

Thank you very much for your contribution.

MME LOUISE CHENEVERT:

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Thank you very much. Good night.

LE PRÉSIDENT:

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J'inviterais maintenant monsieur Irwin Rapoport, s'il vous plaît.

M. IRWIN RAPORT :

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Merci. Bonsoir, good evening. On behalf of Les amis du parc Meadowbrook, a group that wants to convert the 57 hectare golf course in Meadowbrook into a nature park, we want to thank you for having these hearings and we want to support this park and we also see this park as being twinned with Meadowbrook as two large nature parks in the area, which will, as people mentioned, help preserve biodiversity and provide green space.

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I would like to quote two people. Quote: *Omnia rerum principia parva sunt* wrote Marcus Tullius Cicero, quote: "The beginning of all things are small", and quote: "When given the resources and opportunity, tradition oriented Cherokee people would help each other out and take on project for the larger community good." We are seeing this with all the briefs being submitted and the people presenting them. People are raising excellent point of biodiversity and the need for green space. And we have the City of Montréal, the Plante administration bringing forward various projects for the West Island, for the L'Anse-à-l'Orme Park, the Anjou gold course and, of course, this park.

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Of course, what we want is the Falaise be part of this park. Originally, it was presented has the Falaise Saint-Jacques – Turcot Park. We'd like that restored because it's just natural to have this large forest as part of it. So, now, just a few days ago, there was an article saying that

Montreal ranks death last among nature cities in terms of green space with just 250 hectares per 100 000 habitants. Compared to the minimum of 473 hectares on average for large cities. And if, if Montreal going to attain that, we would need 4 575 hectares of green space. So, if I discuss
590 Meadowbrook tonight as being part of this, it's because every bit of green space we have is necessary and it would be great for the City of Montreal and all the municipalities on the island to have a total moratorium on development of green space wilderness, farm lands, marshes and only built on brown fields. We want green space and I know there are thousand people in the Southwest, in NDG and across the island as Louise mentioned, who would be glad to help out to plant, clean up this area of the new park. So, there is a lot of goodwill to do excellent things.
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Having the Falaise Park or having the Falaise Turcot Park, whatever we are going to call the park, having the Falaise, the woods on it, combine with the restored land from the highway and the rail operations, which it needs to be cleaned up in a serious way due to decades of abuse by, with pollution. And obviously the Falaise itself, has mentioned, has been affected by dumping of garbage. It needs to be cleaned up and we need to restore native plants and trees so we can have wildlife returned and it's just essential to have the biodiversity that's threatened in Montreal and a lot of it is threatened and it brings a lot of local extinctions.

605 Now, of course, there are several things that we want in this park. For the Turcot section or Turcot section, we need a lot, it should be 100% green space with trees, pollinated gardens, native shrubs, berry bushes, *et caetera*. Natural paths, absolutely no concrete. Small club house, sorry small chalet that blends in using natural materials and it should be, the chalet should be in the Turcot section and there should be limited paths in the wooden section so that people don't go off into areas that are being recovered. We don't want to disturb wildlife and we want, and obviously, once we start restoring it, we want to protect what we have and obviously we've got the endangered brown snake there, you have two endangered plants which I will get to, but... and we need to restore those and you have, and you have, it's an important bird sanctuary, so, it's, we see this park as being for wildlife and for people and it benefits all because, we have areas in the city, actually this part of the city where you have a lot of low-income areas where they don't have access to nature.
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620 So, having that access, easy access to get there is important and obviously reducing the heat island effect is important. So, all the benefits that goes with nature. And you know, part of it
is, obviously, as mentioned having the pollinator garden, monarch butterflies is in trouble and were the northern end of the eastern migration route. We have a lot of endangered insects and there is, worldwide we are seeing insect's population go down. So, that's part of it.

625 One of the things, if I go on, on different subjects, I apologize. Again, thank you for, we appreciate the city doing this, because this is necessary. Now, you've got a park here that, just the Turcot, Turcot section alone surrounded by trains and highways and then you got Notre-Dame which is extremely busy as well.

630 So, it's surrounded by pollution, it's... you need safe access points to get across, that will mean access points with traffic lights and ample time for people to get across speeding, in wheelchairs or just walking and cycling and that's why, if you put soccer fields and baseball fields in a park like this, who wants to play in an area where there is constant noise and pollution. I mean, we appreciate the green space and all that, but it's, maybe it's best to leave things alone and obviously the lake would be great, as Louise Chenevert brought up, that lake is historic, it's been there, it's part of the reason why Lachine was settled and it can be restored and, as I will get into it a little bit later, the underground water infrastructure is there if the city does the work to feed it with natural, with water from the Saint-Pierre River which is in Meadowbrook. So, we can have a natural lake full of fish, aquatic plants, the works, great Blue herons, you get the picture.

