

# ***Transforming the Bonaventure into a boulevard***

***By Harvey Lev***

## ***Table of Contents***

***1) Introduction- Reflections on the Proposed Urban Blvd***

***2) The democratic Process - mockery***

***3) Costs - The Project is disrespectful of taxpayers monies***

***4) Security - The destruction of a safe environment***

***5) Economics - The impact on me and my neighbourhood***

***6) Le patrimoine & heritage & Culture - the disrespect of history***

***7) Le corridor de pelletage d'autobus - hidden agendas***

***8) Alternatives - ideas to improve the project***

## ***Introduction***

My name is Harvey Lev and I am a long time (over 40 year business and property owner and resident of this neighbourhood).

I feel I must voice my concerns and they are many. I will try and be concise, however as I am directly effected by the bus corridor on Dalhousie most of my effort has been directed toward this. This in no way diminishes my concern about the project as a whole.

The purpose of this brief is to question the need for this dangerous & expensive project in an area that has affordable alternatives and to voice my concern over the lack of any consultations during the entire process.

### **I wear 3 hats**

1) as a property owner, resident (New City Gas as well as others) and business owner directly affected by this project.

2) as a long term resident of Griffintown (since 1963) and as a member of the chambre du commerce Griffinoise. and co-organizer of the corridor culturel Griffintown

3) As a citizen of Montreal.

# *The democratic Process*

I believe in democracy

The SHM in their in the **QUARTIER LE NOUVEAU MONTRÉAL Réaménagement de l'autoroute Bonaventure, phase 1/ Synthèse des études de l'avant-projet détaillé, mars 2009 MESSAGE DE LA PRÉSIDENTE DU CONSEIL D'ADMINISTRATION ET DU PRÉSIDENT-DIRECTEUR GÉNÉRAL** with accompanying photos, claim to adhere to these principles.

In the French version they use “une concertation continue auprès des Montréalais intéressés au développement du havre” “inclusif” et “Un des plus larges consensus”, “un véritable milieu de vie”.

In the English version they use words such as “continuous dialogue”. “consultation” “a model of sustainable development” “An approach based on dialogue and co-operation”

The SHM is a private not for profit body that is mandated by various governments for this project and which is supposedly funded in its entirety by taxpayers. At their option they can disclose which ever reports they choose and hide whichever reports they choose not to divulge. There seems no obligation on their part to impart information and no obligation to reveal how money is spent and with whom they have their consultations or the results of those consultations. The directors are all appointed and other than the mayor they hold no public office.

It is not quite clear why we are here. Allow me to explain. If the mandate of this commission is to review and make proposals for improving the project then it may serve the commission well to ask the executive of the SHM if they really intend to accept the results of these hearings and to question the very intentions of the SHM. I believe that the commissioners will not be very pleased if they discover that the process is being used as a rubber stamp.

Mr Rainville mentioned during the question period in November-December that he has met with me on 3 occasions. The 1<sup>st</sup> occasion, at my insistence, was at a meeting which I will refer to later on in this memoire. The message I received from this encounter was clear . When asked about the project M. Rainville used the term **C'est toutes Cannée** . Roughly translated “Faites accomplies” “ In the bag” “ A Done Deal” I was told that all options had already been investigated and no changes to the project were possible.

Mr Rainville used this term Cannée on at least 2 other occasions when meeting with citizens. His meeting with David Hanna and his meeting with the representatives of the Lowney's residents. The message was clear. There was to be no continuous dialogue, no consultation and no co-operation . **C'est toutes Cannée**

The SHM was very kind to me at that meeting and at the subsequent meeting. We were served coffee and were shown Disneyland type brochures and maquettes and everyone was very polite.

In planning a make over of the Bonaventure expressway and neighbouring streets the SHM, and contrary to the claim made on pages 56 and 57 of ***The avant-projet detaille, mars 2009***, never once invited the citizens of the effected neighbourhood to have any input. The SHM never attempted to study the effects the project would bear on the residents west of the Bonaventure because as far as the SHM was concerned these properties were the domain of the Griffintown Project. The proof of this lies in the fact that throughout the maquettes and photos of the various brochures that the SHM has published and continues to exhibit, all indicate the Griffintown project is still going forward.(e.g. page 17 of ***The avant-projet detaille, mars 2009***) In my initial conversation with M.Rainville he insisted that my properties belonged to Divimco and that this was the reason the SHM never made contact with me.

