

New master plan coming in next year's budget

City to limit number of entrances at Summit Woods soon

BY LAUREN SWEENEY

The city will be reducing the number of entrances to Summit Woods in the coming weeks to lay the ground work for a master action plan proposed for next year's budget. The plans, announced at the council meeting July 2, are aimed at updating efforts to protect what is officially a bird and fauna sanctuary.

While the issue of dogs and their leashing continued to be raised during the question period, the plans were led off in open-

ing comments by Councillor Mary Gallery, whose commissionership includes parks and greenspaces, and reiterated later by Mayor Christina Smith.

Large rocks and other landscaping obstacles are to be installed this summer to limit entry and exit points to the woods, and to provide central spots for garbage cans and encourage the use of the main trails, Gallery explained. This was based on a meeting with the city's new forestry engineer.

It is also time for a new master plan to replace the last one from Sandra Donaldson in 2013, she said.

Focus on birds rather than dogs

A tightly run question period was led off on this focus by Brian Puddington, of Lansdowne, *continued on p. 20*

City celebrates Canada Day



Preparing to cut the Canada Day cake at the Westmount recreation centre July 1 are, from left, Andrew Maislin, head of operations and sports facilities, city councillors Conrad Peart, Anitra Bostock, Matt Aronson, Mary Gallery and Jeff Shamie as well as Dave Lapointe, division director of Culture, Sports, Recreation and Social Development. See p. 15 for more of photos the event.

PHOTO: LAUREN SWEENEY

This issue is the last one before our usual summer break
Next issue: August 13

Offices going to 310 Victoria as of September 1

Contactivity makes final move arrangements from church

BY LAUREN SWEENEY

New quarters have been found for the offices of the Contactivity Seniors' Centre at the building at 310 Victoria, according to executive director Benita Goldin. The move will be effective September 1 from Westmount Park United Church.

The offices will occupy space on both the first and fourth storeys, above ground

level, of the office building at the corner of de Maisonneuve. The search for office space follows the announced departure of meeting and program locations to Victoria Hall and the Westmount recreation centre (WRC) in a new partnership with the city (see story May 28, p. 1).

"Our main office for reception will be on the first floor, #102, just as you exit the elevator," *continued on p. 3*

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'Explorer' Biro names Westmount lake - City says repairs coming this year



Explorers have often named bodies of water that they discover, or "discover" from the point of view of users of their language. To the best of the *Independent's* knowledge, the seasonal lake on St. Catherine where that street starts/terminates at de Maisonneuve and Claremont has never had a name. Photo contributor Denis Biro has chosen the name "Lac Liz" for it. For clarity, the street and sidewalk are in Westmount and belong to the city of Westmount, and the Liz retirement residence is in NDG. On a more serious note, he had this to say, "Westmount, as far as I can determine, has no plan to re-do or even re-surface this part of St. Catherine over the next three years. The street is problematic and certainly the sidewalk is unsafe for the elderly at Liz." Contrary to Biro's impression, Westmount director general Julie Mandeville told the *Independent* by email July 2 that the city would be "temporarily repairing the sidewalks in front of LIZ in 2024." In addition, the city's not-yet-approved capital works budget plans for a complete road reconstruction in 2026.

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Office in Lachute

Use age-appropriate park equipment: Public Security

Firefighters cut pre-teen out of toddler swing at Prince Albert Park

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

A girl aged 10 to 12 years became stuck in a toddler swing July 3 at Prince Albert Park and had to be extricated by firefighters, Public Security officials said last week. A public safety officer who attended the incident just after 1:42 pm found her legs had become stuck in the straps and seat.

The chain securing the swing had to be cut from the top before the straps could be safely cut to free her.

No other details were recorded concerning whether or not the girl lived in Westmount, but she was reported as not being injured although the incident was considered to be misuse of equipment designed for toddlers.

"It's important to make sure that playground equipment is used according to its intended purpose," said Public Security director Greg McBain.

Patroller goes to assistance of homeless man

A Public Security patroller noticed a homeless man lying on the ground July 2 near 4000 de Maisonneuve, officials said. He was described as appearing to have passed out. Going to his assistance at 2:10 pm, the officer was told the man had drunk too much rubbing alcohol. Fire department first responders were called and responded.

Indie's summer schedule

July 16, 23 & 30 and August 6:
no issues

August 13 & following: weekly
until Christmas

Going away? Public Security offers 'Special Passing Attention'

With the start of the summer holiday season, Public Security officials last week issued a reminder to Westmount residents about the unit's Special Passing Attention (SPA) program. This is available to anyone absent from their home who has registered to have patrollers keep an eye out for any signs of attempted break-ins.

Before leaving, some of the reminders to vacationers include leaving a key with a trusted neighbour or friend who can regularly check out the interior and serve as a contact in event of emergency.

Tips include setting lights on a timer to resemble an occupied home, cancelling newspapers and packages including orders that may not have been delivered before departure. Ladders should not be left visible or unfastened to deter anyone trying to use them to enter the home. Arrangements should also be made to have lawns cut in the event of extended absences.

To register for the service or for additional answers, Public Security can be reached at 514.989.5222

Police Report, p. 10

Contactivity, cont'd from p. 1

Goldin told the *Independent*. The intergenerational programs will be at Selwyn House School.

"We are grateful to 310 Victoria owner Barry Friedberg for welcoming us as new tenants," Goldin said. "We will have more updates about our move and programming further along in the summer."

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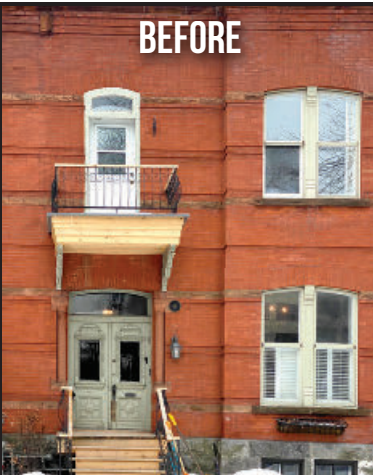


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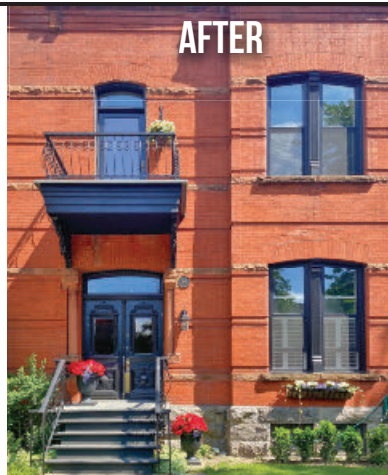
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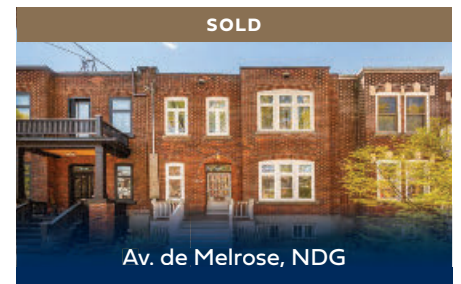
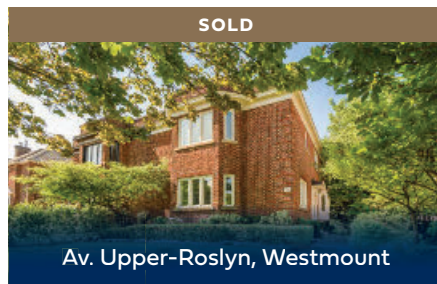
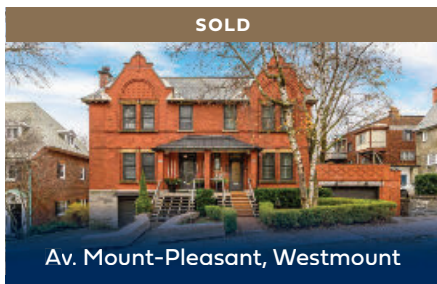
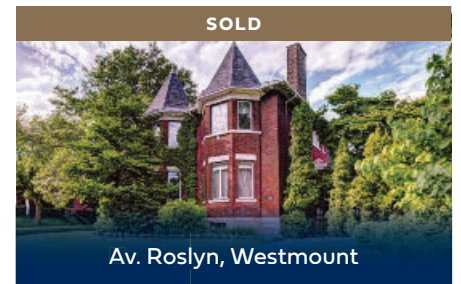
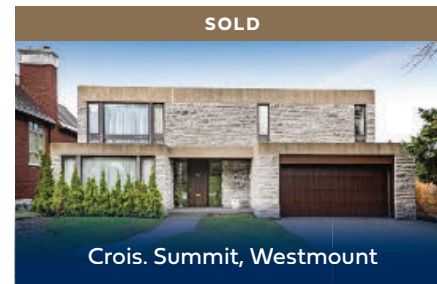
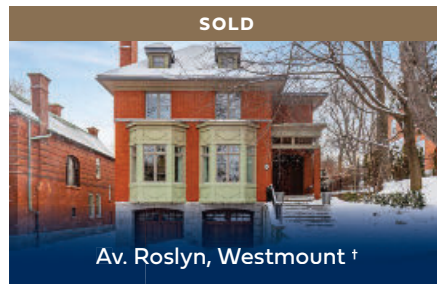
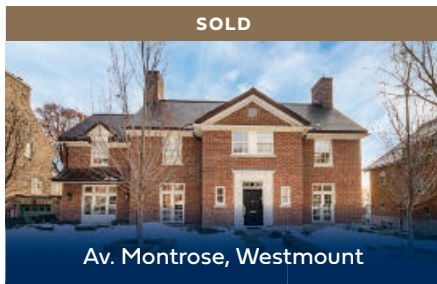
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR – GENERAL MAIL

WESTMOUNT'S CANADA DAY SHOULD BE BETTER

I was so unhappy with Westmount's Canada Day celebrations, which were almost nil. There was a cake cutting at the outdoor pool. I think Westmount could do a better job celebrating our great country. When I asked, I was told that I should have attended the Filipino celebration at Mackenzie King Park [in Côte des Neiges].

Disappointed in Westmount.

LITA ALPER, LANSDOWNE AVE.

PERHAPS PEOPLE WANT TO PAY MORE FOR MORE GARBAGE SERVICE

I think in principle our elected officials do a wonderful job for us and it is a thankless task. That being said, the changes they have enacted concerning waste removal and instituting curbside pick-up are a clear case where they dropped the ball.

I am not impressed or swayed by the spin doctors presenting an environmental benefit of reducing garbage by forcing people to compost etc. If that were the case, people would not be smoking. Drugs would not be an issue etc. We would all do what was the best for our health.

I have waited a couple of months before writing this letter to see how I would feel about these changes. We are all creatures of habit and change is difficult. I can report back that we are not happy with these changes and more often than not, we forget to put out the food composting bin on

the day required. It then accumulates till the next week. The net result for us and, I suspect, a large part of the population of Westmount is that we are not accustomed to rolling out our composting or garbage to the curb.

Given that we forget to do so more often than not, we will no longer be collecting food waste and will now just put the food waste in the trash so we only have one bin to remember to bring back and forth to the curb.

