PUBLIC

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WESTMOUNT HELD AT CITY HALL ON FEBRUARY 15, 2016 AT 4:15 P.M. AT WHICH WERE PRESENT:

Chair Philip A. Cutler
Mayor Peter F. Trent
Councillors Rosalind Davis
Victor M. Drury
Nicole Forbes
Cynthia Lulham
Patrick Martin
Christina Smith
Theodora Samiotis
Administration Sean Michael Deegan, Director General
Martin St-Jean, Director of Legal Services and City Clerk
Recording Secretary Andrew Brownstein

GENERAL COMMITTEE AGENDA

Adoption of the General Committee Agenda of February 15, 2016

It was agreed that the Agenda of the February 15, 2016 meeting of the General Committee of Council be adopted, with the addition of the following items under New Business:

- Commercial development strategy (Councillor Samiotis).

Confirmation of Minutes of the Meeting of General Committee Held on February 1, 2016

The Minutes of the General Committee of Council’s meeting held on February 1, 2016 were adopted with corrections.
Business arising from the Minutes of the Meeting of General Committee Held on February 1, 2016

Councillor Davis drew Council’s attention to the issue of parking at the WRC lot. She explained that the two-hour maximum for parking at the WRC for non-permit holders is too restrictive, particularly for hockey players.

Director General Deegan noted that as opposed to the traditional system of marking the tires of parked vehicles with chalk, the administration has discussed the possibility of installing a machine that would provide motorists with a ticket indicating the time-limit on their parking. Councillor Cutler suggested that as opposed to the machine issuing a ticket, motorists can enter their license plates, allowing parking inspectors to more efficiently establish which vehicles are beyond the permitted parking time.

Councillor Cutler recommended applying the two-hour maximum for non-permit holders from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. He informed Council that the matter will be discussed at the TAC’s upcoming meeting.

Regarding the modification of the catchment area for St.-Léon School, Councillor Davis reported to Council that the school’s principal has refused to meet with the City’s representatives. She explained that the western limit of the catchment area is being shifted from Claremont Avenue to Victoria Avenue and the eastern limit is being moved from Guy Street to McTavish Street.

Mayor Trent recommended that the City request an updated version of the map it had previously received when a similar issue had arisen. In that case, it had to do with the request to increase the built-up area on the site and the need, in Council’s view, to establish the distribution of the students’ residences throughout the catchment area, and how many actually were in Westmount. Councillor Davis confirmed that she will communicate this request.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION

PARKING METERS PAY-BY-PLATE

Copies of the following documentation were distributed:

- Memorandum from Sean Michael Deegan, Director General, to the General Committee of Council, dated February 10th, 2016.

Mr. Claude Vallières, Division Head – I.T., and Mr. Greg McBain, Director of Public Safety, joined the meeting at 4:36 p.m.

Mr. Vallières informed Council that many residents consulted the Infopanne webpage during a recent power outage.
Mr. Vallières showed Council the placement of the pay stations on a map. Councillor Martin and Councillor Drury noted that the pay stations are much closer together than those in the City of Montreal. Councillor Samiotis inquired as to whether the City is going beyond the norm for the parking meter system that is to be installed. Cutler confirmed that the City is following the standard for such a system with 10 parking spaces per pay station.

Mr. Vallières reported to Council that for the base of the pay stations, the City will be prioritizing the use of the existing surfaces that meet their requirements. Further to Councillor Drury’s question, Mr. Vallières informed Council that he will inquire as to the base that the City of Montreal uses for its pay stations.

Mr. Vallières showed Council that signage will be installed in order to inform motorists of the metered parking zone and that it is a pay-by-plate system.

Mr. Vallières outlined the process for the new system’s installation. The bases will be prepared, and then the new pay stations will be installed. The last collection of money from the current parking meters will then be carried out. Stickers will then be placed on the current parking meters indicating that they will not accept payment. The current parking meters will then be removed, with caps then installed on the top of the posts.