Since November of 2008 I have been actively involved in participating in the process. I have spent hundreds of hours and written hundreds of letters to the various governmental departments and the private citizens that will be touched by this project. I am not paid. In essence I am a volunteer. This has been for me a very empowering time. The responses I have had have been extra-ordinary. I have met and cemented a wonderful relationship with many of my neighbours. We have met each Wednesday evening for almost a year at my office, which faces out on Dalhousie street, to discuss the various options and to share the enormous burden of dealing with unresponsive bureaucrats and elected officials. In other words we have held weekly public consultations. Apart from the private citizens that attended regularly, I have invited many of the members of the various governing bodies to join us. This invitation has gone out each week and has met with mixed success. M.Rainville has never chosen to join us, nor has anyone else from the SHM offices. Isabelle Hudon sent me an e-mail asking me to stop inviting her.

We have been joined by an impressive list of Urban Planners, Heritage and cultural professionals, community organizers and professors from 3 Universities, who saw fit to send their students to observe our meetings. Many of these private citizens and professionals will be presenting briefs over the next few days, all of them volunteers and unpaid. On occasion we have had present at these meetings candidates from all the political parties involved in the last election from sud-ouest borough.

At the same time I have sent out invitations, again on an almost weekly basis to the very people that are responsible for the various aspects of this project. This is a copy of the invitation.

*"Je m'appel Harvey Lev, je suis le propriétaire de les batisses "New City Gas" sur la rue Dalhousie. Je voudrai vous invitez pour 10 minutes pour montrer les issues concernant ce projet. 5 minutes visuel et pour un café et gateau faites á la maison.*

*J'attends votre réponse.*

*harvey lev*

Again I have had great success. Joel Gauthier was the first to take up the invitation, but refused the cake. He was followed by Stephan Bergeron, Député de la circonscription de Verchères - porte-parole en matière de Transport routier, de Transport en commun et pour la SAAQ. . Candidates in the last municipal election including Louise Harel, Nicole Boudreau, Louise O'Sullivan, Ken McLaughlin, Steve Lemay, David Hanna Sean Murphy, Danielle Godbout, Sophie Thibault (Conseillère d'arrondissement, district de Saint-Henri-Petite-Bourgogne-Pointe-Saint-Charles), Véronique Fournier (Conseillère de la ville, district de Saint-Henri-Petite-Bourgogne-Pointe-Saint-Charles). The entire Conseil de Patrimoine de La Ville de Montreal came and then we had lunch together at the Darling Foundry. The list is long.

Unfortunately the list of those who did not reply in a positive manner is significant in that these people have an obligation to meet with the citizens of the neighbourhood which they intend to change radically. Sadly they have missed an opportunity to improve the project. They were each invited over 20 times.

The commission should know that I have invited Mayor Tremblay or his representative. I did receive an e-mail from the mayor's office acknowledging 16 of my invitations and a comment to the fact that the mayor was in favour of the project as is and therefore was not interested in consulting with citizens. The mayor and his party lost the election in Sud-ouest and in Ville Marie but he remains adamant in not hearing what the citizens of Griffintown have to say. The two major opposition parties thought that the project was so deficient that each had as party policy, major changes, and each would cancel the Dalhousie bus corridor.

I have had no response from Isabelle Hudon regarding these 20 or so invitations, The other members of the board have also chosen to ignore my invitations.

**Julie Boulet**, (Ministre and Jacques Gagnon sousministre of (The Ministre du transport du Québec), The Transport ministry through M.Gagnon sent me a response and suggested that I focus my attention on the OCPM hearings.

### **These people each missed an opportunity for some delicious cake.**

Looking at the "Charte Montréalaise des droits et responsabilités", I can cite at least 2 undertakings(attendu) and 10 Articles that the SHM project contravenes.

## **Costs**

The mayor of Longueuil has publically said that the problem lies in the fact that the terminal is too small. The AMT refuses to allow all of the buses into the terminus due to overcrowding and safety concerns. The AMT is now studying a project to build a new terminal at Peel Street at the cost of tens of millions of dollars..

The costs of this project, especially the bus corridor boarders on the obscene. Imagine how much low cost housing could be built with the hundred plus-plus million to be wasted on the bus corridor. At it's very peak during the rush hour the busses can only be 50% efficient. They always must make the return trip empty.

