

Commentaires des résidents – PPCMOI 500 Claremont :

Comments from residents – SCAOPI 500 Claremont:

January 6, 2019:

A few comments about the second SCAOPI process for 500 Claremont:

- The complete elimination of the north-facing roof terrace (facing Windsor) should be maintained. There should be no addition of any roof terrace or however it is disguised on the Claremont side of the building.
 - The intensity of the light generated by the gym and social space planned for the roof top is also of concern, including hours of access by the tenants to those spaces.
 - The possible noise and its level resulting from so many (and possibly added) air conditioning units (in this second application) located on the roof level remains a real concern, especially with the noise issue from the MUHC encountered by some residents.
 - The addition of rental units and the resulting addition in the number of vehicles and parking spaces in the underground garage is not positive for the neighbourhood. The increase in the ins & outs of the garage is detrimental to the pedestrians using the sidewalks and the two bus routes on Claremont. The issue of the added traffic unfortunately seemed to be minimized by the developer and I think by Urban Planning.
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January 6, 2019:

It is sad that I have to ask the same question again especially after being told that the process would improve; namely, what are the community benefits in the new SCAOPI application for 500 Claremont given the clear financial benefits to the developer as summarized in his letter to Mr. Flies dated November 27, 2018?

The letter to Mr. Flies dated November 27, 2018 states that the developer proposes: *“Enfin, on propose maintenant l’offre de 2 voitures communautaires sur la propriété, ...”*. It is my understanding based on the PAC meeting of December 11, 2018, that these two vehicles would be housed on one and not on the previously proposed two parking spots.

This is actually a reduction of the community benefits which were two parking spots available for two such vehicles when the original SCAOPI application was adopted. Consistent with my notes and my letter on page 25 in the Westmount Independent of October 3, 2017 [open letter to mayor and city councillors], Laureen Sweeney on page 23 of the Westmount Independent of December 12, 2017 (“Unanimous vote ‘500 Claremont’ advances to next phase”) states:

“The adopted draft resolution grants the project variances in height and usage to the current zoning (R3-16-01). In exchange, the developer is required, among other conditions, to provide two spaces on the property for community use “in perpetuity” (two benches along Claremont and two parking spaces for car-sharing purposes).”

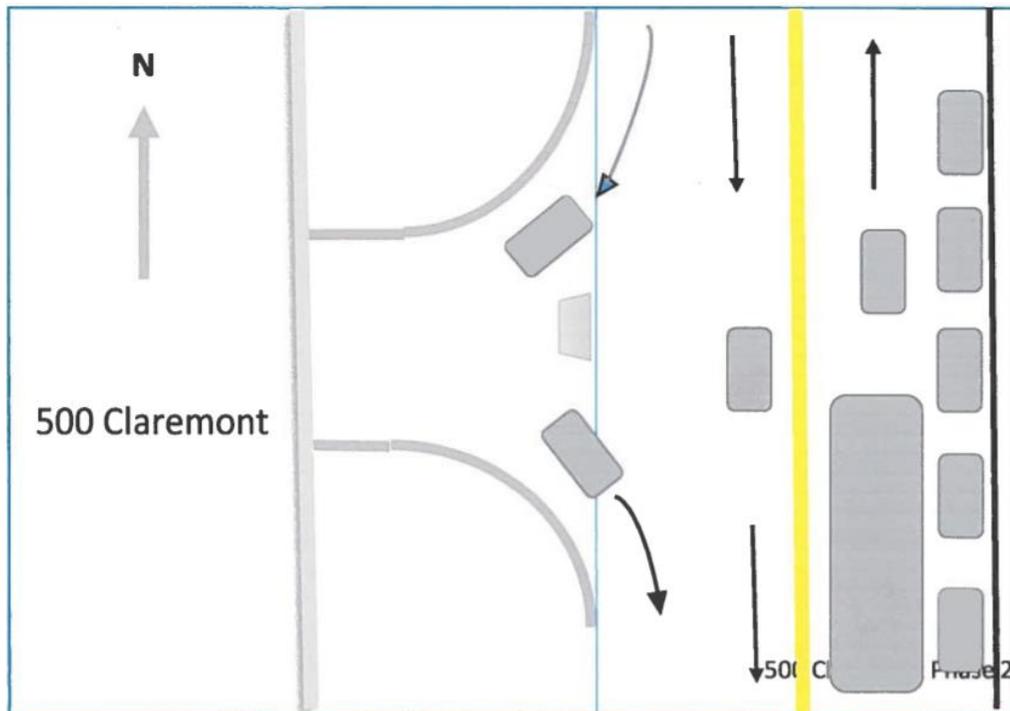
January 15, 2019:

