

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**ST. COLUMBA, ABANDONED AND NEGLECTED**

At the register held on March 17 this year, 224 residents of NDG rejected a proposal to destroy the 100-year-old St.

Columba church. We did not expect then that the owners of the property would respond by petulantly refusing to uphold their responsibility for maintaining the upkeep of their building and would continue to let it deteriorate, as they have been

**Do we want a borough that reacts to seasonal needs, or political hype?**

PETER MCQUEEN  
FROM THE  
NDG DISTRICT

On Friday, May 27, I noticed that NDG water splash pads were not working even though it had been hot for a week. I notified our services, who stated that turning on the water parks involves work by city plumbers that would have to wait weeks. I protested that splash pads in the Plateau, Verdun and Rosemont were already open, but to no avail.

I wish I had prodded our services sooner since, when it is 30 degrees Celsius, families that don't have backyard hoses need working water parks. Our mayor stated that mid-June was the usual opening date, but I suggest that heat waves in late May, with no chance of ground frost at night in the long-term forecast, should precipitate an opening.

Over the years, council has voted for many splash pads (often replacing wading pools) in our parks because there is no chance of drowning, no cost of a lifeguard, but also longer operating hours per week and a flexibly longer season (or so I thought!). And I believe that our city must both fight climate change and, unfortunately, prepare for it...

Although the directors of our various

services are very busy (in spring: pothole repair, park and street clean-up, tree planting and traffic line painting), I suggest that Public Works must constantly watch the short- and long-term weather forecasts and juggle the schedule of various annually recurring priorities for our blue collar staff:

- adding garbage pick-up in parks and commercial streets as soon as spring arrives,
- opening splash pads early or extending swimming pool season in late August,
- clearing branches and leaves quickly after autumn wind storms,
- re-flooding skating rinks throughout the winter for freezing weather,
- readying for big snowfalls despite Christmas-New Year's holidays.

Meanwhile, the CDN-NDG Public Relations department was spending money and marshalling borough services for two events on May 27 and 29:

- on Friday, mayors Copeman and Coderre officially opened the Benny library, using the event to unilaterally announce our joint decision to revert to average library hours this fall (which Mayor Copeman and all us councillors had mistakenly agreed to cut last year to save money),
- on Sunday, there was the first annual mayor's walk from Van Horne to Benny parks (you can see the expensively produced video of it on the borough's FB site).

I have noticed an increase in the number of borough public events paid for with our taxes that seem to be designed to increase our mayor's re-election chances more than the well-being of our citizens.

This brings back my worst memories of the previous Applebaum administration in CDN-NDG. Do we want political hype or do we want a borough that reacts quickly to its residents' needs?

*Comments or questions? Peter.mcqueen@ville.montreal.qc.ca or 514.868.4281 or come tell borough council what you think Monday, August 8 6:30 pm at 6767 Côte des Neiges Rd.*

doing for the past three years...

Russell Copeman assured residents that the stained glass windows that had been prematurely and illegitimately removed and replaced with plywood (before the public consultation process was even completed) would be reinstalled by May 5. The unsightly, and rotting, plywood has now been in place for six months! Are the developers playing a game of "I told you so" - trying to show that opposition to their vision means dereliction for St. Columba? In the real world, owners have real responsibilities - to ensure proper maintenance

of their property and its surroundings. How long would a homeowner be allowed to get away with replacing ordinary glass windows with plywood? Never mind that these stained glass windows are part of this site's heritage value. Where have the windows gone? Why does it take such a long time to put them back in place? It's long past time that the borough stop turning a blind eye to this negligence. St. Columba must be maintained to the standards set by the borough of NDG.

IMOGEN BRIAN,  
HINGSTON AVE.

**Now we know who's pushing Cavendish extension**

JEREMY SEARLE  
FROM THE  
LOYOLA DISTRICT

The ruling Quebec Liberal Party has finally come out and stated that the proposed Cavendish/Highway 40 connection is designed by and for West Island commuters in order to use our residential streets as an alternative to the Decarie expressway.

The traffic disaster that would follow is easily foreseeable.

At its last general council held this May in Drummondville, the Liberal Party of Quebec adopted a resolution that was put forth by the Liberal Association of Nelligan, backed by Martin Coiteux, MNA for Nelligan, as well as minister of Municipal Affairs and of Public Safety.

It is to be noted that Nelligan is composed of: Pierrefonds-Roxboro, all of Île Bizard-St. Genevieve (borough of Montreal) and the city of Kirkland (the furthest west areas of the island of Montreal). The resolution as adopted reads as follows:

"20 - FREEING UP THE DECARIE EXPRESSWAY IN MONTREAL

IT IS RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE LIBERAL PARTY OF QUEBEC THAT:

The government recommends and participates, with the other levels of government, in the financing and execution of the opening of Cavendish Blvd. between St. Laurent and Côte St. Luc so as to give a north-south alternative for motorists coming from the west."

- The Liberal Association for Nelligan

CDN-NDG borough mayor Russell Copeman and Montreal mayor Denis Coderre favour the proposed Cavendish highway (they have voted for it on several occasions).

If they succeed, adjoining residential streets such as Prince of Wales, Cumberland, Montclair, Walkley, Bessborough, Kensington and Grand would be clogged 365 days a year by overflow traffic. Traffic pressure would automatically become the same on both highways (the Decarie and the Cavendish - indeed, extra highway always generates more traffic).

In the west, Connaught, Trenholme, Patricia, Westmore, West Broadway and other streets would become the Cavendish Highway overflow for highways 40-to-20 traffic seeking to access or exit Elmhurst. Our quiet residential streets would become a permanent fixture of the provincial highway network and, once done, there would be no going back. NDGers would, of course, also be able to use the Cavendish Highway and adjoining streets but only under conditions similar to those now experienced on the Decarie. In other words it would be no easier to head north and far more difficult to get anywhere at all within NDG.

Now the truth is inarguable, the Cavendish Highway proposal is designed by and for West Island commuters.

What do you think?

Should we in NDG decide the future of our community or should West Island Liberal Party commuters and the minister of Municipal Affairs decide for us? Indeed, who works for whom? Meanwhile, please rest assured that I believe fundamentally in the power of the community and in our power to protect our community. Please let me know your thoughts, for or against, on this matter.

**FREE PRESS**

Published twice per month -  
Presstime: Monday at 10:30 am

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OWNED AND PUBLISHED BY:

Sherbrooke-Valois Inc., 310 Victoria Ave.,  
#105, Westmount, QC H3Z 2M9

26,000+ copies to NDG, Hampstead  
and Côte St. Luc