This does not include the extra costs of expropriation and the legal costs of the various law suits that are in progress and that will arise from the project if it proceeds as it has been presented.

## ***Security- How does one cross the street safely?***

The issue of public safety should be first and foremost. I have spent some time researching bus corridors in operation in various cities in North America and in the world. I have not found any that allowed 2 way traffic on an undivided roadway. A momentary lapse or a little black ice, a head on collision. Add to this a design that allows buses to pick up and drop passengers at a way station and then re-enter traffic. Some of these same passengers will be required to cross over Dalhousie to reach their destinations crossing in front of fast moving buses which according to the SHM will pass an average of every 15 seconds during peak periods. How will they cross the street ? How do the busses re-enter the bus corridor ? At the same time in this 1 kilometer stretch the bus route will traverse four major east west arteries (Wellington, Notre Dame, St Jacques and St.Antoine before it reaches the terminus while negotiating a steep curving descent and 7 sets of hairpin turns, this in each direction on an undivided street. The SHM mentions this on page 31 of ***The avant-projet detaille, mars 2009*** There is sure to be a battle between vehicles, each trying to reach it's destination and the stress (road rage) may well become a serious factor.

With the opening of the viaduct at Wellington there will be 5 completely blind spots along the eastern side of the street and 1 on the West side at Wellington. No bus driver will be able to anticipate what awaits them at each of these street corners. A feasibility study commissioned by the SHM and prepared by Consultants UMA regarding the feasibility for the opening of the CN viaduct at Wellington which concerns only the intersection at Wellington and referred to in the ***"Rapport final-Impacts vibratoires sur le batiment de la New cite Gas aux 172 rue Dalhousie, novembre 2009"*** remains hidden. One might ask why the SHM has not made this study public. Is there anything in it that would cause us concern?

***The avant-projet detaille, mars 2009*** refers to the dismantling of the barrier that the elevated expressway poses between west (Griffintown) and east (Cité Multimedia/Vieux Montréal).

As a long time resident who traverses this almost each day I do not perceive a barrier. At the moment I must cross a cul du sac, and 2 small city streets (Nazereth and Duke), passing safely and without concern under the highway. This route is used by local traffic, bicyclists, pedestrians and is the major route for the horse caleches that serve Vieux Montréal and whose stables are all west of the Bonaventure.

The SHM will replace this with a Bus Expressway and then two 4 lane boulevards with a fifth lane as a possibility. Each one of these Boulevards will handle an exit and an entrance to an autoroute (Highways 720 and 10) These highway accesses are a cause of

concern vis a vis speed and volume of traffic. Each of these boulevards will be as wide as de Maisonneuve or Peel street and together they will be as large as René Lévesque. or University.

This is hardly a dismantling of barriers. No caring parent would not allow their children to cross through such a configuration and it is difficult to imagine elderly or physically challenged citizens or families taking such risk and what of the caleche drivers and the horses. It is not clear if any studies other than geometric street plans have been made that would ensure the safety of citizens.

## ***Economics - my family's future***

The SHM has not made any effort nor commissioned any study nor consulted with business, property owners or residents to investigate the economic effects the project will have on the territory to the west of the viaduct.

Dalhousie is narrow and blind. My properties date back to the 1850's and are my life's savings. Although I was promised an engineering study on the effect of both the construction and the traffic vibrations by M. Rainville of the Societe du Havre, little of substance has been forthcoming. I asked for a copy of the engineering feasibility study that he told me he had commissioned to open the viaduct and which is adjacent to my buildings and I have been refused access to it. Instead I have discovered that the plan includes Massive concrete pillars adjacent to my building along its entire length including the entrances and the removal of the sidewalks along its length. Mr. Rainville has since promised me that this will beautify my property. I have my doubts. I have my doubts that the buildings can remain standing or will ever be again usable. The worst part of this whole situation is that at my 1<sup>st</sup> meeting at the SHM offices with M. Rainville, (which M. Rainville mentioned during the 1<sup>st</sup> OCPM meetings) and the now departed M. Malo, this part of the project was actively hidden from me. M. Rainville took special efforts to show me the project with great pride, public parks with art works and fountains, a new gateway into the city, an international competition for a great sculpture, opening up of the viaduct for cafes and cultural events. Never once was I informed of the massive pillars that would be installed along the entire length of my Dalhousie street walls.