I believe this new policy will reduce the amount of food composting versus augmenting it. The best is yet to come during the winter months when the snow falls and the driveways have not been cleared prior to pick-up. How are you expected to roll your garbage bin in the snow?

This is Westmount, with an aging population, and forcing them to now bring their garbage to the curb when it was picked up at the rear of their homes for years and reducing the services without any prior consultation was a serious error in my opinion.

We have to live a municipality with a PAC [Planning Advisory Committee] that is the most difficult and restrictive on the whole island of Montreal. The explanation given is that this is Westmount and we need to maintain our traditions and heritage. With the new garbage policy, when you drive around Westmount, what do you see? Garbage bins and recycling bins and food waste bins adorning our streets. Most people put their garbage out in the morning and upon returning home at night

remove the bins. We will increase our rat, squirrel and mouse population with garbage bags on the street. Most people do not have bins, offering them a token grant is more for political mileage than actual help.

I question how much we are saving with this change of curbside pick-up. Maybe we should have asked the population of Westmount if it wanted this saving or was willing for the city to continue with on-property garbage pick-up and forgo this saving.

It might be worthwhile to see with our garbage disposal company what would be the cost as an extra to their contract to continue picking up the garbage in the same fashion as it was prior to these changes.

I don't pretend to have all or any of the answers, but it would have been appropriate to have public consultations and information sessions prior to removing and reducing certain services, and hear what were the thoughts of the Westmount population. I still think it would be appropriate to have the public consultations so that our elected officials, who are supposed to represent us, hear how we feel about these changes.

It is not too late to acknowledge that mistakes were made in the handling of this file and take all appropriate steps to correct the situation.

RONY CUKIER, ROSEMOUNT AVE.

WALKABOUT SHOULD IDENTIFY PAVEMENT ISSUES – BEFORE FALLS

So this is what it takes – a pedestrian's nasty fall – to spur city hall to repair the sorry, miserable state of one of the most user-heavy streets in Westmount?

While "Queen" Victoria was getting a "facelift" (July 2, p. 7) to east-side swaths of sidewalk between Sherbrooke and de Maisonneuve, the bruises to my jaw, left eye and face had healed from a fall in that area while walking – in flats no less – to Metro in late afternoon May sunshine (see May 7, p. 3). Only by the grace of G-d was major damage averted. My profound thanks to the man in the grey-green T-shirt who quickly came to my aid. Ditto to the Public Security officers who arrived faster than a NASDAQ flash crash.

Why was a sidewalk in the city's main commercial district – one which city fathers and businesses encourage locals to patronize – left in such condition for who knows how long? Where do deeply-gouged sidewalks fit into Westmount's aims to improve accessibility for older residents, especially those relying on canes, walkers or wheelchairs?

And I have to wonder: do members of council walk this busiest of neighbour-

hoods for a first-hand look at its condition?

If this isn't already happening, there should be an annual walkabout every spring in Westmount's two commercial districts by the councillor with the Public Works portfolio (currently District 5's Anitra Bostock) to identify where repairs are needed.

A stretch of restored sidewalk can't compete with the snazzy new mural on Greene Ave. for a photo op with councillors (July 2, p. 20). But I reckon that when it comes to generating constituents' goodwill, safe sidewalks win the contest hands down.

DOROTHY LIPOVENKO, YORK ST.

PUBLIC, FORMER CONGREGATION APPROVE PLAN FOR MOUNTAINSIDE CHURCH

The present is to follow up on the information session held June 27 for neighbours and interested Westmounters on our work for bringing a new life to the former Mountainside United Church on The Boulevard between Roslyn and Lansdowne, an event that I was asked to host and a sophisticated proposal that I was privileged to present. (See also story on p. 12.)

Many people attended the presentation in order to learn what the owner, Mr. Daniel Revah, was planning to do with the property going forward, in the context of contemporary living and use, but with love for iconic historical buildings. The proposal was described in great detail and demonstrated the skill of his design team to navigate the delicate course, guided in no small part by the city of Westmount's urban planners.

Before the watchful eyes and quiet presence of Mr. Peart, architect and councillor responsible for urban planning for the city of Westmount, there was obvious near-unanimous support from those in attendance for the project as presented and for the owner's desire to advance after years of negotiation for approvals.

Comments ranged from the most enthusiastic support to concern only for the preservation of trees on the boundary now isolating a Roslyn neighbour. The only opposition was by a recent graduate hoping for funding and then use of the church by a school. The consensus was – at the very least – extremely favorable to the project.

And why should it not be!? Considering:
1. An iconic monument of great value is being fully preserved and brought to life with an appreciative family to occupy,
2. The plush landscaped grounds surrounding *continued on p. 7*

Looking for more opinions?

For letters on Summit Woods' dog-leash laws, see p. 18.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR – GENERAL MAIL

the building are being preserved and privately maintained, all the while keeping the wide-angle views from both corners,

3. A half-dozen new households shall occupy the property that had been without an occupant for several years since the church congregation had to reluctantly abandon their jewel for lack of funds,
4. The new homes shall be of such size, scale and design as to totally reinforce the pattern and style of the existing houses that have been built on Lansdowne, filling the existing gap that is now mostly covered in asphalt,
5. Even Leslie Hall, the former and original church building on Roslyn [south of, and downhill, from the main structure], of far lesser aesthetic/architectural value than the monumental vacated Mountainside building, will be preserved, although neighbours would rather have a modern building instead. A pair of attached homes will be created to welcome new residents, using the building's excessive depth for a landscaped atrium. (Given the preference of the neighbours for a modern building, we may re-open the conversation with the city on this matter.)
6. As a further benefit to the city and its citizens, a certain area of the overall site on the projecting northeast corner of the lot [at Lansdowne and The Boulevard] is being discussed for a small park as a place to rest/relax, in lieu of subdivision fees [that the city normally charges in cases like this one].

Within the spirit of optimism generated by the people in attendance, and apparent responsiveness in the last month from the city professionals, our team is proceeding to formally submit our request for zoning that permits once again the use of the property and building for residential occupancy, as had been an absolute right taken away about two or three years ago.

Before closing, I would like to thank a special group of people who attended, members of the [Mountainside] congregation, now relocated, for whom the continuity for "their" treasured building remains important and who, without exception, felt well cared for by the new owner. They reiterated that what the owner was going through with the city was totally unfair, given that they themselves had approached the city before selling and were led to believe that the zoning was there, and permanently. Moreover, their enthusiasm demonstrated to have overcome, in part, some of the inevitable pain they undoubtedly felt.

THOMAS ROBERT REINER – ARCHITECT
& URBAN PLANNER

SIDEWALK IN FRONT OF LIZ SHAMEFUL

I know that the Liz residence is in NDG, but the sidewalk belongs to Westmount. How do you expect people in wheelchairs to manage this sidewalk and the corner?

The city of Westmount should be ashamed for not repairing the sidewalk and manhole. Moreover, the pedestrian light should be four ways.

We hope at Liz that the city will act quickly.

NICOLE CARRIER, NDG

Editor's note: See also story and photo on p. 2. – DP.

INDEPENDENT DOESN'T FACT CHECK – PUBLISHES FAKE NEWS ON DOG BITE?

Fake news? The week of June 25 (p. 19), the *Westmount Independent* published an article with the attention-grabbing headline: "Owner to put down dog, police looking for victim after Summit Circle dog bite."

Of course, being a dog owner and a concerned citizen, I read further only to find that this "story" made no sense. Supposedly, the dog owner (not a Westmount resident) randomly contacted the police and an animal shelter to say he had a dog who had bitten several people, and now after this latest incident, he was going to put the dog down. According to the article, Constable Yigit of Station 12 said that the owner had done his due diligence by reporting a dog-bite incident.

The implication was that, although no victim reported it, Constable Yigit had told the *Independent* there had been a serious dog bite by a non-Westmount dog that took place somewhere on Summit Circle – so it must be true.

I contacted the editor, David Price, for more information and was told to contact the police, which I did. I also contacted Westmount Security. No one had heard about this supposed incident. I eventually heard back from Constable Yigit who said that the article was all wrong and the police had demanded a retraction (and hopefully an apology!) from the *Independent*.

No one knows exactly how Mr. Barry came up with this version, but it is obvious that no one at the *Independent* did any research or fact checking to back it up.

Apparently, what really happened was that a woman who said she works at a shelter in Verdun called Station 16 (not Station 12 in Westmount) concerned about a dangerous dog owned by a man who lives somewhere in Montreal but who at one time in the past may have lived on Summit Circle. There was NO DOG BITE. Nothing took place on Summit Circle. This had

nothing to do with Westmount dogs or the Summit. Nothing to see here.

One can only wonder if the local paper wrote this inflammatory article just to try to continue this unnecessary debate around dogs that council has already clearly settled.

PAULA ENGELS, NDG

Editor's reply: I always laugh at being accused of creating controversy. It makes me think of 19th and early 20th century newspapers, which had to sell copies to make money and needed "screaming" (and often untrue) headlines to do so. Wouldn't that have been a fun world to be a part of!

I, on the other hand, am more like the prostitute in the movie *Young Guns*: "It all costs the same." Controversy or smiling residents? We distribute our free newspapers and bill our advertising clients. No screaming or untruths required. And readers respond well to every kind of story.

Indeed, controversies take up management time (i.e. mine) and so are, in a sense, more costly. I'd rather everyone got along and my phone/inbox not light up, but if there are unpleasant events or conflicts, we will cover them, despite potential blowback from diehard partisans like yourself.

Last time, it was reporter Laureen Sweeney that you accused of being "biased" (April 30, p. 8). This time, reporter Martin Barry is being accused of inventing a story to keep a debate going. Why would he? Or do you think that I wrote the story and inserted it under his byline? Why would I? Do you think that we forgot that there is a large constituency of dog owners and dog lovers in Westmount who would read and assess any dog story? Do you think that we like publishing corrections?

But we aren't issuing a correction in this case anyway.

The June 25 Police Report contains what we were told by the police. For many stories, and especially police ones, we do not have any loose threads to continue any research past our interview(s). For instance, the police do not give us the names of (natural person) victims, nor – in this case, at least – the name of the indirect perpetrator (i.e. the dog's owner). The police are law enforcement professionals who dispense information to the press and public carefully, and we should all support them in this approach. As a result, though, we were presented with a dead-end. We couldn't find out more.

The good thing for readers is that we say what we have done, in this case writing: "... said Station 12 community relations officer Cst. Mike Yigit, paraphrasing from the French-language report."

If one reads the article carefully, we are

not saying that such-and-such a thing happened. We are saying that the police said X or Y or Z. It may seem like a lawyerly or Scholastic-esque distinction, but these careful phrasings lie at the core of reporting.

Reporters are not courts with subpoena powers; nor are they characters in a formulaic tv show where the omniscient writer of fiction always gives the viewer all the information by the end of the episode. Usually, there is no video or audio recording of the news event and no document, so reporters have to find a person to say something. We also don't have the ability to endlessly go back to the police to parse every detail of an interview, including efforts that partisans in this or that debate would want. The police have other things to do and we appreciate the time that we do get from them. Plus, we are generalists writing for a generalist audience, not for the partisans of cause A, B or C. But one has to read the words carefully. In the adult, non-partisan world, there is a lot of fog.