500 Claremont — Replace Danger with Harmony

Dear Sir;

Yet again, this is a request for change to the dangerous design of the parking entrance / exit to a safer one. According to the December 2018 proposal, 43 cars will enter and exit in a haphazard way, an increase of 10. I propose that the entrance / exit design be changed now, at this design approval stage, to control the directions of the cars entering and exiting, and so reduce the possibility of accidents, and injuries to pedestrians. The sketch below shows one design which would reduce the risks to vehicles and pedestrians, as follows:

Entrance from north only
Exit towards south only
Median to dissuade illegal directions



I urge the Planning Advisory Committee and the Urban Planning Department to demand this change, or some other design, to avoid damage to vehicles, and injury to our pedestrians.

Letter from 2017

500 Claremont — Danger with Proposed Plan:

Dear Mme. Poirier:

As a close neighbor to 500 Claremont, we applaud the efforts of the City of Westmount to make better use of the property, and for informing neighbors of the plans. The invitation to express opinions by January 10, 2017, is also welcome. However, for our home, separated by only one home from 500 Claremont, the plan currently on display at Westmount City Hall is disturbing.

If the project maintained the current traffic pattern, with all vehicular traffic entering and leaving

from Windsor Avenue, the project could be acceptable to us. For over 30 years, the Congrégation de la Fraternité Sacerdotale used that entrance and parked up to some 20 cars in the space, with no accidents, to our knowledge.

Why the New Proposed Access Is Dangerous:

The proposed access to underground parking from Claremont Avenue raises the following safety concerns:

Fact	Dangerous Consequences
124 and 138 bus routes have two stops at Windsor Avenue, northbound and southbound	Traffic already converges from four directions: the proposed 500 Claremont access adds a fifth, hidden direction
Roslyn School pupils walk north 8-9 A.M.	SUVs will be leaving 500 Claremont, late for work
Groups of pedestrian traffic to and from Marianopolis College	Distraction to drivers of cars exiting 500 Claremont: students, buses, cars, parkers ...
Cars use 1-hour parking on Claremont to attend medical appointments at Westmount Medical on Sherbrooke Street	Frequent exchanges of cars parking, which temporarily block and frustrate through traffic of buses, trucks and cars
Vehicles routinely accelerate between existing stop signs on Claremont Avenue	Cars do not anticipate vehicles emerging from underground parking at 500 Claremont
Planned sharp 90 turn to enter the parking garage at 500 Claremont	The turn adds another distracting element to an already dangerous exit
Service trucks and SUVs routinely park on the west side of Claremont Avenue,	Daily, these high vehicles would block vision of approaching traffic when exiting from 500 Claremont Avenue

In conclusion, we strongly recommend that the planning committee insist that the developer use the existing road access to 500 Claremont Avenue.

January 17, 2019:

I am against the project of 500 Claremont because of the security risks problems of pollution more cars than initially said and more noise and traffic.

January 18, 2019:

I strongly disagree with the latest changes wanted by the owner re: the 500 Claremont bldg. They will just make this white elephant worse.

January 18, 2019:

I oppose the most recent changes to the planned renovation of 500 Claremont.

January 18, 2019:

RE 500 Claremont

1- The new proposal asks to demolish 69% of the existing building and rebuild the extra floor. Would the addition of an extra floor be accepted under current guidelines? I suspect not. If they replace the floor, then, the addition being built must be a disproportionately large relaxation of size limits on additions. Why would the City allow this?

2- The developers argue that they need that extra floor and additional apartments it provides to better meet the demands of the market. We were told the size of the first proposal was necessary to meet the demands of the market, and now they want more. At any rate, the demands of the market are not the City's responsibility nor are they a good reason to accept a design with a negative impact on the existing residents.

3- The loss of the upper story should be good news for the heritage character of the building. We were told right at the beginning by the original architect, Catherine Vezina that the extra floor added in the 1960 was so solid and firmly in place that it had to be retained, that is, the building could not be restored to its original and appropriate proportions. She was mistaken. Now it can and therefore should be restored.