At my 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting I asked why I had not been informed about these pillars. It was explained that there would be a column located approx. every 2.5 meters 8 centimeters from the wall going up and across Dalhousie. These structures are required to hold up the train tracks. I was told that the curve of the track at this location posed engineering issues and that special measures were required. I was then informed that my sidewalk would disappear. I asked about access to my buildings and how this was going to look. In response I was told not to worry as M. Rainville then explained that in this day and age concrete can be made to look very attractive. I asked about my entrance, my delivery doors and 17 large windows and 2 fire escapes, I was told not to worry as I could move the entrance to the other side of the building and as to the windows etc. They were not really important as they looked out on the train tracks and that this had little aesthetic value. I would point out that the Hotel/condo project that the SHM is proposing will have the same view, albeit from a different direction. Will there be no windows?

These buildings that were to be the center piece of the Devimco Griffintown project, built during the 1850's by the industrialists that created what has become Montreal, and which brought the first power to the city and enabled Montreal to become a modern metropolis.

This property is special and will be referred to in other memoires. For example I have been having discussions with Mark Meyer, director of the National Art Gallery in Ottawa and the formerly le musée d'art contemporain de Montréal to transform the site into a joint annex for both museums.

The dormant Devimco project had plans to use the site for a public square, farmers market and Art Galleries, as the center piece of their massive project and which figures prominently in all their documentation.

I am now in discussions with a 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> group that would convert the property into a hotel - upscale restaurant-music & art center. a cultural centerpiece for the future direction of redevelopment for the entire sector. Phylis Lambert toured the complex last year with an eye to a possible Art Center. Any of these or other possible projects are put in serious jeopardy by the bus corridor.

The possibility of constructing new buildings along the entire length of Dalhousie street means that no housing or office construction can take place on the vacant lands along the route, this is de-facto desertification of the area. Who in their right mind would buy a condo or put their office in front of a bus expressway.

Mr. Rainville mentioned to me at our first meeting that the SHM must remove the buses from Nazareth-Duke for a number of reasons, one of which is the commercial viability of developing condo towers on the Bonaventure site. So much bus traffic would cause issues vis a vis the commercial viability of the SHM's project. This is unacceptable, my street should not become a bus dump and the SHM does not have the right to damage my future.

I have been served with a reserve, from the Ville de Montreal, as have other property owners, for a part of my properties and so I no longer can entertain any development on that portion of the property. The city has no obligation to buy and, I still must pay taxes and upkeep without having any benefit.

The commission should be aware that the vast majority of land owners have been in the area for a generation or more. Most of us have built our small business's and raised our families in relative peace and prosperity and helped to sustain the rich Montréal Economy. Some larger firms employed hundred's while the rest of us employed dozens. The city has encouraged the area to depopulate through zoning regulations and wilful neglect.

The plans for the opening of the viaduct and the construction of supports for the railway bridge between Wellington and Ottawa streets will remove the access to my property at 172-176 Dalhousie. I will lose the sidewalk, the front door, 2 fire doors and 1 shipping door and street access to the building along with the use of 17 large windows.

The ***"Rapport final-Impacts vibratoires sur le bâtiment de la New cite Gas aux 172 rue Dalhousie, novembre 2009"*** was originally presented to me and Jesse Lev at a meeting held at the SHM offices and is the last of the 3 encounters that M.Rainville mentioned during the question periods of late Nov-Dec 2009 . The study in question refers to a Swiss study regarding bus vibrations. The main tenet of this study assumes that the center of the roadway is 18 feet from the buildings. When I pointed out that the center of the buses passing the facade of my property was just 8 feet, which was confirmed by both M.Rainville and Réjean Durocher project manager from Genivar, the engineer presenting this study closed his

notebook and slide projector and the meeting was adjourned, with a promise to conduct a real study on a real place. Now at the last moment the SHM posts this study, updated, as if is realistic. I should add that at no time has anyone tested the quality of the mortar or the condition or size of the foundations and structure or the vibrations of the railway, this I would assume is necessary to determine the short and long term effects of vibrations and pollution etc. The engineers should also be informed that the 3 tracks closest to the building are not used for train travel, but are used for parking of AMT trains and should base their conclusions on the tracks being a distance of at least 10 meters and it should be noted that the tracks are built on an independent structure.