Mr. Vallières showed Council a map of the City’s current six parking zones. Director McBain explained that the hours for metered parking are currently different around a few corners, which could confuse motorists upon the installation of the new system. Councillor Martin inquired as to whether each street could be its own zone. Mr. Vallières responded that with this approach, the applicable metered parking hours can be modified on a street-by-street basis.

Councillor Davis recommended standardizing the hours as much as possible with two zones, adding that no metered parking should apply before 9:00 a.m. Councillor Drury agreed.

Director McBain explained the proposed two zones. East of Wood Avenue, the applicable rate will remain $3/hour and the hours will be set to 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. West of Wood Avenue, the applicable rate will remain $2/hour and the hours will be set to 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Councillor Lulham and Councillor Samiotis inquired as to why the same rate will not be applied for both commercial areas.

Councillor Cutler informed Council that the City’s approach to the issue of motorists paying for parking in one zone and then moving their vehicle to the other zone with a different rate will be further discussed at the TAC’s upcoming meeting.

- It was agreed that the City’s metered parking will begin to apply as of 9:00 a.m. throughout the City. Greene Avenue’s metered parking will apply until 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Vallières and Director McBain left the meeting at 5:05 p.m.
The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m., at which point Council held its Special Sitting. The meeting was reconvened at 5:11 p.m.

REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDS

Copies of the following documentation were distributed:

- Memorandum from Sean Michael Deegan, Director General, to the General Committee of Council, dated February 10, 2016; and
- Memorandum from Patrick Raggo, Director of Public Works, to Sean Michael Deegan, Director General, dated February 10th, 2016.

Mr. Patrick Raggo, Director of Public Works, joined the meeting at 5:11 p.m.

Director Raggo presented Public Works’ request for additional funds.

He explained that an additional $150,000 is needed for the water maintenance budget in order to fund the significantly increased number of interventions being carried out on the infrastructure. Rather than continuing with spot repairs, when a weakness is detected in one part of the service, and it is therefore likely that others will emerge shortly thereafter, the entire service is replaced. Director Raggo qualified the extra work as “catch up work.” Accordingly, he explained that he does not foresee such additional funding being necessary in future years.

Director Raggo added that $50,000 is required for the Westmount Athletic Grounds’ new skate park, specifically, for the repaving of a portion of the east side of the Westmount High parking lot. He explained that a higher grade of asphalt is needed for skate parks and that the City must pay somewhat of a premium for carrying out the work on Saturdays, as it cannot be done on schooldays.

- It was agreed that the City will allocate an additional $150,000 to the water maintenance budget and an additional $50,000 to fund the Westmount Athletic Grounds’ new skate park, as requested by Public Works.

TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF WESTMOUNT GREENHOUSES AND CONSERVATORY – UPDATE

Copies of the following documentation were distributed:

- Memorandum from Sean Michael Deegan, Director General, to the General Committee of Council, dated February 10th, 2016; and
- Memorandum from Patrick Raggo, Director of Public Works, to Sean Michael Deegan, Director General, dated February 10th, 2016.
Director Raggo reported to Council that in order for the consulting firm to carry out its study on the state of the greenhouses’ inner and outer structures, the drone, which must be accompanied by a person to help operate the system, must be scheduled for five concurrent days during which the temperature must not be too cold and the winds not too strong. This has not yet been possible since the start of 2016. He explained that realistically, the drone’s observations will only be carried out in March.

Councillor Martin inquired as to whether such a study is in fact necessary, and correlatively, the accuracy with which it can be assumed that the entirety of the cypress wood frames are structurally compromised and should be replaced with a metal frame. Director Raggo responded that while it is likely that much of the wooden frames are structurally compromised, if any of them can be preserved, the proposed study will likely permit to identify the greenhouses that will only require a simple repair. These greenhouses can then be open to the public while the City carries out its restoration of the rest of the greenhouses. Councillor Samiotis recommended carrying out the proposed study, as it will allow for the City to determine how it may best maintain the Conservatory’s current character. Councillor Lulham agreed.

REPORT ON SNOW REMOVAL OPERATIONS

Copies of the following documentation were distributed:

- Memorandum from Sean Michael Deegan, Director General, to the General Committee of Council, dated February 10, 2016;
- Memorandum from Patrick Raggo, Director of Public Works, to the Director General, dated February 10th, 2016; and
- Report on snow removal operations from December 29, 2015 to January 4, 2016, prepared by the Public Works Department.