4- This is also an opportunity to look again at the heritage value of this building, and its social and cultural significance. 500 Claremont was built in 1908 by Eliza Hervey and the Hervey Institute to teach Protestant children the skills necessary to obtain employment in domestic service, and thereby lift themselves out of poverty. This School of Industry also helped women find work through a job register and provided relief to needy families. The significant contribution of women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to the alleviation of suffering is very much overlooked in history, much in the same way as this building's significance has been overlooked. The approved design and these recent alterations obscure this heritage completely - the building is unrecognizable as a philanthropic institution of historical value.

5- The 16 foot opening to the parking garage will eliminate at least 2 and probably 3 on street parking spaces. Note that Tom Flies stated for the previous proposal that the 10 foot opening would take 1 and likely 2 spots.

6 - They say that the tenants will probably not use both spaces. If a tenant doesn't use both their spaces, they will likely sublet the second one. While this might alleviate the on-street parking problem somewhat, it will also encourage another person to drive instead of seeking alternative modes of transport. There are five bus stops at Claremont and Sherbrooke (24, 63, 104, 124, and 138) and Vendome metro station is an 8 to 10 minute walk away. Car use is considered the number one cause of global warming. The landmark report by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released in October 2018 stated that we have 12 years to limit climate change in part by reducing emissions. It's stunning that Westmount would accept a proposal which accommodates even MORE cars when there is an urgent need for car use to be reduced. We should be declaring a climate emergency like Vancouver and showing leadership in this area: <https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/vancouver-councillors-unanimously-approve-motion-declaring-climate-emergency>

7- They claim they need to offer two parking spots per apartment because that is what future tenants of Westmount expect. Virtually none of the surrounding homeowners have 2 parking spaces, and some don't even have one. Surely future tenants of Westmount can expect what their new neighbours have, not more?

8- Air conditioners/compressors on the roof will generate considerable noise. Why is a geothermal system

(as recommended in the Building guidelines, Annex 2 of Bylaw 1305) not being required for this development given the size of the property available? Fewer parking spaces and a geothermal system would be greener, in keeping with PAC priorities.

January 18, 2019:

As a property owner living four houses south of 500 Claremont, I am concerned about several aspects of the 500 Claremont project which will decrease the value of my property, and make living more difficult.

If the top floor must be demolished, why not permanently remove it? This would restore this heritage building to its original height, which was more in keeping with a residential neighbourhood?

Neighbours have never agreed to the parking exit on Claremont. It has been on Windsor Avenue for over 100 years, and should stay there, to minimize traffic congestion on Claremont.

If the entrance / exit to the parking for 43 cars must be on Claremont, then the entrance and exit should be physically separate, to ensure that cars are less likely to disturb the flow of traffic, which is already heavy during busy hours.

January 19, 2019:

We were late for the on-line comments on changes to the 500 Claremont SCAOPI proposal, but hope that you'll take our comments into consideration nonetheless. Thanks.

In general, I'd say that we were very concerned at the way that this resubmission from the developer takes what was formally accepted last fall (though not, it should be noted, by the 85 residents who signed the registry for a referendum), and considerably ups the ante on the project. Now he has to demolish the 5th floor, increase the number of apartments from 16 to 20, and increase the number of parking spots from 32 to 43. This is apparently because the previous submission, claimed to have been well thought out, is now shown to be out of sync with the realities of the building as well as the market requirements.

As the rather disconcerting minutes of the December PAC meeting report, "There is confusion about the proposal presented today and the one approved a year ago. The proposed changes are difficult to understand." If our municipal authorities cannot understand a development proposal then something is seriously wrong.

In this instance, it would appear that the developers have failed to provide adequate details for an informed decision. Discussion Items, 2, 3, 4 and 6, for example, refer to missing drawings of proposed changes to the building and car park. Details of the new replacement wall for the upper level were not included, and cross sectional elevations for the site were not provided. The discussion of the new parking arrangements were no clearer to us than they appeared to have been to the committee. Further, as XXX pointed out, the news about the upper story could be an opportunity to restore the heritage character of the building, rather than - as the developer now wants - a chance to increase the density of the project, which neighbours have objected to all along.

With respect to the developer's assurances on the impact on local traffic, we should remember that their traffic study was undertaken by someone who did not know that Marianopolis was located in the area! On the parking issue we should also note that allocated parking for residents has been reduced recently on Claremont, and will apparently continue to shrink.

To summarize, the proposal remains as problematic as ever in both its substantive and its municipal planning and procedural aspects, and does little to address ongoing neighbourhood concerns.