M. Rainville promised me an engineering study on The New City Gas Co. buildings, the quality of life, the structure, on the short term effects of the construction and on the long term effects the use of the corridor, 1400 buses per day on vibration and on the destructive effects of pollution on the structure and on the quality of the air. The 2<sup>nd</sup> occasion I met with M. Rainville was at the New City Gas buildings. He was accompanied by an aide and six Engineers. M. Rainville assured me that the engineering studies would be exhaustive. Recycling Swiss data is hardly all-embracing.

Where are these studies?

The recent history of failed projects in and around Griffintown has caused economic devastation in the area. The property owners and business's have been subject to one failed mega project after another. (The Casino & Griffintown) . During that time the city has been active in effectively red zoning the neighbourhood. A new PPU published in 2007-2008 for sudouest changed the zoning from industrial to residential and commercial, which has the effect of making most of the existing properties obsolete. (It should be noted that acquired rights have a lifetime of 6 months) There was a freeze on all building and occupancy permits between Rue Ottawa and the Canal, which was only lifted in November 2008. During that time I was refused occupation permits for prospective tenants and for a restaurant. It was not even possible to get permits for required fire doors or to add a toilet in a building. Various property owners I believe 11 in all received expropriation notices and as well another dozen or so were subject to property reserves. These expropriations and reserves formally disallow property owners and tenants to make any changes to their premises. After the developer announced that it could no longer proceed with the project, city officials, including the mayor and the borough mayor insisted that the project was to go ahead and only after a few months of protests by the owners were the reserves lifted and the freeze removed. These actions combined with the well publicized projects caused the existing business to flee Griffintown. The changes in zoning and the continual talk of other projects for the area which include The Canada Lands Property on Ottawa street with plans for 7 or 8 buildings including 3 towers of 22 stories mostly residential, with a projected construction period until 2018. This proposal from the SHM with a projected construction period through to 2025. There is new talk of a phase 1 Griffintown project with construction to begin in 2011 and open ended up to 2018

All this construction in one small area for such an extended period will make the area uninhabitable for the existing citizens who should have some right to peaceable enjoyment of their properties etc.

It seems that the length of time to completion is really out of whack. Jean Drapeau built Expo 67, the Metro, Place des Arts and yes the Bonaventure expressway simultaneously in much less time and these projects were significantly more ambitious. Place Ville Marie, CIBC etc. I can go on and on.

The need for high density residential construction is questionable. Montreal lost 25,000 residents in the last year. This coupled with the extensive construction boom in the city for condos and housing has all but saturated the market place. Canada Lands, Cite du Havre, Devimco's Griffintown, Lownney's and the other high density projects already in construction and in planning for the Griffintown area exceed 12,000 units and this does not take into account all the many other projects around the core of Montreal.

Building projects such as these will mean that the area will be over constructed for many years and that the surrounding approx 10 million sq, feet of vacant lands will lie fallow leaving the sector with intermittent rich sites set amongst slums, hardly a good initiative.

With no infrastructure to handle the traffic which is already a daily problem during evening rush hour this will cause unbearable traffic turmoil. This turmoil will increase dramatically when the Bonaventure demolition starts. Where will this traffic go. When I asked M.Rainville told me that he will ask for all the traffic from the south shore and Ile des Soeurs to be diverted to Highway 20 and Turcot yards and then to Highway 720 to and from downtown.

At the moment during traffic hours, on a sunny day traffic to the Champlain bridge on this route is already backed up past the Turcot interchange.

The highway will eventually be replaced with a boulevard which by it's very nature will carry traffic in a slower manner. The traffic turmoil from the construction alone is scheduled to last until 2025. That is fifteen years before we will get back to a system that is capable of moving less cars than the existing Bonaventure highway does at the moment. The Wellington bridge across the canal is 2 lanes wide and there are no other entrances or exits to the neighbourhood other than Notre Dame street which is a small commercial and residential street and is over trafficked on an on going basis.

Ottawa Street as well is the main conduit for the horse caleches on their way to Vieux Montreal and William Street is their route to return to the various stables along the way. Both of these streets are neighbourhood streets and neither of them connect to any major artery.

There are few major thoroughfares to allow for traffic flow as the site is bounded on 3 sides by obstacles.(The Canal, Vieux Montreal and residential St Henri  
The increased traffic will cause paralysis in all these sectors.