Director Raggo presented Public Works’ report on the cost of snow removal operations using the example of the snow removal carried out from December 29th, 2015 to January 4th, 2016. Forty centimetres of snow fell over the course of December 27th and 28th.

Director Raggo explained that the report considers the cost of dumping, trucking, diesel fuel, salt, and labour. He noted that the cost of repairing equipment was not included in the assessment. He informed Council that excluding the labour costs, the total cost of the operation was $337,000.

Director Raggo explained that as the operation was carried out over the holidays, the City was able to focus on its commercial arteries rather than have schools as the priority. However, labour on statutory holidays is remunerated as overtime.

He reported that the City’s amendment to its by-law applying to landscapers has helped improve snow removal. He noted that the City will begin to ticket contractors who dump
snow on the public way, particularly on the bicycle path and the sidewalk, after the City has cleared the snow.

Director Raggo noted that as there are several new employees in Public Works carrying out these operations, they will be more efficient once they gain experience on the machines and on the City’s unique topography.

Councillor Samiotis informed Director Raggo that the lanes from Hallowell Avenue to Greene Avenue are not well-cleared. Director Raggo responded that a private contractor manages the snow removal for those lanes, and he will address the matter with him. Councillor Samiotis noted that given the width of the lanes, the snow must be removed by shovelling.

The Mayor commended Director Raggo for the efficient execution of the snow removal operation carried out from December 29th, 2015 to January 4th, 2016. He estimated that with the cost of labour, the entire operation required roughly $600,000. He asked how the funds are divided between the two years’ budgets. Director Raggo responded that the costs are divided evenly for each day of work, and are therefore distributed over 2015 and 2016.

Councillor Drury inquired as to how much snow must fall before the City begins its operations. Director Raggo explained that there is no precise answer due to the particularities of the City; specifically, more snow falls at the top of the hill and the steep incline of many of the City’s streets make operations necessary when there is a risk of ice. Ultimately, he explained that the average city begins snow removal operations once 2 cm of snow has fallen. Westmount begins its operations slightly before this threshold is reached. The City of Montreal only begins its loading operations once 10-15 cm of snow has fallen.

Councillor Martin commended Director Raggo for the efficient execution of the snow removal operation carried out from December 29th, 2015 to January 4th, 2016 and his department’s practice of beginning snow removal operations earlier than the average city. Director Raggo noted that costs are minimized by starting earlier as there is less traffic on the way to and at the snow dump. Council members agreed.

Councillor Lulham inquired as to whether the snow removal trucks are equipped with side guards, as had been done in the past. Director Raggo confirmed that side guards were a requirement in the tender for the trucks.

Director Raggo left the meeting at 5:42 p.m.
CENTENNIAL / PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Copies of the following documentation were distributed:

- Memorandum from Sean Michael Deegan, Director General, to the General Committee of Council, dated February 10th, 2016; and
- Memorandum from Joanne Poirier, Director of Urban Planning, to Sean Micheal Deegan, Director General, dated February 10th, 2016.

Councillor Samiotis presented an update on the celebration of the PAC’s centennial, referring to the memorandum provided by Ms. Joanne Poirier, Director of Urban Planning. She informed Council that approximately 170 copies of the PAC centennial calendar have been sold with the rest being distributed for free at the Winter Carnival, to the Westmount Historical Association, and at the opening of the upcoming architectural exhibition. Councillor Samiotis reported that Mr. Bruce Anderson is selecting a few architects who have done work in the City and a few of the houses they designed to be highlighted at this architectural exhibition. The residents of these houses will be directly invited to the exhibition. Councillor Forbes recommended distributing copies of the PAC centennial calendar with the invitations to the owners of these houses.

