

## Meadowbrook developers meet with Montreal

By Joel Goldenberg, The Suburban 2007-11-07

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Côte St. Luc and Montreal West political leaders say developing Meadowbrook is impractical.

Representatives of Groupe Pacific had a meeting recently with the City of Montreal and is meeting with the borough of Lachine to discuss potential development of the Lachine portion of the Meadowbrook Golf Course, Montreal West Mayor Campbell Stuart and Côte St. Luc councillor Dida Berku revealed last week.

Berku, referring to the upcoming Lachine meeting, said a “sustainable development” plan is being presented involving energy-efficient housing and 1,200 units in total.

There have been plans to develop the site since the late 1980s, but these were shelved partly as result of heavy pressure from activists against development of the greenspace. Plans to develop the Côte St. Luc side have been stalled ever since the city rezoned its half of the site “golf course”, prompting a \$20 million lawsuit. Last fall, as part of an arrangement with Groupe Pacific, connected to its role as developer of the site in the mid-1990s, the land in its entirety was sold to them for \$3 million.

During last week’s Montreal West town council meeting, Stuart said the developers had an “unannounced” meeting with Montreal planning department officials “to put forward their general proposal to build residences on Meadowbrook.

“I have spoken to [Lachine mayor] Claude Dauphin, but he was not aware that the meeting had been held. If there are any other hearings, we will be involved. We have a very strong view on development, which is that Meadowbrook is a precious greenspace which ought to be preserved and any building on that portion risks requiring access through Montreal West to Westminster, so it’s of no particular interest of Montreal West to have this forced upon us.”

Berku said Côte St. Luc has not seen the developers’ plan.

“We (Côte St. Luc, Montreal West) haven’t been invited so far [to meetings with the developer],” she said Friday. “There are supposed to be ‘green’ buildings, but the best way to keep it green is to keep it green. They’re working off the Lachine zoning, which is more or less 1,200 units — pretty high density for Lachine.”

Berku said Côte St. Luc’s planning department found out that the developers are meeting with Lachine.

“When they’re ready, they can meet with us.”

Berku said she is still not worried about a potential development.

“There’s no access routes, no plan for the implementation of infrastructure all the concerns are still real and unresolved, and they can’t be resolved within the physical limitations of that site. It has serious physical and geographic limitations — surrounded by railway tracks.”

Activists are also arguing that any development accede to proximity guidelines adopted by the Railway Association of Canada and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, which calls for the building of homes at least 30 metres from a rail line and 300 metres from a freight yard.

“Meadowbrook, on the Montreal West side, is next to the Sortin railway yard. I’ve met with Dauphin, and have shown him the guidelines, which he adopted as a representative of Montreal on the FCM and he also should be interested in implementing these guidelines, since he is responsible for security for the whole island.”

Montreal officials were not available for comment at press time.