

Merci. Merci beaucoup, Madame.

Mme MARIELLE OUELLETTE :

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Merci.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

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Alors si vous êtes d'accord, on prendrait une pause de quinze minutes et on revient avec l'Association des résidents des Habitations du Fort. Merci.

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SÉANCE SUSPENDUE QUELQUES MINUTES

REPRISE DE LA SÉANCE

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

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Alors je demanderais à monsieur Koochekian, s'il vous plaît. Alors M. Koochekian.

M. REZA BABOOR KOOCHEKIAN :

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Hello to everybody.

LA PRÉSIDENTE:

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Hello, welcome.

M. REZA BABOOR KOOCHEKIAN:

My name is Mohammad Reza, my family name is Koochekian Saboor. I'm a resident of René-Lévesque but here I am reading my paper, the paper which is with you.

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We, the Residents' Association of the Habitations Du Fort, located at 2101 René-Lévesque Ouest, are a tenants association representing the needs and the interests of our 86 apartments - means I am here representing 86 people, maybe more than that too, it is not one person, and really, they all signed against, practically we have signed against this project – apartment complex for the senior citizens, those 60 years and older. The main mission of our organization is to defend the rights of our tenants. We live directly across from the Franciscan site on the boulevard René-Lévesque Ouest, and we will be directly impacted by the result of this decision. Very much it is affecting everything practically.

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A majority of our residents are socially isolated, low-income, handicapped elderly people with limited access to the private events and the public parks located outside of the Peter-McGill district. For some of you, Mont-Royal Park may seem close, yet for an elderly senior citizen with mobility problems, it is very far and therefore not accessible. On a summer day, we would simply like to walk out our door and find tranquility in a safe, public space in nature for all generations to enjoy. The miniscule parks currently located in the sector are insufficient to the needs of elderly people, to families and to adults. They quickly feel crowded and are surrounded by so much pavement.

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Meanwhile, the CCA is not a public park, and Cabot Square contains more concrete than nature. The Franciscan site is a much more appropriate site for a proper public park, with a potential for a shelter for picnics and for elderly people to seek shade on a hot summer day. The sidewalk in front of our building can easily be modified for safe passage across the street. Senior citizens can interact with other generations and families, which is becoming more and more difficult to do in our increasingly individualistic, privatized society.

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We find the Condo project to be a deplorable insult to the citizens of Montreal. It will negatively impact the neighbourhood, literally casting its long shadows upon the adjacent historic buildings, and upon our modest apartment complex. The small 'public' park proposed in your

985 project is shamefully small, and will be overshadowed by the two towers. Compared to other
neighbourhoods in Montreal where parks are abundant, we are currently asphyxiating due to the
lack of green space in Peter-McGill. We do not even have a public community center.

990 The further destruction of green space and community space will contribute to more
loneliness, more solitude among senior citizens, and lead to a decline of our mental and physical
health. We urge the Borough of Ville-Marie to make the morally right decision and benefit the needs
of the thousands of seniors and families in Montreal, instead of the private interests of the privileged
few.

We, the residents of Habitations Du Fort, are saying 'NO' to the Condo Project.

995 Best regards from our building.

1000 And another thing I want to tell you, usually they say in a phrase that no birds can live in
golden cages because they prefer, with all the cage which is golden, they prefer to stay in nature, so
we need nature. We are part of the nature. If you take our nature, if you take our space, we are in a
prison. And if you make those two towers there, you know, you block absolutely everything,
everything. We cannot even see in front. That is the effect of that. And not only that, you're taking all
our benefits. We don't have any recreation place, we don't have any play place. The citizens are
there, there are 86 people, families there.

1005 I mean what I am telling you, the local government doesn't listen to us and they have to
respect these old-aged people. They are very sick. I tell you, two, three days back was a committee
there and a person who was in the room two, three times he went to the hospital because he has
hallucinations, he was there in the room all the time, he couldn't go out, and he had hallucinations
because he was thinking there is a snake in the room. And two, three times I went and I searched
everything and there was... Because he needs somewhere to go and sit in the summertime. The
1010 whole winter he is in the room, now in summer still he is in the room because there is no place
outside to sit and this is a prison for him, for everyone of those people a prison. We don't have any
place even to do exercises, simple exercises.

1015 We don't have any restaurants. I mean restaurants in the vicinity, there are a lot of
restaurants. As one of our friends was telling me, it is expensive. Our budget doesn't allow us to go
and we need some sort of help. It is elderly citizens of this country, they pay taxes and they have
rights. This is Canada, I mean, the second largest country, the largest land in the world, but we don't
1020 have space for our people to go in nature. We don't have a car to go outside. We don't have a
place to go... I mean facilities to go somewhere else. Give us a chance to live there a little bit in our
end of our life, a better life.

LA PRÉSIDENTE:

1025 Thank you very much.

M. JOSHUA WOLFE:

1030 Thank you. Your brief was very brief and you made all your points very clearly, except for
one question that I have to ask you. You mentioned, your sentence: *the sidewalk in front of our
building can easily be modified for safe passage across the street.*

M. REZA BABOOR KOOCHEKIAN:

1035 Yes.

M. JOSHUA WOLFE:

Are you thinking of a crosswalk in the middle of the block or what do you mean by that?

1040 **M. REZA BABOOR KOOCHEKIAN:**

They can do that, I mean I am not an engineer, but as far as I know, there is a way to do that.

1045 **M. JOSHUA WOLFE:**

I'm not following what you mean, at the corner or a traffic signal, or what?

1050 **M. REZA BABOOR KOOCHEKIAN:**

No, there is a way which they can divert it and then make it to pass from there just across from the road.

1055 **M. JOSHUA WOLFE:**

Okay.

1060 **M. VIATEUR CHÉNARD:**

Are you using Cabot Square, or some of the residents in your building go to Cabot?

1065 **M. REZA BABOOR KOOCHEKIAN:**

It's very crowded, we cannot go there, particularly... It's very crowded. There is no place to play or to get together with other seniors. The only thing is you can sit there, but in the wintertime we cannot sit there, even in the summertime we cannot sit there. We cannot play, we don't have any place to exercise, just like we don't have any place to go swimming. I am a sportsman, in my young time I was champion in my sport; but the thing now, I have no facility to do anything. Even if I want to do some exercises, I have to do it inside my room.

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M. VIATEUR CHÉNARD:

Okay, thank you.

1075 **LA PRÉSIDENTE:**

Thank you very much.

M. REZA BABOOR KOOCHEKIAN:

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Thank you.

LA PRÉSIDENTE :

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J'appellerais maintenant madame Solange Baril. Bonjour, Madame!

Mme SOLANGE BARIL :

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Bonjour, Madame! Le mien est assez court aussi, tout le monde sera content. Alors bonsoir, Messieurs, Madame! Mon nom est Solange Baril, je viens au nom de l'organisme pour lequel je travaille, le Groupe Harmonie. Le Groupe Harmonie est un organisme communautaire enraciné dans Peter-McGill depuis sa naissance en 1983. Il est un fruit du CLSC Métro et grâce à ce lien, nous avons toujours des locaux gratuits, ce qui est fort chanceux au centre-ville de Montréal où, comme vous le savez, les locaux sont extrêmement chers pour les organismes et tout le monde en fait.

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Alors le Groupe Harmonie a une mission unique au Québec, nous venons en aide aux personnes âgées qui ont un problème de dépendance – toxicomanie, dépendance au jeu – et nous chapeautons aussi une ITMAV – une Initiative de travail de milieu auprès des aînés vulnérables – dans des HLM du secteur ainsi que du travail de milieu à la Place Alexis-Nihon où, comme disait