Regarding Parks Canada’s designation of a significant portion of the City as a “Historic District,” to be honoured by a plaque placed in front of City Hall, Councillor Samiotis informed Council that Parks Canada has responded to the City’s request for their translation of “district” as “arrondissement” to be reconsidered in light of the term signifying “boroughs” on the Island of Montreal. Parks Canada has forwarded the request to the Minister of the Environment.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE LOCAL HERITAGE COUNCIL / RÈGLES DE RÉGIE INTERNE DU CONSEIL LOCAL DU PATRIMOINE DE WESTMOUNT

Copies of the following documentation were distributed:

- Memorandum from Sean Michael Deegan, Director General, to the General Committee of Council, dated February 9th, 2016;
- Memorandum from Myriam St-Denis, Project Manager, to the General Committee of Council and to Joanne Poirier, Director of Urban Planning, dated February 10th, 2016; and
- Draft preliminary Terms of Reference of the Westmount Local Heritage Council, prepared by Myriam St-Denis, Project Manager, dated February 9th, 2016.

Mr. Tom Flies, Assistant Director of Urban Planning, joined the meeting at 5:47 p.m.

Councillor Samiotis informed Council that a public notice must be published 30 days prior to the Local Heritage Council’s meeting, which is scheduled to take place in the spring. These public meetings will provide residents with an opportunity to express their opinions
as to the City’s architectural heritage. She explained that the expert in cultural heritage must be present at these meetings, as his recommendations must be included as an annex to the Local Heritage Council’s opinion.

**SCAOPi (PPCMOi) UPDATE**

Referring to Mr. Flies’ memorandum, Councillor Samiotis explained the result of spot zoning results for future prospective zoning amendments to that new enclaved zone that would be subject to the register-referendum process. As an enclaved zone, only the residents of the zone in which it was originally located would have the right to participate in the register-referendum process. In terms of the SCAOPI by-law's financial impact, Mr. Flies added that it will implement a fee for the evaluation of such projects. Moreover, residents will be informed of the developer’s proposed plans earlier in the process.

Council members commended Mr. Flies on his work on the matter.

Mayor Trent agreed with Mr. Flies’ analysis. He added that residents have a reasonable expectation that, relatively speaking, the status quo obtains in matters of zoning. He emphasized that residents must be made conscious of the impact of spot zoning versus the use of a SCAOPI by-law on future register-referendum processes and that the SCAOPI by-law will allow for an earlier revelation of the developer’s proposed plans.

Councillor Lulham agreed with the Mayor, noting that exceptionally, residents living nearby a vacant lot should expect its potential development. She added that residents have expressed that they want an initial consultation to be held prior to the first reading of the by-law. Mayor Trent responded that the PAC will be formulating a proposal for a formal consultation process at its meeting the following day.

Councillor Smith requested the Mr. Flies and M"St-Jean prepare a visual representation of the impact of permitting the two requested development projects that are of greatest concern to residents, 4898 De Maisonneuve Boulevard and the Metro grocery store, by spot zoning versus the SCAOPI by-law.

Councillor Samiotis affirmed that the City must reiterate the benefits of the SCAOPI by-law to its residents. Councillor Smith noted that a definition should be added for “community benefit” in the by-law.

**SOUTH EAST TASK FORCE UPDATE**

Councillor Samiotis outlined the Southeast task force’s mandate, composition, and the responsibilities of its members. She informed Council that the task force will have its first meeting the following night, to be followed by two more meetings. At its first meeting, the task force will review the workshop and the guideline parameters.
Councillor Samiotis and Councillor Lulham recommended that the task force members' names remain confidential. The residents who are involved with the task force are volunteers who attended the workshop.

Councillor Lulham pointed out that the workshop was successful in communicating the City’s intentions for the Southeast project to its residents, as the public opinion of the initiative seems to have improved.

Mr. Flies left the meeting at 6:48 p.m.

PARKING INDUSTRY EXHIBITION - ATTENDANCE OF COUNCILLOR CUTLER

Copies of the following documentation were distributed:

- Memorandum from Sean Michael Deegan, Director General, to the General Committee of Council, dated February 10th, 2016; and
- Schedule of the Parking Industry Exhibition and workshops.

➢ It was agreed that the City will authorize an expenditure of $2,500 to cover the travel, accommodation, and expenses for Councillor Cutler’s participation at the 2016 Parking Industry Exhibition.