As it turns out, in this case the police have now revised a few details. No big deal. It happens. See p. 10.

And by the way, the police have not demanded a retraction. That fake news item (and others) comes from you. – DP.

SNIPPY EDITOR SHOULD LET OTHERS HAVE LAST WORD

I remember reading some years ago that the letters page of a newspaper is for the readers. The editors have the whole rest of the paper to make their views known. Our esteemed DP, however, seems to increasingly feel the need to add a comment to his readers' letters.

When Anne Sutherland (July 2, p. 6) recently pointed out an apparent contradiction in an article that was perhaps unclear, she did so, in my opinion, in an acceptably facetious manner. The editor, not content to just clear up a misunderstanding, did so in a tone that was unnecessarily snippy and condescending.

The gracious response would be to let the reader with an inquiring mind have the last word.

ANDREA PATCH, GROSVENOR AVE.

Editor's reply: Ah, the irony. I must defend myself about having the last word ... by having the last word. "Increasingly"? This complaint has a long history: see, for instance, January 12-13, 2010, p. 4 and September 7-8, 2010, p. 7. I will say this: my tone and text mirrored Anne Sutherland's, almost verbatim. We're here making a living, letters that are negative *and* unfounded don't help (although I try very hard to give all naysayers their "day in court"), and turnabout is fair play. – DP

Northwest of Westmount**Site of scrapped 'One BLVD' condos to become Le Loyal apartments**

BY JENNIFER BALL

A large new building is under construction just outside of Westmount, after several years of discussion and fruitless planning.

The One BLVD condominium project on the western perimeter of Westmount near the intersection of The Boulevard and Victoria Ave. had advertised a delivery date for this summer. The project never broke ground, though, and its sales office at 5014 Sherbrooke St. was closed.

The site will now be the footprint for an apartment building.

The One BLVD condominium project was to be a 12-storey, 77-unit condominium tower that the Reliance Construction Group had been contracted to build. (For more detail, see February 15, 2022, p. 16 and September 27, 2022, p. SL-17.)

The site will now house a 13-storey apartment building with 113 units to hit the rental market at an undisclosed date, and is a \$60-million project, according to Isabelle Drolet, director of marketing and communications at Groupe HD, the developer.



The planned apartment building Le Loyal is under construction at 4845 Côte St. Luc Rd. It is outside of Westmount, to the northwest of the city.

RENDERING COURTESY OF GROUPE HD.

Residential construction company Praxis will build the apartment building and

its address will be 4845 Côte St. Luc Rd. Drolet provided details on the project.

Her statement was provided in French and translated using DeepL translator. Here are some the main points:

- 13-storey building with 113 rental units including:
 - 11 studio units,
 - 46 one-bedroom units,
 - 44 two-bedroom units,
 - 12 three-bedroom units,
 - Two floors of parking, including 49 parking spaces,
 - 106 indoor bike parking spaces and 27 outdoor bike parking spaces.
- The communal areas will have:
- A lobby,
 - A training room,
 - A lounge area with shared kitchen,
 - A co-working area,
 - A rooftop terrace with swimming pool,
 - A pet grooming area,
 - A bike storage space,
 - Indoor parking with charging station.

Groupe HD is developing the building in partnership with Castello Immobilier, the architects are ACDF Architecture and NEUF Architects (who were also the architects on the One Blvd project), and the landscaping will be by BC2.

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A new example of Westmount wildlife



As seen July 2 on Victoria near Somerville.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

An unnecessary addition?



As seen on a hot June 28 in Prince Albert square.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

Summer means infrastructure work, planning for fall & after



Mayor's Column

CHRISTINA SMITH

With the warm weather and the summer holidays here, I wanted to wish you all the best as many head out on vacation.

For all of us on council, it is a time when we are in the planning stages of next year's priorities and budget, and continue with our long-term infrastructure investment.

We are a small city but, like municipalities across Canada, we are seeing the effects of a housing crisis in the country, the impact of climate change on our infrastructure and a changing work environment. In the short term, however, our primary focus is on our decaying infrastructure, which we continue to repair and rebuild.

Driving through Westmount today seems to be an obstacle course of orange cones (and sometimes potholes). The ongoing work on our roads and sidewalks and in our parks is disruptive and irritating. But it is also critical and necessary. Much of our planning is focused on the state of the underground infrastructure, which is not as obvious for residents to see. Our roads, water and parks projects, which are the majority of this year's capital works budget, are all moving forward, on budget and largely on time. While our infrastructure decay did not happen overnight and will take time and money to address, we are making progress and beginning to enjoy the benefits.

The new Westmount Park play structure and paths surrounding it will be a welcome fix that was desperately needed. At the library, we have installed a new accessible entrance, providing direct access for families with strollers or mobility challenges to the children's department. We are also finalizing the creation of the new "makerspace," which will be equipped with exciting technologies and allow us to offer innovative programming for children and adults.

Our green spaces are also receiving a lot of attention and much needed care. The city's tree planting initiative is 75 percent complete, and these new trees are part of the city's commitment to protect our tree canopy. Annuals have been planted, and crews are adding shrubs and perennials on Grosvenor and Lexington as well as in Westmount and King George (Murray)

parks. New flower boxes have been installed at summit lookout, and we will soon be replacing the ones in our parks. You may have come across our dedicated team that are working in our larger parks.

One of the strengths of our infrastructure plan is that key projects have been designed with the involvement of our residents. A good example is the revitalization of the southeast sector, where many residents participated in a workshop at Victoria Hall on June 12. This session allowed us to collectively reflect on a vision for this neighbourhood, and I believe that we now have the right tools and people in place to ensure this area of Westmount meets its full potential as the gateway into our city. The next step is the public consultation this fall.

We are scheduling consultation on other projects in the fall, and I urge all Westmounters to participate. Your input is critical. With your help Westmount will continue to be a place where families want to live and seniors have access to services and housing that meets their needs.

Our infrastructure program for the next few years is extensive, and please click on our Westmount.org site to get a better understanding of the work ahead. While we are well aware of the state of disrepair of our roads and sidewalks and the work to be done in our parks and municipal buildings, please do not hesitate to come forward if you feel there are gaps in our planning. I have been spending more time walking the streets and parks with residents with a goal of discovering issues we may be missing. I thank those who have taken the time to share their ideas with me.

Finally, the past few months have been busy with celebrations of Westmount's 150th anniversary. This is an opportunity to celebrate our community and recognize the important work of those who helped build our city.

On June 15, we inaugurated a mural on Greene Ave., and I encourage everyone to go see this beautiful piece of art that celebrates our values. And on September 5 we are hosting a celebratory tea in the courtyard in front of the greenhouse and October 9 will be the gala celebrating Westmount's 150th with a very special guest.

While we admittedly have a wide range of challenges in front of us, we live in a wonderful community and have much to be thankful for and it is a city I am honoured to serve.

Please plan on taking part in our birthday celebrations and, in the interim, have a wonderful summer.

Scarcity of lifeguards cited by mayor City to look into finding a way to open WRC pool's splash pad

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Can the city keep open the splash pad at the Westmount recreation centre pool at all times rather than closing it when the pool itself is used for lessons and other groups such as seniors?

Mayor Christina Smith's answer during the council's question period July 2 came as a simple word: "Lifeguards."

She then elaborated by stating that Westmount was fortunate to have been able to hire the current number of lifeguards, considering that some community pools have remained closed due to a lack of them.

In addressing the council at its July 2 meeting, Diana Anderson, of Victoria Ave., explained she had written a letter to the editor (in the July 2 issue of the *Independent*, p. 6) stating the splash pad was closed during some of the prime times when children under age 5 were awake and available to use it.

Mayor Smith explained that the city was trying to make the pool as accessible as possible to the many different user groups,



Diana Anderson at the mic during July 2 question period.

all requiring lifeguards, but would find out if there was "something we can do. It's all about lifeguards."

Police Report

Station 12 police make correction about alleged dog-bite incident

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

A spokesman for the Montreal police department's Station 12 has issued a correction regarding a dog bite incident on June 15, which was initially construed by the police as having taken place on the Westmount summit.

According to the initial summary furnished by the police (see June 25, p. 19), the incident took place on Summit Circle on June 15.

In a phone interview late last week, Station 12 community relations officer Cst. Mike Yigit said he had mistakenly stated that it took place on Summit Circle because the dog's owner was a former resident of that upper Westmount street.

"What I want people to understand is that this was second-hand information that was given to the police," said Yigit.

He said the event in question "did not happen in Westmount" and the reason for its mistakenly being reported as such was that "the owner used to live in Westmount

in the Summit Circle area."

He added: "We don't know where this happened and the guy no longer lives here."

When asked again where the police believe the incident may have taken place, he responded, "We don't know. We have no idea."

He said that in the police department's dossiers, the person relating the incident in question to the police was classified as being "at large," with his last known address being on Summit Circle.

Yigit told the *Independent* in an earlier interview that a separate incident report was filed at the Montreal police's Station 16 in Verdun, but that someone came to the reception desk at Station 12 on Stanton St. to also report the incident.

He said the person who filed the report at Station 12 was not a witness to the incident, but provided "second-hand information. They got the story and they thought it was important enough to come and denounce it to the police."

Consider all costs, benefits then let voters decide on artificial turf



ECOWatch

HEATHER BLACK

On May 6, city hall approved up to \$4 million to help create an artificial turf soccer field at Marianopolis College on condition of zero environmental impact (May 14, p. 1).

But what about the benefits of grass on both the environment and children's health? As this decision requires long-term funding, which affects future councils and citizens, a scorecard – and referendum – are needed.

Heat islands, toxic run-off and PFAS in drinking water

While grass temperature in full sun is 0 to 3°C cooler than air (Armson 2012), artificial turf can increase surface temperatures up to 30°C, according to the National Recreation and Parks Association (artificial turf: -1 point).

This increase or "heat island" effect is evident on Montreal's online heat map. Pointe Claire's two artificial turf fields at Terra Cotta Park are red next to a "green" grass field (grass: +1).

Artificial turf's plastic blades or backing also contaminate clothes, homes, run-off and enter water sources as "forever chemicals" (artificial turf: -1). A July 19, 2023, CBC report indicated that 99.3 percent of tap water from 376 Quebec municipalities, including Montreal, contain PFAS – with PFOA higher than American standards.

In future, taxpayers can expect expensive new water treatment plants – with costs passed on to municipal taxpayers (artificial turf: -1).

Artificial turf also harbours germs – MRSA, for instance, can survive for 7 to 30 days (Waninger Rooney 2011), which requires antibacterials such as triclosan – a known endocrine disruptor (artificial turf: -1).

In contrast, grass's aromatic compounds (Andersen Corazon 2021) boost the immune system (grass: +1). Moreover, on October 9, 2023, CTV News reported 20 percent more injuries occur on artificial turf when compared to grass – a softer, slower and "safer" surface (grass: +1).