640 And obviously, we also want the dalle-park because we need the access from NDG to the southwest borough and we need access to Lachine Canal, cause right now to get to the Lachine Canal you have to go either to Ville Saint-Pierre or to the Glenn Tunnel and obviously the park, the trails as I mentioned should be limited. We could have small trails go around the forested area, but we want to protect that and there should only be one bike route which is at the Cavendish. Should be at the Cavendish entrance because mountain biking has done damage at Mont-Royal and we want people to enjoy the park, but this park is for numerous users.

So, let me just bring this...

650 **LE PRÉSIDENT:**

You have about two minutes.

655 **M. IRWIN RAPOPORT :**

O.K., I didn't mean to go so fast.

660 **LE PRÉSIDENT:**

No, I just trying to make sure that we have time to talk as well.

665 **M. IRWIN RAPOPORT :**

Sure. Let me, I will go directly to the need for Meadowbrook. Meadowbrook is, wildlife for Meadowbrook and the Falaise both use both areas. Meadowbrook right now, which is restituted to golfers for five months a year, can be used for year long, year-round sports, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, bird watching, hiking and Sauvons la Falaise et Les amis du parc Meadowbrook have long been advocating for the need for more green space area and in fact, the mayor of Côte-des-Neiges, NDG, Sue Montgomery as stated publicly, we need more green space and wilderness. And you know, people do need this. So, we would like to see, we would definitely like to see this park created, we want to see the Falaise section added to it and maybe we should have some hearings just to how we can add this. We want to see Meadowbrook added as part of it and you know, they are not contiguous, but with the "bande verte" and people can cycle through to Montreal West and they, a path can be created like the Montreal Fleuve path without, really nice signage so that, get people there. Access points in Côte-Saint-Luc and Montreal West to Meadowbrook and obviously there be access points in NDG to the Falaise and access points to the southwest and obviously they meet to the dalle-park and, I hope I brought cogent points, but the important thing is, this initiative is so welcome by the community and you can count on so many members of the community to participate in the creation of the park as

680 park as a park committee, providing expertise for the Falaise section to repair it and to just help out in planting trees and doing what they can. So, again thank you and we thank you for giving us this opportunity and we appreciate the efforts of the Valerie Plante's administration to bring more green space to the community.

685 **LE PRÉSIDENT:**

690 Thank you. We have a few questions. The first one is, in your brief, you mentioned that you partnered with Sauvons la Falaise to sensitize neighbouring businesses to the importance of this green space. You said, we just wanted to know about that initiative. Who you approached? Did you get any success? And what needs to be done more to get businesses on board for this kind of initiative?

M. IRWIN RAPOPORT :

695 It's going to get into full swing very shortly. The idea is to inform business owners that this green space is important and that this is not a dumping ground as people have mentioned. We suggest, right now there is, currently there is a wire mesh fence, that's insufficient protection. Possibly a wooden fence, obviously using recycle wood could go along the route, you could have small access holes for wildlife to get back and forth, but the important thing is to stop the pollution
700 that's going on there.

705 Have inspectors from the city and the southwest and NDG boroughs go in, determine where the pollution is coming from. Issue fines if necessary or find a way to have a modus vivendi between businesses and the park. But I think, protection for the Falaise could start now without a park, because this forest that has survived is a miracle and we've got 60 species of birds there, we've got a lot of wildlife and we have the brown snake. Efforts needs to be done to do something.

710 **LE PRÉSIDENT:**

And I would imagine that these kinds of new infrastructure would blend in with the
dalle-park that would be part of connecting to the other park as well. Another question that
intrigued us was when you mentioned that the existing railway corridor provides a link for animals
to connect between Meadowbrook and the Falaise now and perhaps it would connect to the...
715 we wondered is, do you have, have you seen or how do you know about, this connection is made
and we wondered what kind of corridors we have to be imagining with this new park that's being
proposed for wildlife. I mean, a railway lines sufficient?

M. IRWIN RAPOORT :

720 They do function. Myself and members of our group have seen foxes, we've seen various
types of birds, obviously there's groundhogs, skunks, racoons, but there is also, in various
sections you see various types of bushes, berry bushes. So there is food along the corridor,
wildlife will find a way. In fact, maybe Lisa mentioned it yesterday, there was sighting of deer at
725 the Falaise, so obviously it connected through the railway tracks.

