

As the population of the world is predicted to reach 10 billion people by the end of this century, as more and more of those people will be living in urban environments, as we are facing serious situations regarding peak oil and climate change, we have no choice but to start making urban agriculture a priority. I am writing my memoir as a citizen of St. Raymond's and NDG and in my position as president of Action Communiterre. The changes I would like to see implemented would improve food security in my neighbourhood and would enable Action Communiterre to do their work in a more effective, secure way.

My first concern is green space. It has come to my attention that we might lose our garden in St. Raymond's. This garden is a garden that was created especially for families with young children and is on the property of the CSDM. The school, Annexe St. Raymond's needs to be torn down or renovated. Rumours are being circulated that this property will be sold to develop as condos. Our neighbourhood already has a condo disaster on Upper Lachine and we don't want any more developments without green spaces built in our neighbourhood. We would like this garden preserved and even made bigger, perhaps even turned into a greenhouse and teaching farm, maybe even a big collective kitchen, for people interested in gardening, urban food production, and even integrated into the school curriculum of the neighbouring schools. There is a greenhouse in St. Jean-Sur Richelieu that has integrated growing food into the education system that could even be used as a model.

This also brings up a very important issue - the fragile nature of the contracts that the gardens are currently being developed on. These contracts need to be more solid and protected. The gardens need to be more valued and not so easily dismantled. There needs to be some kind of protection created so that urban gardening spaces are protected and cannot be taken away. These spaces are important both in terms of food security and as spaces where important community connections are developed and made. Spaces for urban agriculture should be mandatory in the infrastructure of every new housing development project.

There should be financial incentives for building rooftop gardens and creating green walls. The city should provide a service where an engineer can come and evaluate people's roofs as to their capacity for roof top garden developments for free.

In a time of childhood obesity, urban gardening should be implemented into the school curriculum and should be connected to community centers. Urban gardening teaches kids about where healthy food comes from, how to grow it, cooking programs could be developed, and they get kids back outside and exercising. A good example of this is Dufferin Grove Park in Toronto. In this park there are community gardens, outdoor pizza ovens where families can come several times a week and make pizza using vegetables grown in the park gardens for a small fee (a social economy possibility).

. There is also a farmer's market held regularly in this park. This park also has outdoor fire pits and offers courses to kids on cooking over a campfire. This is a great experience for children who might not have the economic opportunity to go camping or

to go to an overnight camp outside of the city. These activities could and should be included in the city day camp curriculums.

Another great opportunity would be to make part of the Falaise St. Jacques into an edible forest (as has recently been created in Seattle). A small cafe serving food made from the edible forest could also be created as a social economy project. There could be walking trails created with information about plants and species of the Falaise, as it is an important microclimate. This microclimate might also allow for growing fruit trees that might not grow well on other parts of the island. These projects would help preserve this precious and underused green space.

In neighbourhoods like St. Raymond's, that have been designated by the CLSC as hot neighbourhoods because of a lack of green spaces, it is doubly important and should be a priority of the the borough to protect the green spaces that are there and be sure they are well used and accessible to the community.