Environmental health risk

The Netherlands' men's professional soccer banned artificial turf in 2023 follow-

ing a *Philadelphia Inquirer* report that linked the cancer deaths of six former Phillies to PFAS (artificial turf: -1).

Although some illnesses are difficult to prove, the effect of specific "forever chemicals" on fetus development – and outcomes – can be measured (artificial turf: -1).

Maternal blood PFOA, PFOS, PFHxS, and PFNA amounts are associated with obesity in seven-year-old girls (Szilagyi, Avula 2021), while BPS is linked to lower IQ in boys at age seven (Bornehag 2021).

According to the Mount Sinai Children's Environmental Health Center "Position Statement on the Use of Artificial Turf Surfaces," children are more susceptible to heat injury, inhale more chemicals and have immature immune systems. Their research on rubber-infill "natural" alternatives found carcinogens and neurotoxins in almost all materials tested (artificial turf: -1). Field closures on hot days (artificial turf: -1) also reduce the chief artificial turf benefit – extended field time (artificial turf: +1).

Epidemiologist Diana Zuckerman of The National Center for Health Research, wrote in a "Letter to NJ officials in Montclair and Essex County regarding harms from artificial turf" that, despite the standard eight-year warranty and claims of eco-friendly products, artificial turf requires frequent watering and replacement. She concluded that "well-designed grass fields will last much longer and be more cost-effective" (grass: +1). As *Westmount Independent* editor David Price noted in an editorial a year ago ("Put artificial field to a referendum," July 11, 2023, p. 8), artificial turf is a referendum issue.

Priorities and trust

At grass +4 points, artificial turf is no longer a trade-off between positive player health and the environment. As the dangers of plastic "forever chemicals" mount, council's choice is now extended field time versus children's long-term health. For many citizens – and parents – a decision to go ahead with artificial turf is a costly and unacceptable risk that undermines trust in our elected representatives and is poor public policy.

We welcome your letters

We welcome your letters but reserve the right to choose and edit them. Please limit to 300 words and submit before Friday 10 am to be considered for publication the following week. email us at: editor@westmountindependent.com

Contactivity, Public Security cited positively by mayor

Smith: Families, communities need to prepare for unexpected dementia

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

In a webcast program called “McGill Cares” that deals with dementia education, Mayor Christina Smith cited the need and value that community services can play in providing support to people and their families in dealing with Alzheimer’s disease and other forms of dementia.

Based on her own recent experience – and that of her family – in caring for her father who passed away in February from Alzheimer’s (see February 13, p. 8), the mayor related the need to plan ahead for older family members who may not be able to care for themselves and/or, in some cases, may not even have an advocate.

In an interview June 26 with Claire Webster, a former Westmount resident who is a certified Alzheimer care consultant and ambassador of the McGill Dementia Education Program “McGill Cares,” Mayor Smith described the many stresses and challenges that she and her family had faced in the last year.

She also singled out the importance, and lack, of community resources else-

where, in contrast to programs provided in Westmount by the Contactivity Seniors’ Centre and the one it co-manages with the city’s Public Security Unit, through which people living alone and on a vulnerability list are in touch daily by telephone.

Interestingly, the city recently partnered with Contactivity to enable the centre to hold its programs at Victoria Hall and the Westmount recreation centre (WRC) in light of its upcoming departure from its longtime base at Westmount Park United Church (see story May 28, p. 1).

More help needed

In her personal experience of professional needs for family assistance close to home, she said the care for her father by staff at the CHSLD Vigi Mont Royal in the Town of Mount Royal (TMR) had been very professional but it was a long drive for her from Westmount and from his home in Beaconsfield. She also deplored the overall lack of current medical services.

She related her intensely personal experiences as the mother of three teens, including *continued on p. 13*



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‘One enormous house’ planned for developer – Public presentation attendees generally in favour

Owner of Boulevard’s former Mountainside Church proposes total of six single-family homes



An illustration of the current plan, looking west/southwest from Lansdowne and The Boulevard. Starting at the green area and moving left/south down Lansdowne are renderings of a planned single-family house and then a building containing two semi-detached units.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THOMAS REINER.

BY JENNIFER BALL

The owner of the former Mountainside United Church, Daniel Revah, is now proposing to develop six single-family homes on the 55,000 sq. ft. lot, including plans to create one enormous single-family home, which he and his family will occupy, from the bones of the centenarian church.

The recent meeting

On June 27, a small cohort of Westmount residents – including Conrad Peart, city councillor, commissioner of urban planning and architecture, and member of

the city’s Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) – attended an information session on the future of the site. Members of the congregation that formerly owned and used Mountainside United Church also attended. They moved two years ago to McGill’s Birks Chapel (see June 20, 2023, p. 9).

Everyone present heard about a new proposal for the 55,000 sq. ft. lot as well as an explanation as to why there has been no progress since Westmount resident and developer Revah bought the huge building and land six years ago (see October 9, 2018, p. 1).

For two and a half years, the buildings have been unoccupied and not used (see May 3, 2022, p. 26).

The information session was held at the Chabad of Westmount on the second floor of 4 Westmount Square. The development team said that it was a requirement of the city that residents of Westmount be aware of the proposal, and that they have an opportunity to provide positive and negative comments about it.

The hope was, of course, that residents would endorse the plans.

The former Mountainside United Church is on The Boulevard between Roslyn and Lansdowne avenues and there are

two attached buildings on the site. In 1915, the first, smaller building was built. It is called Leslie Hall. In 1925, the larger building was added further up the hill.

The *Independent* has reported on the evolving story for years.

Daniel Revah, president of Corev Immobilier and Corev Condo, purchased the building and land in 2018.

According to Revah, he bought the property with residential zoning in place. He also contends that during the submission process for the development, he received reassurance from the city that residential use of the religious property was allowed. According to Revah, the city proceeded to change the by-law afterwards, thereby excluding residential use of the property.

What has been planned before now?

At one point, Revah mused about renting the facility to a mosque (see November 10, 2020, p. 1).

Revah told the *Independent* in April 2022 that his intention was to retain the bones of the main building and create an attachment that would house a few dozen condominiums (see May 3, 2022, p. 26).

Architect and urbanist Thomas Robert Reiner, whom Revah hired to facilitate the information session, said the different iter-

ations of the project in the past seven years have been “a low-rise multi-family condominium building, then townhouses, and now finally semi-detached and single-family...”

“The church itself does not lend itself to a multi-family treatment so it...will be respected the way it is.” It is a Category I building so the PAC will likely have a large role in determining the type of interventions that are acceptable.

Residents wade in

Residents shared a variety of views, including saying that certain border trees should be preserved, which Reiner said would be done; that Leslie Hall is ugly and that it (or its replacement) should be made taller with more units.

Despite a short laundry list of minor wishes, the overall mood of the room was positive about the project.

Revah said there still is a long road ahead. “The city still has to change the zoning and then after the zoning change, we go to the architects...”

“All we are trying to do is to get the zoning back when I bought it.”

Once they are permitted to break ground, Revah said construction would take one and a half to two years.

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Ross Brown, Dufour, Katnick, Mulholland, Winton chosen for varied backgrounds

Five residents named to city's new environment committee

BY LAUREN SWEENEY

City council July 2 appointed five residents to the city's newly formed Environment and Sustainable Development Advisory Committee. This increased the number from two as originally announced in a call for applications December 4.

The five, representing "members of the community" as the resident members are being called, are: Ross Brown, a member of the city's former Healthy City Project; Richard Dufour, a frequent council attendee and advocate for a local glass recycling depot; architect Mira Katnick of Westmount-based Architem; Isabelle Mulholland, an environmental consultant; and Jessica Winton, a frequent voice at council question periods.

As the only one of the five attending the council session, Winton was introduced and personally congratulated by Mayor Christina Smith and Councillor Matt Aronson, who moved the approval resolution as commissioner of climate change and sustainability.

Referring to herself as "a younger voice on the committee" at age 23, Winton is a master's student in urban planning at



Concordia and a research assistant and "engagement lead" for Openwaste.ai. "This is a research project to develop an app that helps people identify and sort their waste in the best manner possible," she explains.

She won the lieutenant-governor's youth medal in April based on the sustainability-related projects she has led at Concordia. These include the first round of sustainability ambassadors where she led a project called "Waste Invaders," a game about waste sorting.

2-year mandate

The new committee also includes councillor and finance commissioner Antonio D'Amico as well as Patricia Racette, the city's environmental coordinator and the lone member of the administration. While the naming of committee members was made only recently, their two-year mandates end December 31, 2025.

◀ Jessica Winton, right, is congratulated July 2 on her appointment to the city's newly approved Environment and Sustainability Advisory Committee by Mayor Christina Smith and Councillor Matt Aronson. She was the only resident appointee attending.

Smith: communities need to prepare, cont'd from p. 11

spending nights in an ER just before a council meeting in the midst of the city's June to August 2023, seven-week blue-collar strike.

Attending to her father's care included driving back and forth to TMR, all while also dealing with the invasion of privacy by workers demonstrating in front of her own home and, in at least one unrelated case, a resident targetting a member of her family.

Prepare in advance

It is vital, she said, to have important

papers such as wills and other notarized papers prepared in advance, and plans worked out with family members. There were many things, she said, she wished she had done "earlier" with her mother and family before she "lived the journey" brought on by her father's unexpected condition.

As of last week, the full interview, billed as "A heart-to-heart with the Mayor of Westmount on her caregiving journey," was available at mcgill.ca/x/wNS. The "McGill Cares" program is funded by private donations.



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The Study works to create active outdoor learning space



Construction work at The Study, which is located at 3233 The Boulevard. The photo was taken from the north side of The Boulevard on June 20.

BY JENNIFER BALL

Sustainability and its practical applications is informing recent construction on the land at the all-girls private school The Study as it works to create an active outdoor learning space and better water management system.

Both of the school's historic houses, 3233 The Boulevard and 5 Braeside, are Category I buildings so Westmount's Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) reviewed and approved the scope of work, which Sarah Binns, director of communications and marketing at the school, and Lindsay Woods, associate director of advancement, explained to the *Independent* on June 27.

"The prioritization was to create a water management system that was more sustainable for our own property. Firstly, in terms of integrity of this heritage building, and secondarily for being responsible citizens of Westmount in terms of alleviating the pressure on the municipal system..."

"We've added in a complete water management system that includes roof run-off and store management, including drains with gradings that run into a rainwater garden..."

"The catchment garden feeds into two large underground water retention basins that slow-release water back into the municipal system."

In addition, Woods said they created active learning spaces for their students and teachers.

"We have a wonderful, massive seminar table that can actually seat an entire class, and we have an outdoor amphitheater that allow us to host lectures and debates and productions of all types."

The concept of being one with nature was a driving force behind the project.

"We don't have benches; we have large rocks. We don't have paths; we have gar-

dens. And these are all the kind of elements that we brought into the project," Woods said.

The project has been going on in multiple phases for many years. Woods believes it was an opportunity to highlight how innovative they could be as a centre city school.

"To create green spaces in the small campus that we have is such an indication of being conscious of girls' health and well-being."