Right now, because of the commercial industrial development and residential
development, there is no way to have green link between Meadowbrook and the Falaise, which
would be nice, but, but we can do, I mean, there is a lot that can be done. The railways itself
730 provide area for trees to grow, for a lot of species to have a place to exist and there lots that can
be done to work with the railways to not cut trees, and actually allow planting on there.

MME DANIELLE LANDRY, commissaire:

735 In your brief, you talk to the value of water in the project. We know that there's a plan for
a body of water within the park and you mentioned that there's remaining sections in
Meadowbrook Golf Course of the Saint-Pierre River. How do you see the linkages between these
two pieces of water?

M. IRWIN RAPOORT :

745 Well, the Saint-Pierre, say for the Meadowbrook section is buried under storm water sewers. Right now, originally the course of the river went from Mont-Royal downwards and across and it goes to, right now, what you have is Montreal West and Côte-Saint-Luc, you have separate storm sewers and waste water sewers.

750 So, the water going through Meadowbrook would be clean if it wasn't for the cross-connection problems that are being dealt with. So, the infrastructure exists where water, if the city puts a little more money into it, overtime, clean water can be diverted westward into the lake that will be created. So, in a sense, will be daylighting another section of the river and has I already mentioned it, this river and the lake was there, it's on the maps, I have a map here where you can see it. But, it would make, what it would make the park unique, cause it would be a restore lake and Louise Chevrevet, I believe mention there was about 10 lakes that existed and it would require some efforts and money, but as mentioned trees absorbs a lot of water and the lake would also help with future, dealing with future issues concerning climate change-related flooding and efforts like that. We, we have some people in our group who would be glad to provide more information on how we can have a natural lake.

760 **MME DANIELLE LANDRY, commissaire:**

765 O.K. Thank you. In your brief, you emphasized the importance of having a park users' committee to help manage the park. Is that right?

M. IRWIN RAPOPORT :

770 Yes.

MME DANIELLE LANDRY, commissaire:

According to your own experience, how can we sustain the participation of citizens within such a committee?

M. IRWIN RAPOORT :

775 The first step is to say the city wants to have a park users' committee and I have no doubt
that Les amis du parc Meadowbrook, Sauvons la Falaise, the NDG Cyclists and Pedestrian
Group will be there. The Southwest community groups that want the green space. So, they got
their interests and they can provide members to join the board. There are researchers and
scientists and botanists who would be glad to participate. There is a movie called... is it "lost
780 rivers" or "buried rivers"?

PERSONNE NON IDENTIFIÉE:

Lost rivers.

785 **M. IRWIN RAPOORT :**

790 Lost rivers. Where you have in Seoul, Korea and in New York they have been daylighting
rivers and you've had businesses, community groups all offering to volunteer on committees to
help the cities, help the cities restore the rivers.

795 And I think, not only for this park, but I think Côte-des-Neiges, NDG borough and every
borough of the city should have park users committees which would bring together elected
officials, citizens' group, citizens and city and park department employees and we could even
have a central park users' committee that would help, on the global scale.

MME DANIELLE LANDRY, commissaire:

800 And how would you see park people. It's an organization that you mentioned in your brief.
How would you see this organization being of some help in this process?

M. IRWIN RAPOORT :

805 Well, we can emulate the infrastructure they created in the methodology of how they help
other cities. One of the things we could do also, is bring in people from Parks Canada and
possibly get advice from the Interior Department in the United States which have many wildlife
refuges. They actually plan corn and other vegetables cause they know that the migrating bird,
migrating geese and cranes, it's all on the migration route. So, for example, with the Falaise Park,
810 we can have a farm, a farm section where we could plant corn for migrating geese, Canada
geese, we could have... there is lots of expertise that would be glad to volunteer. There is a
group in Montreal called Guerrilla Gardeners where they actually go around and when they see
an open area, they will plant trees, bushes to beautify the area. There plenty of people out there
who I think, if we give them the right call, they will volunteer.

815 **MME DANIELLE LANDRY, commissaire:**

I thank you.

LE PRÉSIDENT:

820 Thank you very much.

M. IRWIN RAPOPORT :

825 I appreciate the time.

LE PRÉSIDENT:

830 J'inviterais monsieur Patrick Barnard, s'il vous plaît.

M. PATRICK BARNARD :

Alors bonsoir, merci beaucoup à la commission. J'étais ici hier soir. J'ai été frappé par la
qualité des interventions, franchement. Le monsieur qui parlait des oiseaux, qui était un trésor.