



RÉAMÉNAGEMENT BENNY FARM
BENNY FARM REDEVELOPMENT
Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, Montréal, Québec

A PROJECT FOR THE COMMUNITY



CANADA LANDS COMPANY
SOCIÉTÉ IMMOBILIÈRE DU CANADA

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Benny Farm: a Project for the Community

Benny Farm is an 18-acre (7.3 hectares) residential property located in the Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (NDG) region of Montréal. Canada Lands Company CLC Limited (CLC) has been the owner of this property since 1999.

Since the announcement to redevelop the site in 1991, a number of plans and projects have been proposed and many discussions and public consultations have been held. However, ten years later, in 2002, most of the site had yet to be developed, and the community held diverse views on the redevelopment.

In July 2002, CLC embarked on an ambitious participatory process in order to bring forward a project that is viable, integrated well with its surroundings, and responds to the needs and expectations of the local community. At the core of this process is a Task Force made up of representatives of the various interests in the local community. The Task Force's terms of reference were to discuss the major issues involved in the project and come to a decision on a redevelopment program. Various options were examined, and the population of the district was consulted and kept informed on a regular basis.

The result of this process, the Benny Farm redevelopment plan, combines several objectives and reconciles a number of different values. The plan responds to NDG's needs for housing and community services. It takes into consideration concerns for social diversity and pays particular attention to groups with the greatest needs. It provides for a harmonious interface with adjacent streets and respects the original character of the site.

CLC intends to devote significant attention to implementing the plan, as was done in preparing it. The company, therefore, plans to remain involved until redevelopment is complete. It will thus ensure that the stated objectives are adhered to, that the projects built are of high quality, and that any negative impact on the neighbourhood is mitigated.

Over the years, many people have contributed—in their own way and with great passion—to shape the project being put forward today; they include veterans, residents, members of community organizations and interest groups, politicians, representatives of municipal service departments, and professionals from various fields. CLC extends its sincere gratitude to all of them and hopes the future Benny Farm site reflects the qualities and values they have advocated.



Canada Lands Company

Activated in 1995, the Canada Lands Company CLC Limited is a self-funding, arms-length, “non-agent”, federal Crown corporation that optimizes the financial and community value of strategic Government of Canada properties¹.

In carrying out this mandate, CLC purchases properties from the Government of Canada, improves and revitalizes them, and then manages or sells them in order to produce the best possible benefit for both local communities and Canadian taxpayers. The company is entirely self-financing, pays all taxes at all levels of government and implements innovative property solutions made possible by its depth of real estate expertise.

The company’s activities to date, along with estimates for its sold properties, will yield the following benefits for local communities and Canadian taxpayers:

- \$286 million distributed to the government as dividends, cash acquisitions and payments for properties;
- \$3.3 billion in stimulated private sector development expenditures;
- 26,400 person years of direct construction employment;
- \$35.7 million in environmental remediation investment; and
- 14,000 new or refurbished residential units at all affordability levels.

CLC respects Government of Canada policies regarding the environment, heritage and relations with First Nations regarding land claim issues while undertaking a wide range of real estate activities across Canada. It also operates transparently in partnership with private-sector partners, engages in extensive public consultations for its redevelopment projects and submits itself to all municipal planning processes. This overall business philosophy derives from the company’s core commitment to the principle of corporate social responsibility.

The company has approximately 90 employees. Its head office is in Toronto and it maintains an additional 12 corporate or project offices in major cities across Canada. Some of the major properties owned or managed by CLC include Glenlyon Business Park in British Columbia, the former CFB Calgary lands in Alberta, the CN Tower in Ontario, the former Saint-Hubert Garrison in Québec and the former Moncton CN Shops in New Brunswick. The company reports to Parliament annually through the Minister of Transport, the Honourable David Collenette.

¹ For more information, visit www.clc.ca



Site Description and Background

Benny Farm covers an area of 18 acres (7.3 hectares) in Montreal's Notre-Dame-de-Grâce district. It is bounded by Monkland Avenue on the north and Benny Avenue on the east and is adjacent to Sherbrooke Street to the south and Walkley Avenue to the west. Cavendish Boulevard divides it into two large blocks.