I would also add that government has a dismal record when acting as a private developer and I believe would do much better as a regulator. M. Rainville has already stated at these hearings that there are no developers involved in the project at the moment and that no land has been sold. Yet a press release dated June 18 2009 clearly states that the city will net 99 million dollars in land sales. How does he know?

**Quartier Bonaventure - Le nouveau Montreal - Reamenagement de l'autoroute Bonaventure phase 1 - Synthèse des études de l'avant-projet détaillé 2009 Page 16**  
talks of turning the ground under the CN Viaduct into boutiques and public spaces. I wonder if the SHM has already found any interest in such a project. The Viaduct will be sandwiched between a widened bus expressway and a 4 lane Urban Boulevard that is to carry all the traffic that enters and exits downtown Montreal from the southern suburbs as well as the main rail passenger lines that run overhead into Central Station and 1400 buses. The fact that CN has not seen fit to acknowledge such a project publically and may have a long term lease for

the location at the moment raises many questions as to viability.

## ***Le patrimoine, heritage, Culture***

As a number of others, more qualified than I am, have decided to write their memoirs based on the patrimoine and the environmental subject, I will be very brief. As you read through this entire memoir I ask you to remember that we are referring to 2 buildings that were constructed between 1840 and 1859. It will be a colossal error to destroy any part of these two magnificent buildings, To do this is equivalent to the destruction of our history and is as shameful as the destruction of the mansions of Sherbooke street in the 1960's.

I invite the members of the commission or anyone who has an interest to come and see for themselves. The buildings will be sponsoring and hosting a series of free events to celebrate the cultural corridor of Griffintown on February 27, 2010 in conjunction with the Nuits Blanches festival. There will be Poetry, dance, theater, film, lectures, fine art exhibits and walking tours related to the history and architecture of Griffintown .

In the last 20 years the property has been the location of well over 100 films, The Score, Les Aimants, Days of Dickens Past, The BBC's Sherlock Holmes series, Confessions of a dangerous mind, Taking Lives, Papillon Bleu, Banshee, The Bone Collector, The Press Run, The Greatest Game ever Played, Eternal, The Favourite Game (Leonard Cohen), Collectionaire, Peep Show, Pouvoir Intime, Jack Paradise, Tommy Tricker, Caberet Neige Noirs, The Jackal.. Films by such directors as Michel Ouillette, Denise Robert, Nicole Robert, Yves Pelletier, Frank Oz, Bill Paxton, Yves Simoneau, Roch Demers, Michael Rubbo, Léa Pool, Raymond St. Jean. \_\_\_\_\_ as with actors and personalities of the quality of De Nero, Bill Hurt and Angelina Joly, Ed Norton, , Jacques Pariseau, Isabelle Blais, Emanuel Biladeau, Sylvie Moreau, Donald Sutherland, Rufus Wainwright television productions such as Casino, Le Septieme , Le Negotiateur, Superstorm, Are you afraid of the dark. and dozens of musical video clips.

Art en Majuscule operated a contemporary art gallery that housed an average of 11 Art shows each year by contemporary Montréal Artists. Various musical events from CD launches, festival Voie Ameriques, and video clips to musical performances on a regular

basis. The McGarrigle Sisters were interviewed by Peter Gzowski, The Centaur theater, Infinity Theater and Le Theatre des Deux Maries, have rehearsed and had live theater presentations in both the Gallery and in what we called The Griffintown Theatre. Jean Pierre Perreault's "JOE" was born here and eventually went on world tour.

The property houses various artists ateliers where renowned (Armand Tatosian R.C.A, Gord Smith R.C.A) and not renowned artists have and continue to produce works of art in painting, photography, lithography, theater, ceramics, sculpture and dance. I have hosted dozens of graduate student projects concerning architecture, history, archeology, fine arts, music, photography, and urban studies. Professors from all four Montréal Universities and a number of CEGEPs have sent students to film, to write, to photo, to draw, to study history. Architects have used it for study. Ubisoft has used it for the special exteriors and interiors of their 3 dimensional games.

## ***Le corridor de pelletage d'autobus***

In the PPU for sud-ouest there is a designated space for inter-modal public transport at the juncture of Peel and Smith street. At the moment there is over 200,000 square feet of vacant land. I do not understand that the SHM and the City of Montreal, acting separately, have come to such different conclusions about public transport within the same time frame. It is clear that there is little if any communication between them.

