hope

Inexpensive suggestions for improving the neighbourhood

The city seems to talk to us in Billions. Perhaps it is to confuse us. Who among us understands such an enormous figure? The cynic in me says that it makes it easier to steal from. The public perception is such. We hold our politicians in very low esteem. We do not admire them. Something is wrong.

My 1<sup>st</sup> recommendation would be to put a full stop to publically funded mega projects. They seem to be very poorly planned. They rarely come on time or within budget. I would suggest that the mega projects be broken up into more manageable size and that they be policed by a tribunal with powers to ask and get answers. The tribunal should have the right to stop work on projects that are not properly managed.

Below is a list of some affordable, simple ideas that I think can help to revitalize the area. The list could be endless. Each and every one of you could add something to it.

Create;

- 1) A poet's corner
- 2) A Speaker's corner
- 3) A budget for the installation and purchase of Sculpture as well as fountains with the goal of having at least 1 art work per corner and throughout all of the green spaces.
- 4) Chairs and Benches and garbage containers to be installed everywhere these could be integrated with the sculpture and artwork. Phoenix has done this with great success.
- 5) Installation of Photos and Art works on the walls of the buildings throughout the sector.
- 6) Graffiti Walls, sidewalks, and streets. The citizens should be encouraged to express themselves.
- 7) The city should install public toilets in the green spaces, such as installed in Paris
- 8) The citizens should be given full access to all Deadend streets for community uses. (Art exhibits, book sales, picnics, etc. etc. This has been done in a few places including for the last 2 years on Dalhousie below Ottawa street. We have had Jazz, rock, and hiphop music. A series of poetry evenings, outdoor theatre, sculpture and artwork, dance and book launchings etc.) This should be encouraged.
- 9) Skating on the Canal.

10) Canoeing and rowboats (without motors) on the canal. It is very difficult to get permission at the moment. As green and healthy are quite fashionable perhaps we could ban any motorized boats.

This could include courses on canoeing, the creation of a rowing club which would then spawn rowing events and courses on boating and water safety.

This would lower the pollution, both sound and chemical, encourage healthy exercise and enliven the sector. Imagine someone who lives in old Montreal or Griffintown would be able to canoe over to Atwater Market to do their shopping.

11) Allow and encourage the caleches to have sleigh rides along the canal

12) Create a cross country ski trail along the canal

13) Offer an half hourly service connected to the MUCTC using horse drawn buses and sleighs connecting the old port with Atwater Market using regular fares. There are examples of Montreal's original horse carriages at the railway museum in Delson. Imagine a tourist brochure offering a service.

14) Creation of a kite park and allowing allowing courses and kite boutiques and perhaps a number of competitions and events.

15) Many of the streets are still cobblestone beneath the asphalt. Remove the asphalt, expose the cobblestone. This would have the effect of slowing traffic. Tourists love it and Movie production companies adore it.

16) Creation of a forum where citizen's suggestions would be heard and debated and if found to have merit, acted upon. It is our neighbourhood. I am certain that the quality of the other memoires will be full of ideas that could enrich our lives.

17) The city has been looking for a solution regarding the horse caleche barns for 20 years or longer. It might be the time to choose a location to build a traditional looking barn with a proper septic system attached to a couple of fields where the horses could graze when not at work. The horses would love it, the kids would love it, the tourists would love it. Someone could start to give horse riding lessons and there could be a trail through the neighbourhood, a kind of walking tour on horseback

18) Organize open Art studio days (Art Walks) as is done in most cities on a regular basis

19) Allow the creation of small entrepreneurs. Perhaps street food and an art market limited to the works of local artists and artisans.  
Other suggestions;

20) The street grid should be changed to stop flow through traffic. A residential neighbourhood should not be used as shortcut for commuters. This would make the streets safer, cleaner and friendlier. The commuter bus corridor speaks for itself.

Architectural holdings both private and public such as the Wellington Tunnel, the CN tower, the CN turning Railway Bridge, the Art Deco park house and the railway viaduct along Dalhousie should be

protected, restored and recycled preferably for public use. The remaining industrial buildings, warehouses and homes must be restored i.e. perhaps through incentives offered to the property owners.

The city should relax its regulations to allow the neighbourhood to develop in an organic manner. Allowing people to live in their work spaces and allowing small commerce to operate on residential streets. Chain stores should not be allowed.

There should be a moratorium on all new construction over 4 floors.

I am sure that there are dozens of other inexpensive ideas that other citizens have that could be added to this list.

All of these ideas could be funded by a tax, perhaps 1% on new construction and renovation.

All of these suggestions create employment for installation, maintenance, services, artists, craftspeople and instructors and a home for entrepreneurs. All would be appealing for tourists and Montrealers alike. All of them are do-able using thousands of dollars instead of billions. All of these suggestions will contribute to making the area special and people friendly. We do not need Multi-million dollar international competitions to return this section of the sud-ouest to the citizenry. We just need to be left alone and allow organic growth.