MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WESTMOUNT HELD AT CITY HALL ON AUGUST 15, 2016 AT 5:17 P.M. AT WHICH WERE PRESENT:

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

NOTE TO THE READER:
The comments, opinions and any consensus views reflected herein are those of the participants in their individual capacity. As such, they are not binding upon the City or the administration.

The City and its administration are only bound by decisions that are authorized by the Municipal Council in the course of a public meeting by way of a resolution or by-law.

GENERAL COMMITTEE AGENDA

Adoption of the General Committee Agenda of August 15, 2016

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

- Confidential items were added to the Agenda.

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

The Minutes of the General Committee of Council’s meeting held on August 1, 2016 were adopted with corrections.

Business arising from the Minutes of the Meeting of General Committee Held on August 1, 2016

Councillor Samiotis reported on the meeting held with a representative of St. Stephen’s Church during which she and the Mayor requested that the church hire a security guard to
ensure a safe and peaceful environment around The Open Door, particularly afterhours. She explained that the SPVM and Public Security have been devoting a disproportionate amount of time to managing the situation and that when they are not there, residents have contacted her expressing concerns regarding noise and lack of security. Councillor Samiotis informed Council that the church insists that it cannot afford to hire a security guard.

Councillor Samiotis emphasized the importance of keeping the southeast sector clean and free of graffiti. She explained that the City must be prompt in the removal of graffiti on public property, setting the example for private property owners and informing them of the graffiti removal services available.

Confidential items were discussed.

The Director General explained that The Open Door attracts a large clientele as its mission is broader than that of a regular soup kitchen, offering a variety of other services. Council members affirmed they are in favour of The Open Door continuing to provide at least some of these services, as long as the proper resources are devoted to maintaining a secure environment.

Confidential items were discussed.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION

SUMMIT CIRCLE

Mr. Benoit Hurtubise, Assistant Director General and Director of Hydro Westmount, Ms. Elisa Gaetano, Assistant Director of Public Works – Infrastructure and Engineering, Ms. Joanne Poirier, Director of Urban Planning, Ms. Jayme Gerbrandt, the City’s horticulturalist, and Mr. Kevin Gibbs, Representative of Hatch Ltd., joined the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

Ms. Gaetano outlined the status of the Summit Circle landscaping and reforestation project. The plans cover the portion of Summit Circle between Oakland Avenue and 15 Summit Circle. A call for tenders for the project is scheduled for August 23, with some work to be completed in 2016, and the remainder in 2017. Ms. Gaetano reported that the Ministry of Culture and Communications has verbally agreed to subsidize 50% of the project’s cost on the basis of the revised estimate and scope with which it was presented. Further to the City’s request for written confirmation to this effect, the Ministry instructed it to re-submit its formal request for funding with the revised cost and scope. Ms. Gerbrandt affirmed the Ministry’s support for the project, as revised, further to a visit to the site with its representative.

Mr. Gibbs presented the revised plan for the project. Summit Circle’s roadway is currently 9m wide. The prospective pathway is to be 4m wide, with the rest of the area to be reforested with trees, shrubs, grasses, and wild flowers. In terms of trees, the revised plan calls for the planting of 230 trees of at least 60mm in diameter and 3100 trees of 25mm in diameter. Ms. Gerbrandt pointed out that all of the species of trees selected are indigenous
to the woods. She added that the City’s arborist has applied a succession plan in the selection of these trees so as to guide the area’s flora to a sustainable future.

Mr. Gibbs explained that an improvement to the pathway that links Summit Circle to Ridgewood Avenue in Côte-des-Neiges has been integrated into the revised plan for this adjacent construction. Where the pathway’s grade exceeds 15%, large stone steps, 12 to 16 inches in length, will be installed at the narrowest width that would qualify as a sidewalk in order to allow for two-way pedestrian traffic while limiting construction in the woods.

Mr. Gibbs explained that at either end of the portion of Summit Circle in question, the City will create a gradual transition between the roadway and the re-naturalized area. Specifically, exposed concrete pads, which do not have a uniform surface and therefore provide a more natural look, will be built over these transition areas. A combination of lit and reflective bollards will be installed in these transition areas.

Mr. Gibbs explained that the original plan did not account for the impact that the rainwater flow will have on the gravel path once the concrete slab is removed. Specifically, without a proper drainage system, the gravel path will be washed out. Accordingly, the revised plan includes the construction of bioswales and the installation of culverts along the new permeable surface, which will channel the water that does not seep into the ground across a larger area.

Mr. Gibbs presented the plan for the installation of a stone viewpoint wall on Summit Circle. Ms. Gaetano informed Council that the viewpoint wall is to stand at a height of 1.1m. She explained that it is to be only 3m long, making it more of a viewpoint than a lookout. Mr. Gibbs noted that a length of 3m will discourage pedestrians from sitting on the wall.