Binns said that the landscape architect and urban designer Sophie Robitaille of the Westmount-based architecture firm RobitailleCurtis was instrumental in presiding over the project's sustainability framework.

"We would not be able to accomplish such a wonderful project without her support, and her guidance and her creativity."

In discussion with the *Independent*, the women said that environmental concerns are extremely high on the agenda of pressing issues that the scholars at the school are contending with.

Robitaille ensured that the projects included native trees and plants that would not prove to become invasive. Ones that were also friendly to pollinators were chosen.

Woods said, "We planted sugar maples, and we are told that eventually we will be able to tap them..."

"The kids can engage with the space. I am not saying that we are changing our whole pedagogy to be outdoors but when they do spend time outdoors, they will be able to be engaged."

It seems at The Study – which prides itself on being innovative – even a math class can be held outdoors. There girls can noodle on nature's slopes to figure out cosines and solve Pythagorean and Euclidean problems for application in their exams.

Residents splash at city's bash for Canada Day



As seen July 1 at the Westmount recreation centre pool.

PHOTOS: RALPH THOMPSON.

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City's blue-collar mess hall about to be renovated

BY RALPH THOMPSON

The *Westmount Independent* had the opportunity to view the blue-collar workers' current mess hall located at the Glen Yards, 15 Bethune St., on June 27, prior to upcoming renovations.

The mess hall is part of a three-storey brick-and-concrete building where the city provides blue-collar workers with locker rooms, changing rooms, bathrooms, eating and meeting facilities, and a kitchen area.

The improvements were a commitment made by the city as part of the collective agreement made with its blue-collar workers in 2023.

Public Works architecture technical officer Cynine Kaboub showed the *Independent* around the mess hall, mainly the second floor, and also the mechanical rooms in an adjoining building. She explained that the work had already started, with completion expected in the summer of 2025.

The project comprises the upgrade of equipment in the mechanical building to improve the furnaces and ventilation, and renovation of the mess hall. According to the city, workers were consulted on the plans and on the temporary arrangements.

"Union representatives have been consulted during the conception phase and were able to provide suggestions. We organized a presentation for all employees and are working to maintain transparent communication throughout the process," said Engineering department director Elisa Gaetano.

Goals include "replacing outdated systems with modern ones to improve ventilation and heating in the mess hall. Careful



The men's toilets, showers and washing facilities.

consideration was given to equipment selection to optimize energy consumption, including the installation of natural gas boilers and electric equipment."

The existing mess hall windows will not be replaced and the upper floor will not be renovated for now. It will be used by the contractors as a site office.

Temporary cabins have been rented and set up in another area of the Glen Yards to accommodate the workers during the renovations. The rental agreement was approved by city council following a call for tenders.

When the work is complete next year, it is expected to be used by around 80 blue-collar workers.



Kitchen facilities. All the equipment, chairs, tables and lighting have already been removed for the underway renovations.



The lockers and changing area.



Temporary cabins have been set up to accommodate workers during the renovations.

Message: Planet should be a home for all – not just humans

Rev. Whitehouse of Westmount Park United publishes *The Gospel of Jesus Green*

BY JENNIFER BALL

There were two launch dates for *The Gospel of Jesus Green*, June 20 and June 23, at which time Rev. Neil Whitehouse expanded on a central tenet of his first book: how more than ever, we need to focus on creating a home for all – not just humans.

The first launch was downtown at Paragraphe bookstore, and the second at his own church – Westmount Park United Church on de Maisonneuve Blvd. at Lansdowne Ave.

The Gospel of Jesus Green was published by Wipf & Stock last month. Bishop Karen Oliveto of the United Methodist Church described the work in an introduction: “Through the weaving, a tapestry emerges of a new image of Jesus: one who calls us into radical relationship with ourselves, each other, and all creation. It is here, in this sacred connection, that we discover we are both healed and healers.”

Rev. Whitehouse is a minister, a zoology graduate from the University of Liverpool and a Methodist minister trained at Cambridge University. He is also on the advisory board of the Green Coalition of Montreal.

When he asked for authoring/publishing advice from an acquaintance, the Haitian-Canadian writer Dany Laferrière, the response to the mentorship request was brief: “Mal” and “vite.”

Whitehouse kidded, “It hasn’t been quick, so I hope it isn’t bad!”

Whitehouse’s friend Nigel Penney introduced the book at the Paragraphe bookstore launch. “It is a book full of surprises. We owe it to ourselves to read this book,” after which Whitehouse thanked Penney for being the best “un-paid agent in Canada.”

Getting to know Jesus

He said his book “focusses on Jesus and getting to know – despite the layers – something of his story...Getting to know ecology, environmentalism and ‘green.’”

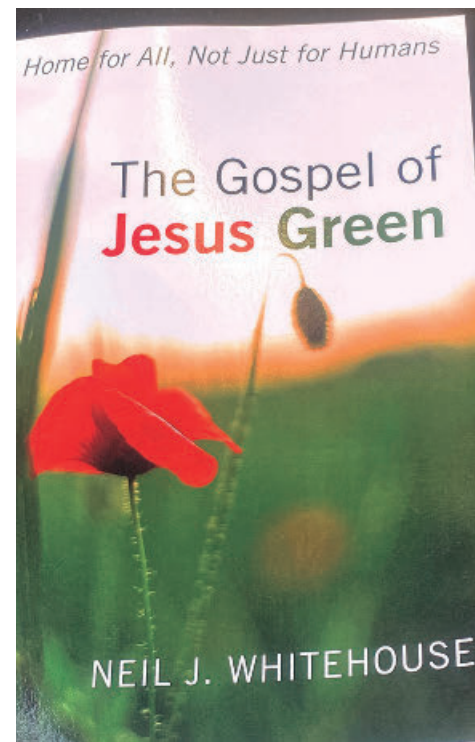
Whitehouse’s Sunday services often include a living plant as a focal point on which he builds out his multi-discipline sermons.

The Gospel of Jesus Green includes personal stories, science, and hopes for the Jesus-curious and those who want to know what “green” means.

The description of the book on the cover reads “Modern people are like the passengers of the *Titanic*; the triumphs of tech-



Rev. Neil Whitehouse at the Paragraphe bookstore downtown on June 20.



nology have real limitations. They face the necessity to share the planet that takes them to hard politics. Economics can be integrated with ecology and the essentials of human relationships...

“The history of Jesus may make him an uncertain figure but his demand to live for the best can still be felt.”

Whitehouse draws on the paleontologist Fr. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin and existentialist Paul Tillich to claim “home for all, not just humans” is a universal biological phenomenon and a truth named by Jesus.

“*Jesus Green* is all about many stories with many birthdays: weaving your story with mine and [Jesus’s story], whose story has never been in his control. It belongs to the big story of life and universe and everything...”

“I sum up these beginnings of home for all as ‘oikos-genesis.’ The global home for all, not just for humans...”

“You heard it here, first time,” Whitehouse beamed.

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Vago restaurant: Situation will be remedied

Residents express sanitation concerns about Greene-Olivier alley

BY JENNIFER BALL

The alley between Greene Ave. and Olivier Ave. south of Sherbrooke is half commercial (east side) and half residential (west side). It has slid back into being a major sanitary concern for at least three Olivier Ave. residents after two years of marked improvement.

Neighbors Dom Keyserlingk, Catherine Cook and Olivia Corning of Olivier Ave. spoke with the *Independent* on June 21 about garbage spill-over in their back alley and the steps they have taken with the city to deter it.

In April 2022, Corning alerted the *Independent* to the fact that garbage was not being picked up in this area (see April 26, 2022, p. 5). Now the problem is that some merchant and restaurant garbage/recycling is being taken out days before its collection date, often blowing onto residents' properties.

"[Vago] leaves everything out for days, not just on garbage day," Corning said.

"Trash blows under our fences and into our yards," Keyserlingk said, and "the number of cigarette butts that are left in the alley [by Vago employees] ... is disgusting."

Residents: Fewer bins means loose refuse

Corning said the situation deteriorated as the number of blue bins for recycling and black bins for garbage started to dwindle behind the restaurant. "There used to be a wall of them," she said.

On June 21, the *Independent* observed that some of the bins that Vago uses do not have covers, other covers were broken and some of the remaining ones had covers that were not being closed by employees.



Garbage bins with broken or no covers in the alley between Greene Ave. and Olivier Ave. south of Sherbrooke. All photos June 21.

Pointing to them, Keyserlingk said: "That will blow right over into my garage and be left there. I will have to pick up their garbage. That is what ends up happening."

Cook, who is the most recent of the three to move to Olivier Ave., said "I am coming in at the tail-end and I am seeing their frustration, and I can understand it as well..."

"I've seen all the garbage and we've contacted [city] councillors Jeff Shamie and Mary Gallery. They've been very respectful, and they gave good ideas..."

"[Shamie] walked me to city hall to meet with the woman who handles all citizen complaints and we've done weekly uploads on the citizen portal with photos detailing the issue."

Cook showed the *Independent* a garage that she owns that she renovated recently.

"When the contractors started work, it was absolutely disgusting. The walls were infested with vermin, but they were all dead."

In addition to the help that councillors Shamie and Gallery provided, Corning said she recently called the Urban Planning inspector Risuke Pilon, who has had the file for several years.

On June 26, the *Independent* reached out to Pilon but there was no response in time for the *Independent's* print deadline.

Vago responds

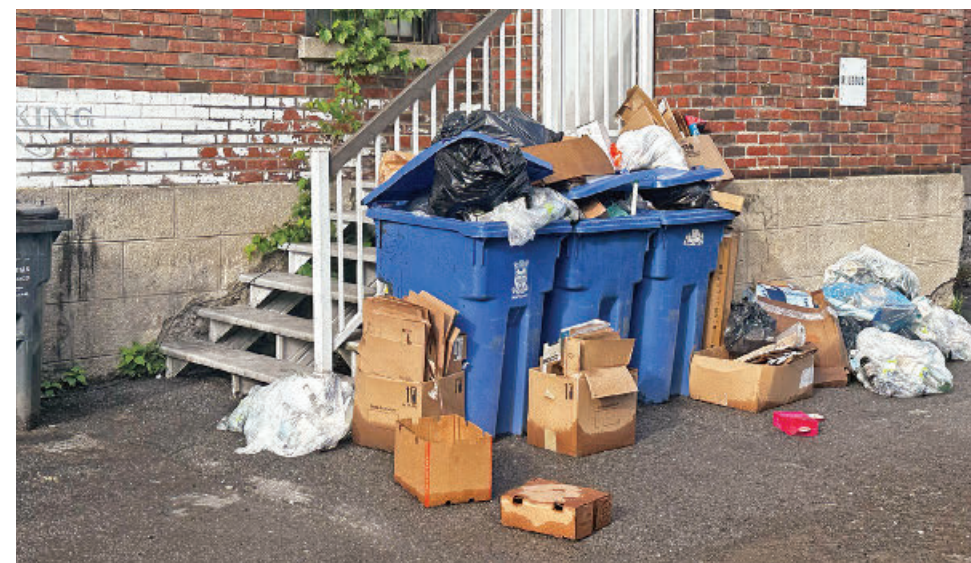
Shaun Turriff, who is a minority shareholder and the general manager of Vago, spoke with the *Independent* on June 28. He said he was aware of the Olivier Ave. residents' concerns and that "...the reduction of bins is a result of the city contractors breaking them..."