2016 ACTION PLAN FOR HANDICAPPED PERSONS

Copies of the following documentation were distributed:

- Memorandum from Sean Michael Deegan, Director General, to the General Committee of Council, dated February 10, 2016;
- 2016 Action Plan for Handicapped Persons; and
- Annexe 1 – Guide Accès Westmount.

The Director General presented the City's 2016 Action Plan for Handicapped Persons, which it is obliged to provide to the Office des personnes handicapées du Québec on an annual basis.

Councillor Lulham recommended that on the list of restaurants located in the City, a small icon should be added next to each restaurant’s name that is handicap-accessible for ease of reference.

Councillor Martin recommended that in tandem with this initiative, the City should prepare its own report for the buildings that it wishes to make handicap-accessible. The Director General confirmed that he will have the report prepared.

Councillor Cutler pointed out that there is a handicap parking spot on Greene Avenue that is not indicated in the report. Director General Deegan confirmed that it would be added.
It was agreed that Council will adopt the proposed 2016 Action Plan at its March 7th Regular Sitting.

**COUNCIL OBJECTIVES FOLLOW-UP**

**TRAFFIC**

Councillor Cutler informed Council that the TAC will be meeting the following day. He added that the committee has begun discussing the approach to the work that is to be carried out on Westmount Avenue, and it will continue its discussion at the upcoming meeting.

Councillor Lulham recommended that the City replace the traffic lights at the intersection of Westmount Avenue and Grosvenor Avenue in order to allow for modifications to the length of their cycles according to the needs of traffic.

**INFRASTRUCTURE AND PARKS**

Councillor Martin directed Council’s attention to his article in the *Westmount Independent* and the Mayor’s article responding to it. He explained that it is normal for reasonable people to disagree, adding that he believes in voicing his opinion.

Councillor Martin explained that he takes exception to Councillor Drury’s qualification of the 2015 surplus as unexpected, as the City should have planned accordingly when it was made aware of the unexpected 2014 surplus in April 2015. He noted that the 2015 surplus was due to the deferral of the Prince Albert project, which the City was aware of in April or May 2015. Councillor Martin explained that as it is normal to have incomplete projects, Council must consider this possibility in its determination of the funds to allocate to each project.

Mayor Trent explained that he objects to Councillor Martin’s statement that Council has chronically underfunded infrastructure investment. He responded that Public Works has spent significantly less than the funds it has requested – and has been granted – in each of the previous four years. The Mayor added that, even if the Prince Albert project had been completed in 2015, there still would have been a greater amount of infrastructure money granted by Council than actually was spent in that year.

**ONGOING ITEM: MTQ / AMT**

Councillor Samiotis informed Council that the City held a meeting with the residents of Prospect Street to discuss the possible designs for the potential sound barrier to be erected behind Prospect Street, as laid out in Stantec’s report.
Councillor Samiotis added that Ms. Lyne Gamache of the MTQ has been slow in corresponding with the City, and that she hopes to receive a response from Ms. Gamache in the coming weeks.

Councillor Lulham noted that the effect of the wrap-around noise must be considered for any potential sound barrier.

MEETING SCHEDULES

Copies of the following documentation were distributed:

- Update of Council schedule of events for the month of February 2016

NEW BUSINESS: COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Councillor Samiotis informed Council that in a recent assessment of the ease with which a small business may be initiated in various cities, Westmount was ranked in last place. She recommended establishing an approach that will strategically promote the retail character of the City’s commercial areas. She suggested offering merchants more help in obtaining their required permits.

The Director General noted that the City was classified with the Town of Mount Royal and other municipalities in relatively good standing in this regard. Councillor Lulham added that the study should not be attributed much legitimacy, pointing out that the City lost points because it did not provide its responses to the study’s questions quickly enough.

IN CAUCUS ITEM

M⁰ Andrew Brownstein, Recording Secretary, left the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

An item was discussed in caucus.

ABSENCES

Council members were requested to submit their absence sheets to the City Clerk.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

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Philip A. Cutler          M⁰ Martin St-Jean
Acting Mayor             City Clerk