Ms. Gaetano pointed out the unforeseen cost of soil decontamination given that soil characterization studies carried out further to the development of the original plan and its associated cost estimate revealed high levels of contaminated soil (A-B, B-C, and C-D). She explained these levels of contamination as most likely related to the road’s construction as well the presence of a former snow dump site. The Mayor noted that the City stopped dumping snow in the area in the early 1990s as it was concerned by its impact on the area’s vegetation.

Further to Councillor Davis’ inquiry, Ms. Gerbrandt informed Council that the path will not be ploughed in the winter, adding that it will only be accessed by vehicles in emergency situations.

The Mayor emphasized the importance in communicating the significantly increased cost of the planned work at the Summit, estimated at $1.3 million, after having informed residents of the original plan for the street closure project in March and its estimated cost of $800,000. He explained that the City should distinguish the costs for the original project from the additional projects proposed to be done at the same time. Specifically, the work to be carried out on the path linking Summit Circle to Ridgewood Avenue and the roadwork to be carried out in front of 15 Summit Circle must be understood as separate infrastructure projects, undertaken at the same time in order to minimize the overall cost. The Mayor recommended classifying these projects under other categories of the budget, noting that the total parks budget is $1 million, which includes the government grant.
Councillor Samiotis agreed that certain aspects of the revised plan are separate infrastructure projects being carried out at the same time as the work on the concerned portion of Summit Circle in order to minimize the overall cost. She explained that the increased cost of the original project in the revised plan reflects the City’s determination to take a holistic approach to this large project. She emphasized the importance of addressing the drainage issue, which was not included in the original plan. She relayed Councillor Lulham’s recommendation to explain the increased cost to residents in this context.

Further to Councillor Drury’s inquiry, Mr. Gibbs informed Council that the Ridgewood path is estimated to cost $61,000.

Ms. Gerbrandt explained that the original plan developed by Fauteux & Associés underestimated the cost of tree planting by roughly $139,000 and was communicated to Council before Public Works received and assessed the architectural firm’s breakdown of the trees to be planted. Further to Councillor Samiotis’ inquiry, Ms. Gerbrandt informed Council that the revised plan includes the planting of significantly more trees in order for the re-naturalized area to eventually be as thickly grown-in as the forest.

Mr. Gibbs informed Council that the revised plan constitutes carrying out all underground electrical work in 2016, while only replacing the Washingtonian street lights with bollards in 2017.

Ms. Gaetano reported that as the call for tenders is scheduled to open on August 23, the work will begin in mid-to-late September or October.

- It was agreed that the administration will classify the ancillary infrastructure projects under other categories of the budget.

Ms. Gaetano, Ms. Gerbrandt, and Mr. Gibbs left the meeting at 6:37 p.m.

PROJET DE PLAN DE CONSERVATION DU SITE PATRIMONIAL DU MONT-ROYAL

Director Poirier briefed Council on the status of the Ministry of Culture and Communications’ update of the conservation plan for the Mount Royal heritage site. She explained that the Ministry presented the City with a draft conservation plan in fall 2015. The City then provided the Ministry with its comments and requested modifications, which have been incorporated into the new draft conservation plan. Director Poirier referred, for example, to the Ministry’s removal of the reference to the belvedere on Summit Circle as it is not part of the Mount Royal heritage site. Accordingly, and further to the Ministry’s request, Director Poirier recommended that Council adopt a resolution at its upcoming meeting expressing its approval of the draft conservation plan.

The Mayor noted a typographical error and a historical error to be corrected in the draft conservation plan.
It was agreed that Council will adopt a resolution at its upcoming meeting expressing its approval of the draft conservation plan for the Mount Royal heritage site.

Director Poirier left the meeting at 6:44 p.m.

Confidential items were discussed.

**ONGOING ITEM: MTQ/AMT**

Confidential items were discussed.

The Director General informed Council that the MTQ has agreed to fund part of the work involved with painting a mural on the temporary sound barrier to the north of Selby Park, which has been repeatedly covered in graffiti and posters. The Assistant Director General explained that the MTQ will reimburse the City for the cost of removing the posters and painting the wall white in order for the mural to be painted.

As the City must recruit an artist to paint the mural, Councillor Forbes recommended Mr. Bruce Roberts, a local artist with experience in painting murals. The Director General requested that Councillor Forbes contact Mr. Roberts to request a cost estimate. Councillor Forbes confirmed that she and Councillor Lulham will follow up on the matter, as the mural should be painted in September.

Confidential items were discussed.

**ABSENCES**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.