"There has been a slowdown in replacing them but now that it has become an issue, I am definitely looking into that, and I have started steps to replace them. I am working on more recycling bins and more garbage bins so that should be taken care of in the very near future. The broken ones have been slated for replacement as well as other ones that are coming."

Regarding cigarette butts, he said he had not been aware of the issue, but "That is something that I can easily fix. I will absolutely talk to my employees and make sure that this is no longer an issue going forward."

Turriff summarized: "We pride ourselves of being part of the neighbourhood. We have been here a long time and I would like to bring it to a point where we are all happy and neighbourly with the situation."



Overflowing recycling bins.



Trash that has blown into residents' yard.



9 Lives

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to 8 pm, as well as Saturday and Sunday from 11 am to 6 pm. It is located at 5215 Jean Talon St. West, Côte des Neiges, Montreal, H4P 1X4.

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Westmount
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LYSANNE FOWLER

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A bright and playful young shepherd mix, handsome as can be, still with his dark puppy mask and lanky frame, Bony is a year and 11 months old, a young companion with great intellect and dignity.

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I hope that this is the first step in a wonderful adoption story for your family, starting the book with "When the puppy came home, ..."

Your neighbour,
Lysanne



Results of conference with Pomerleau/WSP

Council okays \$300K settlement over pool's concrete defect

BY LAUREN SWEENEY

As the swimming season moved into high gear, city council July 2 agreed to approve a settlement for repairs over a defect detected in 2018 in the concrete slab of the pool at the Westmount recreation centre.

In a council resolution to settle the case and aiming to avoid a lengthy trial and limit the city's legal fees, the council accepted an out-of-court offer from Pomerleau and WSP Canada in a total of \$300,000 in capital, interest and costs, negotiated through the law firm of BMMD Avocats mandated to represent the city (see story February 20, 2024, p. 1).

The total amount of the remedial work had been reported as reaching \$552,685, taxes included (see story October 13, 2020, p. 17).

An independent investigator – Solroc – had determined the concrete had not been poured thickly enough on top of the metal re-bar reinforcement (see story September 11, 2018).

The final settlement resulted from a conference over the cracking of concrete during the pool's construction under a design-build contract with Pomerleau, for which WSP was hired to inspect the quality of the work.

Cracking

The cracking was described as endangering the useful life of pool. It led to the remedial work lasting two months to correct some 610 square meters of the pool's concrete base, 130 square meters of the pool's walls, installation of one new concrete joint and re-painting 980 square meters of the pool's surfaces (see story November 10, 2020, p. 10).

The original defects had been investigated and discussed publicly since 2018 when the council agreed to take legal steps, if necessary, against the contractor and monitoring firm after it was determined the original concrete had not been poured thickly enough on top of the metal rebar reinforcement (see story September 11, 2018, p. 1).

Work done – Road still (legally) blocked



Bell Canada work that began June 25 and ended two days later caused the city to notify residents and someone to put up this sign on Wood north of de Maisonneuve. It was still there on July 2, as seen above, and July 5 (not pictured).

PHOTO: JENNIFER BALL

June Sales: Serious mark-downs on small sample size



Real Estate

ANDY DODGE

of the month, in upper Westmount, went for \$4,400,000 after coming on the market in 2022 asking \$6,750,000 and eventually dropping to \$4,995,000. The municipal valuation was \$5,675,000, thus a 22.5 per cent mark-down.

Condos & Westmount adjacent

The condominium market was only slightly stronger, with the average price of 11 sales in the second quarter of 2024 (April-June) at \$1,022,000 and the “typical” condo, with an average valuation of \$1,266,718, having a market value of \$1,316,743 – only a 3.9 per cent increase.

There was little activity in adjacent Westmount, either, with just three house sales, two just east of Westmount on Cedar Ave. and de Ramezay St., and a Roslyn Ave. house sale to the north of the city limits, where four Roslyn sales this year have added to 10 sales last year, making up almost half of all the house sales in the Côte des Neiges district south of Queen Mary Road.

Available listings have dropped from 136 in mid-June to 134 in early July, with little change in the price distribution.

Rentals

The only surprise in terms of rentals was a contract for an upper-Westmount mansion quoting \$25,000 a month. At last report, some 29 houses have been rented so far this year, compared to 28 last year, but in 2022 there were only 33 rentals in the entire year, so this option appears to be increasing in popularity.

Summit Woods, cont'd from p. 1

who referred to himself as both a dog walker and a birder.

“I can always find a place to walk my dog,” he stated. “The birds, on the other hand, are finding it increasingly difficult to find productive nesting areas.”

On the use of the woods by dogs, he asked if the council had consulted with the Audubon Society, for example, or the Morgan Arboretum “or even our neighbouring protectors of fragile wildlife, Les Amis de la Montagne? If not, why?”

He pointed out that in some cases non-residents wanting to use some other Westmount services such as the pool buy day passes for presentation at single entrances. To this Mayor Smith noted that to walk dogs in Summit Woods, non-residents had to buy city dog licence tags.

Safeguard uniqueness

Speaking next, Patrick Barnard, of Melville, cited Summit Woods as “unique” in Montreal.

As a result, Westmount “must act to protect biodiversity and climate change,” he said.

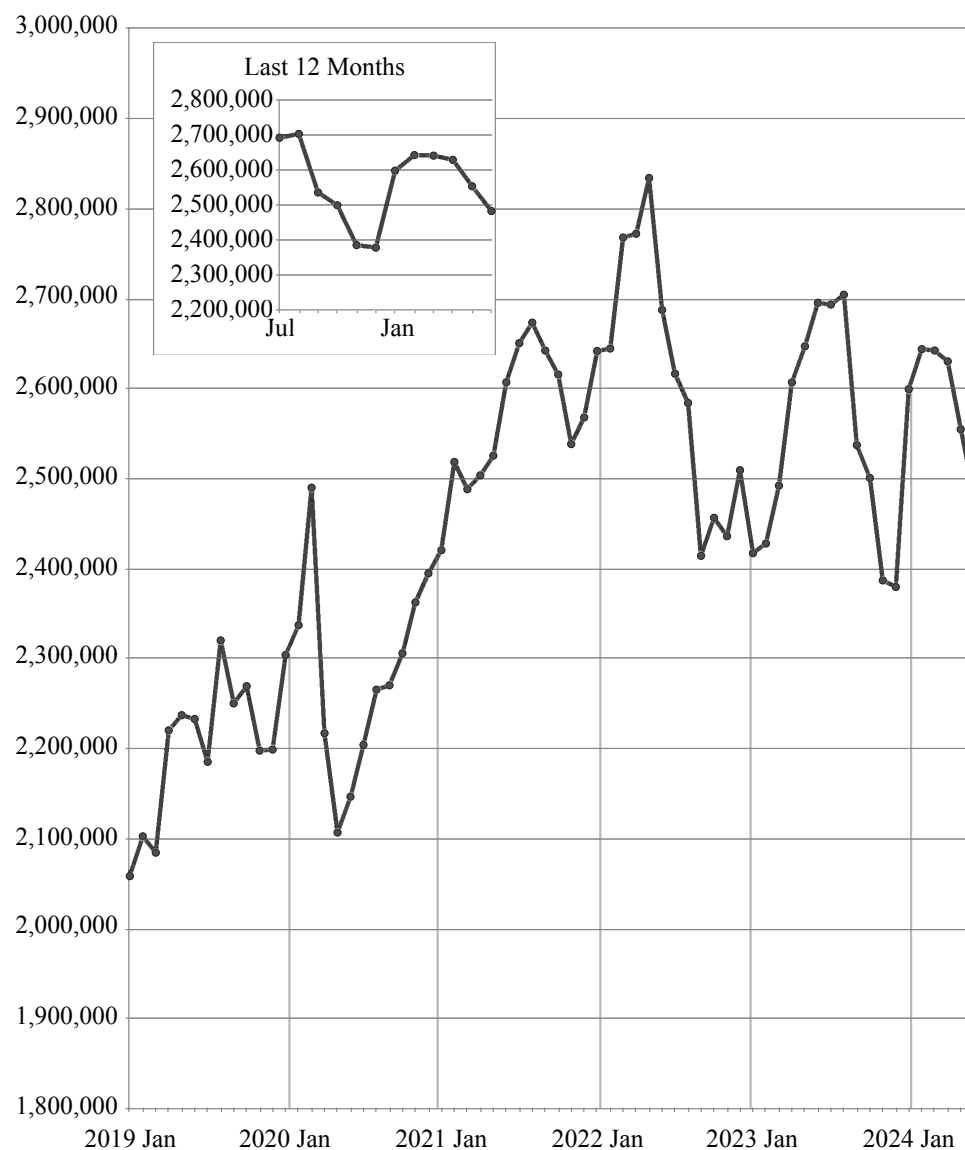
Paula Engels, president of the Westmount Dog Owners’ Association, spoke to a recent report from police in the *Independent* concerning an alleged dog bite on Summit Circle, about which Mayor Christina Smith said that neither the city nor Public Security could obtain any information (see the Police Report on p. 10 for updated information on that topic).

Ornamental or wild flowers?

On the issue of biodiversity, Penny Arsenault, of St. Catherine St., spoke to the need to replace ornamental gardens with those that provide wild flowers that promote food and protection for birds and insects.

She also asked for the city to limit the proliferation of invasive Japanese knotweed in the retention basin created in front of the Westmount recreation centre.

Average adjusted price for ‘typical’ Westmount house, by month, January 2019 to June 2024, based on accepted offer dates



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NOUVELLES

PROCHAINE SÉANCE
DU CONSEIL

Lundi 5 août

NEWS

NEXT COUNCIL
MEETING

Monday, August 5



Programmes d'été gratuits au parc Westmount

Du 2 juillet au 22 août, profitez de cours de yoga, de mise en forme et de danse gratuits tous les mardis et jeudis de 10 h à 11 h. Aucune inscription requise. westmount.org.

Rappels saisonniers

- Du 1 juin au 30 septembre, **l'utilisation de souffleuses à feuilles est interdite**.
- Du 16 juin au 31 octobre, **les chiens doivent être tenus en laisse au bois Summit** de 10 h à 17 h.
- De juin à la mi-octobre, le jeudi de 14 h à 18 h, **le kiosque de la ferme Complètement Légume** s'installe au Square Prince-Albert.

Subventions vertes

La Ville de Westmount offre des subventions pour vos achats durables. Les résidents qui effectuent l'achat de produits éligibles peuvent demander un remboursement pendant l'année en cours. Il suffit

de remplir le formulaire en ligne, de respecter les conditions générales et particulières, et de fournir les pièces justificatives. Un maximum de deux (2) demandes de subvention sont acceptés par adresse, ou par unité d'occupation, par année. Pour en savoir plus et faire une demande : westmount.org/subventionsvertes

Portail citoyen

Demandez un permis, signalez un nid de poule, obtenez une licence pour chien, et bien plus. Nos services à portée de main. citoyen.westmount.org

La Ville de Westmount vous souhaite un bel été!



