

**Brief to: l'Office de consultation publique de Montréal**

**Re: Montreal General Hospital Expansion Project 2011**

by

Gloria Ménard

As a long-time resident of Cedar Avenue, as a proponent for the protection of the region of Mount Royal Park, and as a citizen of Montreal, I have several concerns about the project involving 1750 Cedar Avenue. I will be brief, listing a few of them in point form, for your consideration.

- ❖ Firstly, I question the efficiency of the governors and planners of the MUHC. Plans for a super hospital were announced 15 years ago, which should have given ample time to determine what was to happen at the Mountain Campus. Yet their much-ballyhooed expansion proposal for the east side of the hospital's Mountain Campus contained unacceptable elements that had to be extensively revised. Two years later, a large part of that expansion was abandoned. Next, the Montreal Neurological Institute move to the site was cancelled. Now, these planners have discovered a need for offices and clinics that can only be satisfied by taking over a neighbouring development begun in a residential zone.
- ❖ I question, also, the good faith of the hospital administrators. Having obtained permission for expansion on the eastern sector of the hospital property, the hospital affirmed to the city, in 2008, that any further expansion of hospital activities would take place at the Glen Campus, that there would be no further increase of the hospital footprint in the protected mountain region. Yet, at the same time, discussions were already taking place with the previous owner of 1750 Cedar Avenue to convert the site to hospital use.

And here we are, in 2011, discussing a new clinical centre on Cedar Avenue. This venture not only contradicts that commitment made by the MUHC, it raises serious concern about the manner in which its development was shrouded behind minimal and contradictory information to the community. And, while architectural plans for that centre indicate it meets current height and volume restrictions, what is to guarantee that the hospital will respect that commitment either?

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- ❖ I'm concerned – again – about the city administration's willingness to ignore the master urban plan that was so painstakingly developed over five years of negotiations among all stakeholders. We saw this disregard recently with the Marionapolis project. And we certainly saw it when Cedar residents fought for nearly three years to ensure that development of the 1750 site would meet acceptable norms of size and appearance and respect the legislation providing for protection of the mountain's historic and natural heritage.
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- ❖ I question why the city administration accepts as fact that the 1750 site is essential for the hospital's use. There is space onsite that the Neurological Institute would have used. And the Glen Campus has ample space for such a facility. Comments from the city indicate a readiness to rezone the site from residential to institutional status. To accept the hospital's position at face value. Have they done due diligence here?
  - ❖ The architectural renderings of the future clinical centre show an ugly façade, out of keeping with the neighbouring residences. It is truly a blight on the neighbourhood.
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In conclusion, I would like to state that I am opposed to the zoning change for this project. I'm very worried about its setting a precedent when the other hospitals on the mountain side are emptied and ready for new uses. The handling – or mishandling – of this project does not auger well for the future of the mountain.

Gloria Ménard

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