At a meeting that was held at the offices of the AMT this past spring and which was attended by myself as well Dino Bambaru, David Hanna, Gerald McNichols Tetrault, Pierre.St.Cyr, Caroline Andrieux, Roland Hakim, Joel Gauthier, Michel Veilleux,, and some others.

Joel Gauthier suggested that the AMT would prefer to use a melange of different routes, including the Metro access of the south shore, more train service and as it was the time of the John Lennon exhibit at the Musée du Beaux Arts, M. Gauthier used the term

"Give Peel a Chance".

When questioned as to the possibility of building such a corridor as Dalhausie, Mr Gauthier and Mr Michel Veilleux acknowledged that they had not been informed and had not been included in any of the studies relating to the Dalhousie corridor, that no one in their organization had been consulted and that they could not comment on the project as they had no information regarding it.

At my initial meeting with M.Rainville, when asked why Peel street was not a possible partial alternative, he responded that firstly Peel was to be reserved for Mayor Tremblay's tramway. I would like to point out that if a tramway ever gets built, that the tramway will be of the people of Montreal and not that of any politician or civil servant. He also told me that the SHM considers the bus route a temporary solution. He might be right on this subject, but the hundred plus million wasted will be anything but temporary.

When I first introduced myself to the SHM in November of 2008, I was asked why I was interested in their project and when I replied that I was directly affected by the project

M.Rainville told me that he had plenty of discussions with the new owners of my property and that they were satisfied with the Dalhousie Street Bus solution.

I asked M. Rainville to whom he was referring and he responded Devimco. At this point I started to understand the importance of Dalhousie street to the SHM. If you look at the map you will note that Dalhousie street is at the western border of the SHM project and at the Eastern border of the defunct Griffintown Project.

As I had not sold anything to anyone I insisted that the SHM should verify the facts and 3 days later I was invited to the 1<sup>st</sup> of my 3 encounters with M.Rainville..

## ***Alternatives and Solutions***

I believe that there are some simple solutions to the issues that I have referred to.

- 1) The SHM should honour their commitment to on going consultations as promised with the citizens most effected by this project.
- 2) Since the announcement of 6 new Metro stations on the south shore, there has been no investigation to determine whether a bus corridor is required. It should also be noted that bus transport is less efficient per passenger mile than automobiles.  
The US dept. of transport estimates that a bus burns 4,315 btu per passenger mile while the average car uses 3514 btu ([www.cta.ornl.gov.data](http://www.cta.ornl.gov.data))  
The SHM already acknowledges (***The avant-projet detaille, mars 2009 page 30***) that 40% of the bus commuters transfer to the Metro system and that the terminus is too small. If these persons are given access to the Metro on the south shore, Then the need for a new downtown terminal and bus corridor fades.
- 3) Some of the other alternatives I would propose include using the Victoria bridge for a tramway into Montreal, and the use of the existing 6 rail lines which are almost not being used, that arrive into central station. A solution of this kind would in effect solve most of the issues outstanding. The various bus companies would save millions of kilometers of driving by leaving their clients at the various rail options. Millions of kilometers saved mean less pollution, less noise, millions of dollars saved in fuel and the salaries of drivers and in the cost of purchasing and maintaining of busses required to move commuters. As well most of the issue of public security and health would be dealt with.
- 4) The citizens of Ile des Soeurs could be dropped at the Metro in Verdun (Lasalle) which would save approx 10 kilometers per trip. There is already a bus service.

These suggestions would save the hundred or so million dollars of taxpayers money required to build the bus corridor and the tens of millions more required to build a new and larger bus terminus and reduce operating costs significantly.

In my opinion the new Urban Boulevard should be built with only 2 lanes in each direction on the ground and with 2 lanes underground in each direction that would connect the 2 highways to each other. This would allow the traffic that did not require entering the downtown to continue to their destinations without hindrance and without disturbing the downtown.

- a) It would mean that all local traffic, pedestrian, horse, bicycle etc. would only cross two smaller neighbourhood streets and therefore truly remove the barrier between east and west.
- b) It would allow for larger green space and larger commercial properties.
- c) It would solve the problem of having exits and entrances to the highways that abut the proposed development and cause such danger for all traffic.
- d) It would allow for a safe and sane redevelopment for the rail viaduct.
- e) It would allow for the heritage of all of Griffintown to be respected.
- f) It would facilitate a safe and welcoming residential sector.