Free summer programmes in Westmount Park

From July 2 to August 22, enjoy free yoga, fitness and dance classes every Tuesday and Thursday from 10 to 11 a.m. No registration required. westmount.org.

Seasonal reminders

- From June 1 to September 30, **the use of leaf blowers is prohibited**.
- From June 16 to October 31, **dogs must be on leash at Summit Woods** from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- From June to mid-October, on Thursdays from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., **the Complètement Légume farm stand** will be at Prince Albert Square.

Green Grants

The City of Westmount offers a number of grants for your sustainable purchases. Residents who purchase eligible products and meet the general conditions may request a refund during the same

calendar year by submitting the online form and providing supporting documents. A maximum of two (2) grant applications are accepted per address, or per occupancy unit, per year. To find out more and apply: westmount.org/greengrants.

Citizen Portal

Apply for a permit, report a pothole, obtain your dog license, and more. Access our services citoyen.westmount.org.

The City of Westmount wishes you a wonderful summer!

BIBLIOTHÈQUE ET ÉVÉNEMENTS COMMUNAUTAIRES

Concerts d'été 2024

Du 7 juillet au 4 août, le dimanche à 14 h, près de l'étang du parc Westmount. Profitez d'une variété de concerts de musique tout l'été. Apportez votre chaise ou couverture! westmount.org



Ciné-club d'été

Du 9 au 30 juillet, le mardi à 14 h, Victoria Hall. Venez partager notre passion pour le cinéma! Chaque semaine, nous regarderons un film sur grand écran, dans une ambiance décontractée.
9 juillet : The Worst Person in the World (2021)
16 juillet : The Talented Mr. Ripley (1999)
23 juillet : Anatomie d'une chute (2023)
30 juillet : An Affair to Remember (1957)
westmount.org

Shakespeare-in-the-Park 2024 : Variétés infinies

Du 26 juillet au 3 août, 19 h, parc Westmount. Une soirée de sonnets, de chansons et de soliloques de Shakespeare. Une présentation Repercussion Theatre. Les 26 et 27 juillet, et les 2 et 3 août. westmount.org

StoryWalk® du CLÉTD

Durant tout l'été, au parc Westmount. Baladez-vous dans le parc et découvrez le livre du StoryWalk® (marche littéraire) de cette année : *Plus Noir que la nuit*, des auteur(e)s Chris Hadfield et Kate Fillion, et illustré par les frères Fan. Présenté dans le cadre du Club de lecture d'été TD. westlib.org

Visites de la Bibliothèque

Jusqu'au 22 août, Bibliothèque. Célébrez le 125^e anniversaire de la Bibliothèque en découvrant son histoire, son architecture et les activités qui y sont planifiées cette année. Visites en français ou en anglais. Inscription individuelle. Le nombre de places est limité à 15 par visite. Info : 514 989-5355 ou refdesk@westmount.org

LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

Summer Concerts 2024

July 7 to August 4, Sundays at 2 p.m., by the lagoon in Westmount Park. Enjoy a variety of music all summer long. Bring your chair or blanket! westmount.org

Summer Film Club

July 9 to 30, Tuesdays at 2 p.m., Victoria Hall. Share our passion for cinema! Every week, watch a great film on our large screen in a relaxed atmosphere.
July 9: The Worst Person in the World (2021)
July 16: The Talented Mr. Ripley (1999)
July 23: Anatomie d'une chute (2023)
July 30: An Affair to Remember (1957)
westmount.org.

Shakespeare-in-the-Park 2024: Infinite Variety

July 26 to August 3, 7 p.m., Westmount Park. An evening of music and merriment, poetry and playfulness, by or inspired by Shakespeare. A Repercussion Theatre presentation. July 26 and 27, and August 2 and 3. westmount.org



TDSRC StoryWalk®

All summer at Westmount Park. Stroll through the park and read this year's StoryWalk®: *The Darkest Dark*, by Chris Hadfield and Kate Fillion, illustrated by the Fan Brothers. Presented as part of the TD Summer Reading Club. westlib.org

Library Tours

Until August 22, Library. Celebrate the Library's 125th anniversary with a tour to learn its history and architecture, and hear about the activities happening throughout the year. In French or English. Register individually. Space is limited to 15 per tour. Info: 514 989-5355 or refdesk@westmount.org

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR – SUMMIT WOODS’ DOG-LEASH LAWS

IN SUMMIT WOODS, PLUS ÇA CHANGE...

When Westmount city council decided to label Summit Woods a “dog park” residents were assured “increased fines, increased surveillance, no warnings” will ensure the woods’ flora and fauna and citizens will be protected.

The result is that increased surveillance during the spring period resulted in many fines issued, showing that many dog owners disregard the rules. The summer season brought in Public Security cadets to Summit Woods to oversee infractions. They, however, have no power to issue tickets and seemingly no respect from dog owners who have been witnessed blatantly disregarding the cadets’ instructions to leash their dogs.

Council insisted “nothing has changed with the new by-law.” I guess they are right. Dogs continue to gambol freely through the woods, undermining the health of the only natural habitat left in Westmount. Mayor Smith may have walked with Greta, but it seems it was all talk.

VIRGINIA ELLIOTT, HILLSIDE AVE.

HYPOCRITICAL RESIDENTS GREENWASHING THEIR ELITE AGENDA

I’d like to comment on the ongoing and unacceptable levels of harassment of the mayor and councillors regarding Summit Woods. A small but very vocal group of self-proclaimed environmentalists – at the behest of certain residents near Summit Woods – has been taking council meetings hostage for the last little while.

These individuals are spurred not by true environmental concerns, but by beliefs in elitism and possibly even motives of fame (or notoriety) and relevance. Rather than promoting biodiversity, these self-proclaimed environmentalists are in fact mere instruments in the hands of some residents around Summit Woods who wish to emulate what elite Malibu [California] residents did to Escondido beach: claiming public land for their own private use and enjoyment.

One cannot be a champion of biodiversity and environmental protection and ignore the impact of human activities and urban development, especially in affluent neighbourhoods such as those surrounding Summit Woods. While there is little/no scientific evidence supporting the claim that off-leash dogs harm nature or biodiversity or that they scare off birds, there is nonetheless evidence that human build-up/urbanization, landscaping and beautification of woods for aesthetic reasons, mowing and spraying of yards, human

overconsumption and greed, human carbon footprint, as well as feeding wildlife (all of which these very same self-proclaimed environmental activists have engaged in and/or advocated) all impact biodiversity negatively. As was pointed out during the July 2 council meeting by Ms. Penny Arsenault during the question period, enhancing biodiversity can start in our own backyards.

Complaints from these environmentalists that people are deterred from coming to Summit Woods due to fear of off-leash dogs also miss the mark. Any true environmentalist would be at least somewhat concerned about increasing human footfall.

It appears, however, that the narrative advocates increasing visitors to the Summit Woods – just as long as they are not: 1) dogs; 2) non-residents of Westmount. It is in fact shocking how these so-called environmentalists believe that non-Westmount residents will litter and damage the woods where Westmount residents would not. This witch hunt targeting dogs (which manifests itself in the implication that most off-leash dogs come to the Summit Woods from outside Westmount) and non-Westmounters would be comical if not a symptom of elitism on steroids. These so-called environmentalists are not advocates for the birds. They are advocates for their picture-perfect lifestyle that envisions the Summit Woods as a place where the city’s elites go for a nice stroll when their heart desires, without the displeasure of encountering those who happen to be less affluent or less fortunate in life. Every single word they have uttered is a reflection of their belief that by mere fact of residing in Westmount, they have superior understanding and appreciation for nature and biodiversity, and a sense of entitlement to having exclusive rights to enjoyment of what little nature *they* have left for us by *their own* elitist greed.

Under the guise of “speaking for the birds,” they heckle and harass visitors to Summit Woods, and now the mayor and councillors (who, I must add, have shown nothing but care for Summit Woods and admirable patience in the face of waves of increasingly distasteful comments). Until these self-proclaimed environmentalists reflect on and abandon their hypocrisy, their advocacy remains a hollow gesture, overshadowed by their own hypocrisy and the vested interests of a privileged few. They should stop giving true environmental activists a bad name.

LAURA MIKA, CÔTE DES NEIGES

Editor’s note: There are so many unsupported statements in this letter that, I think, many editors would not publish it.

I prefer to do so and no particular person has been named, so let freedom ring! Maybe you’re right. Let’s hear you out.

I do, however, feel the need, as an observer of much of this debate and for the less involved reader, to share my impressions too. In this balancing spirit, let me say this: I disagree with much of this assessment of the opponents to the current leash laws for Summit Woods.

Firstly, there are several assertions (e.g. trying to privatize Summit Woods, looking down on non-Westmounters) for which I have seen no evidence and whose truth in some cases is almost certainly not known to other members of the public (e.g. what residents do in their personal lives).

Next, in my view, there are three quite distinct groups who are working towards the same goal (i.e. leashing dogs at all times in, or even banning them from, Summit Woods), but who have existed for many years separately and who seem to me to be perfectly capable of advancing their own agendas.

Put simply: in my view, no one is an “instrument” or working at the “behest” of others.

Members of Group 1 live near Summit Woods and are irritated by a host of issues, especially parking. This is the group that draws the main ire of letter writer Laura Mika. I would add that I find it unlikely that *all* nearby residents share their views.

Group 2 is composed of general “dog skeptics” who want to see dogs leashed everywhere or even banned. Many of them have been bitten by dogs.

Group 3 is composed of environmentalists, whom I have known about since the founding of this newspaper 17 years ago. They want Summit Woods to be as natural and as undisturbed as possible.

I reiterate what I have said before: I am not a member of any of these groups. As long as the barley and hops fields are left undisturbed, I will continue to wish everyone well, including the unleashed-dog/status quo advocates – another group that I do not belong to.

I now add that it is impossible to know, absent a referendum, who is more numerous, but in a representative democracy that is also institutionally irrelevant. Absent a directive from a higher authority, council has the power to decide what to do with city assets and it has done so in this case with its 7-1 vote in favour of the leash-law status quo (see May 14, p. 13). People are, of course, still allowed to argue, cajole, infer, imply, criticize and work to involve other parts of the government (e.g. courts) in an attempt to advance their cause. Judging from many parties’ vehemence on the issue, we should all expect more of these

Let’s go the Toronto way



PHOTO & HEADLINE: JOHN FRETZ, LANSDOWNE AVE.

things. Debate participants may irritate each other, but I see it as business as usual in a free society. – DP.

DOG WALKERS DO THEIR PART, NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR HOST OF SUMMIT WOODS ISSUES

We are not the enemy.

The dream of any community is to have an area like Summit Woods where *everyone* can admire some green space and unwind after a long day. However, a small group of residents want to impose a complete moratorium on off-leash dogs, suggesting inaccurately and unfairly that the absence of dogs is the only way to improve biodiversity.

They are championed by one city councillor, Mr. D’Amico. Although he was [effectively] outvoted 8-1 when council decided several weeks ago to keep the status quo of allowing mandated times for off-leash walking (with plenty of on-leash time) while increasing signage, Public Security presence and fines, he refuses to accept council’s decision, and brings up his objections over and over during every meeting.

The truth is that people without dogs walk through the Summit regularly, sometimes picking trilliums, sometimes walking way off the paths, sometimes biking, cross-country skiing, jogging, gathering and dragging dead tree limbs through the bushes to build teepees (see May 5, 2020, p. 1); sometimes entering from the lookout

Letters to the Editor – Summit Woods, cont'd from p. 22

to relieve themselves. There are bonfires lit, beer bottles cast aside, unfinished meals, firecrackers, even condoms. This is all people related, not dog related.

As a member of a community, I'm happy to do my part: to clean up the trash, to inform Westmount Public Security of unusual occurrences such as fires and unwell people. And yet, it is the dog people who are constantly targeted.

Let me allay the fears of those consumed in trying to eliminate only off-leash dogs and their owners from enjoying the sanctuary of Summit Woods. Dog walkers are also concerned about the environment. We love the Summit and are so grateful that we get to exercise and socialize our dogs and ourselves in this beautiful place. We want to rid Summit Woods of the invasive buckthorn strangling healthy trees. We want to stop the erosion of a very old urban forest. We are thrilled that the city is taking the well-being of the woods so seriously, and is doing so much to improve this precious resource for all. We can all share in the care and the enjoyment of Summit Woods together.

SUSAN GOLD, CÔTE DES NEIGES

DOG URINE, FECES AFFECT VEGETATION, WILDLIFE, HUMAN HEALTH

Dog urine and feces pose significant environmental problems that affect not only vegetation and trees but also soils, wildlife and human health. Here is a detailed overview of the impacts of these canine wastes.

Effect of urine on plants: Dog urine contains nitrogen in the form of urea. In small amounts, nitrogen can act as a fertilizer. However, in excessive quantities, it burns plant roots and leaves, leading to their death. Areas frequently used by dogs for urination often show signs of "burn spots" where grass turns yellow and dies, disrupting the local plant ecosystem.

Effect on trees: The accumulation of dog urine around tree bases can cause significant damage. Urine increases soil salinity, which can interfere with the absorption of essential nutrients by tree roots, weakening the trees and making them more vulnerable to disease and infestation.

Alteration of soil composition: Dog urine and feces alter soil chemistry by increasing levels of nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus to harmful concentrations. This can lead to the excessive growth of certain plant species at the expense of others, changing the composition and biodiversity of the local vegetation.

Spread of pathogens: Dog feces can contain pathogens such as bacteria (E. coli, sal-

monella), parasites (roundworms, hookworms) and viruses (canine parvovirus). These pathogens can contaminate soil and water, posing risks to local wildlife and humans.

Habitat disturbance: Dogs can disturb wildlife habitats through their presence and waste. The odors left by urine and feces can repel certain animal species, disrupting local ecosystems.

Toxicity to animals: Some animals may be attracted to dog feces, exposing them to dangerous pathogens. Additionally, the high concentration of certain chemical elements in urine can be toxic to small animals and insects.

Health risks: Dog feces pose a public health risk because they can contain zoonotic parasites (that can infect humans) such as *toxocara canis*, responsible for toxocariasis. Children are particularly at risk because they are more likely to play in contaminated areas and put their hands in their mouths.

Water contamination: When dog feces are not properly disposed of, the pathogens they contain can be washed into local water systems by rain, contaminating rivers, lakes and drinking water sources, increasing the risk of waterborne diseases.

In conclusion, the impacts of dog urine and feces on the environment and human health are multiple and varied. Proper management of these wastes is essential to protect local ecosystems, biodiversity and the health and well-being of human communities.

It is concerning to note that despite these obvious consequences, the mayor of Westmount and the city council decided to change the designation of Summit Woods to a "dog park" instead of requiring that dogs be leashed. This decision ignores the negative impacts on residents and park users, endangering public safety and the preservation of this unique natural site.

MARYAM KAMALI NEZHAD,
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Lead contamination in drinking water?

Council approves subsidies for replacing private water entries

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

City council July 2 approved a city subsidy of up to \$2,500 for eligible homeowners who replace the private portion of their water entry line from lead or galvanized steel to copper. This measure is aimed at properties where the city is replacing the public portion that enables residents to benefit from some of the excavation work.

The decision to provide a financial incentive for eligible property owners who meet the subsidy requirements was approved by city council in a vote of 7-1. The subsidy program is part of a total annual envelope of \$500,000 until funds for a current year are exhausted.

Unusually, however despite moving the resolution, Councillor Conrad Peart, whose commissionership includes infrastructure, was the lone dissenter.

Announcing his voting intention at the start of the council meeting, he explained that while he "unequivocally supports" the elimination of lead from the public portion of the water mains, and "at some point" he will be replacing his own private portion, "I will be doing so at my own cost. I don't expect it to be subsidized by my neighbours."

In presenting various statistics on maximum acceptable amounts of lead, he explained a progressive tightening of permissible lead percentages, now set by Quebec at five milligrams per litre. "This means that some homes in Westmount may exceed the revised Quebec standard for lead content in water."

Distributing water filters

As a result, the city had initiated an extensive testing program across its territory, testing some 250 homes annually, he said. "We have distributed water filters to properties that registered a test result near

or above the new provincial norms."

While the city is "committed to progressively replace the public portion of the water network," Peart said, "What we haven't done yet is make it mandatory to replace the private portion of the water service. This is my preferred option."

The subsidy program is implemented by the city's Engineering department and comes into effect August 1.



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Social Notes

VERONICA REDGRAVE

‘Divine Comedy’ takes place at Temple



Steven Yaffe and France Ellyson.



Shelley Gruschow, Rabbi Lisa Gruschow and Alice Myers.



Chad Lubelsky and David Moll.

Westmount’s Temple Emanuel-Beth-Sholom’s 2024 gala, “Divine Comedy,” featured Yid Life Crisis.

The event’s lead sponsor was “In Memory of Bruce Kent.” Other supporters were the Gustav Levinschi Foundation (show sponsor), and the Cummings/Gold family (the after-party).

The Mensch Award was awarded to former Temple president **Stephen Yaffe**, there with his wife **France Ellyson**. His tribute committee members were **Leslie Alcorn**, **Betsy Pomerantz** and **Sam Berliner**, **Nancy Cummings Gold**, **Shellie Ettinger**, **Denise Grossman** and **Steven Klempner**, **Nancy Maklan** and **Marty Smith**, **Ken Salomon** and the **Yaffe family**.

Sponsors in the top, “Mel Brooks” category were **Betsy Pomerantz** and **Sam Berliner**, **Marcia** and **Brian Bronfman**, **Penny Echenberg**, **Fasken**, **Nancy Cummings Gold** and **Marc Gold**, **Gail Issenman**, **Nancy** and **William Lassner**, **Jewel** and **Paul Lowenstein**, **Nancy Maklan** and **Marty Smith**, **Betty** and **Michael Prupas**, **Julia** and

Stephen Reitman, the **Samuels family**, **Lillian** and **Bryant Shiller**, **Lillian Vineberg Goodman** and **Morris Goodman**, **Stephen**

Yaffe and family, **Vicki Zack** and **Lillian and Bryant Shiller**, there with their daughter **Romy**.

Supportive sponsors at the “Gilda Radner” and “Billy Crystal” levels were **Sandy** and *continued on p. 26*



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Social notes, cont'd from p. 25

David Martz, Wendy Cun at the Crowe Beck Foundation, Sally Yaffe, Cheri Bell, David Abramson, Susan and Jonathan Wener, Judy Echenberg, and Barry Katsof and Joseph Balinsky.

Greeting guests were Temple's executive director Chad Lubelsky and president David Moll along with Rabbi Lisa Gruschow with her wife Shelley Gruschow and daughter Alice Myers.

Also from Temple were immediate past president Neil Wiener, the evening's MC, there with his wife Sylvi Plante, and Marcy Kastner, director of programming.

The cocktail dinatoire brought out chicly clad ladies with outfits ranging from PLBD (Perfect Little Black Dresses) to spring brights – but the choice of the night was white.

Interestingly, sneakers were worn by almost all – ladies *and* gentlemen. (I mused about who actually wears stilettos anymore, but then I remembered Grand Prix events.)

On a hot humid eve, the room's garden mood was a refreshing welcome. Freshly-cut bouquets created by Denise Grossman featured Solomon's seal, whose elegant arching stems starred tiny white flowers. Colourful peonies echoed the floral tablecloths, whose centrepieces were charming pots of herbs.

The sushi station was a huge hit, but the palate-stealer was a delicious mushroom pasta.

Guests included Madonna and Jean-Claude Levy, Yvonne Shashoua, Minna Shulman, Janice Greenberg, Jewel and Paul Lowenstein, Alice and Jonathan Goldbloom, Dr. Joseph Carlton and his wife Susan Szalpeter, Rosie Goldstein, Alana Geller and Aren Prupas, Martha and Mark Oppenheim, Rhoda Reisman and William Alexander, Joelle Kent and her daughter Katherine Kent and Alice Herscovitch, director The Montreal Holocaust Museum, there with her husband Bobby Kleinman.



Rosie Goldstein, David and Sandy Martz.



Jewel and Paul Lowenstein.



Susan Szalpeter, Joseph Carlton and Leslie Alcorn.



Minna Shulman and Jonathan Goldbloom.



Janice Greenberg and Joelle Kent.



Bryant, Lillian and Romy Schiller.

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Indie's summer schedule

July 16, 23 & 30 and August 6: no issues
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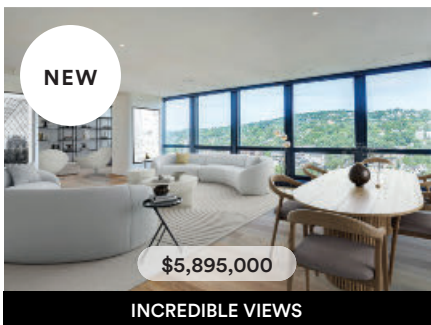
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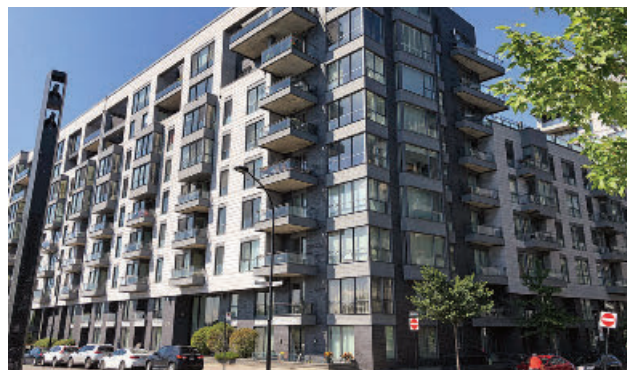
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