Benny Farm is named after Scottish manufacturer Walter Benny, who purchased the property in 1838. His descendants owned the land until 1944, and it was farmed until the mid-1940s. A consortium of insurance companies, Housing Enterprises Limited, then purchased Benny Farm to build a residential development. Project architect Harold James Doran designed a unified complex based on European planning principles of the 1930s, which challenged traditional urban forms and called for abundant greenery and open spaces. The project comprised 384 units in groups of three-storey sixplexes. Reaction from adjoining property owners was lukewarm because of the sharp contrast between the proposed development and the surrounding neighbourhood. Nevertheless, faced with the urgent post-war need for housing, municipal authorities were persuaded to permit the plan to go forward.

In 1947, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) took over from Housing Enterprises Limited and gave veterans' families priority in renting the units. With the arrival of large numbers of families at Benny Farm, a true community came into being, complete with associations, committees and sporting and recreational activities. The original residents' spirit of community and mutual aid lives on among the veterans who still make their home there.

In the early 1990s, CMHC announced its intention to redevelop Benny Farm in order to house veterans and other tenants in more modern accessible units on the site. The corporation hoped to finance the undertaking by having the private sector develop the rest of the property. However, the local community reacted strongly, criticizing the project for its density (1200 units), the height of the buildings (6 storeys), the demolition of the post-war buildings, and the loss of the site's social role. The zoning was changed twice (in 1994 and 1998) to accommodate the CMHC project, and this by-law remains in force. In 1997 the first two new veterans' buildings were constructed (Phase I).

CLC acquired the property from CMHC in 1999 and put up two more buildings (Phases II and III) for veterans' housing, bringing the total number of units for this clientele to 247. At the same time, the company undertook discussions with various local organizations grouped together in the Benny Farm Round Table, a local consultation committee set up to propose a community project for the site. In April 2001 the Fonds Foncier Communautaire Benny Farm (FFCBF), an organization that emerged from the work of the Benny Farm Round Table, signed a protocol agreement with CLC to acquire the site. The agreement was for a term of six months. The FFCBF proposed a residential and social development to be based on a land trust model. When presented to the district council in September 2001, the FFCBF plan, which called for keeping all the original buildings, led to renewed debate in the community.

In October 2001 Canada Lands decided not to extend the agreement with the FFCBF but to put forward a new redevelopment plan and act as principal developer on the project.



View looking north. The dotted line shows the area slated for redevelopment. (photo Studio Graetz)



Plan Preparation Process

In July 2002, Canada Lands set in motion a participatory process to draw up its redevelopment plan. To co-ordinate the process, it retained the services of the agency Convercité². In July and August 2002, interviews were conducted to elicit the views of various stakeholders and in August 2002, a process comprising the following steps was put forward³:

1. Drafting of principles and objectives by the Task Force
2. Preparation of design alternatives
3. Public presentation and public feedback
4. Preparation of the redevelopment plan
5. Community consultation on the plan
6. Discussions with municipal authorities
7. Validation by the Task Force

Principles and Objectives Drafted by the Task Force

The Task Force⁴ was made up of ten individuals representing the various points of view that were being voiced in the community. It also included CLC's Vice-President for Real Estate, Eastern Region and an observer appointed by the City of Montréal. The group's mandate was to reach a consensus on guidelines for the redevelopment program. To support it in its deliberations, it received a range of expert opinions and information⁵. On October 6, 2002, after several intensive meetings, the Task Force reached a consensus on the redevelopment program⁶.

Design Alternatives

Four architectural firms were asked to prepare design alternatives⁷ based on the guidelines drafted by the Task Force. Representatives of the firms took part in the Task Force's deliberations as observers and were able to gain a better understanding of the issues involved and take the Task Force members' concerns into consideration in preparing their designs.

Public Presentation and Public Feedback

On October 30, the design alternatives were unveiled at a public presentation. Invitations had been distributed door-to-door and advertisements had appeared in the local media to notify Notre-

² For more information about Convercité, visit www.convercite.org.

³ For details of the process, see www.bennyfarm.org/en/pdf/process.pdf.

⁴ The list of members of the Task Force is attached.

⁵ The list of experts consulted by the Task Force is attached.

⁶ See the press release, www.bennyfarm.org/en/pdf/pr100802.pdf

⁷ For more information on the firms and design alternatives, see www.bennyfarm.org/en/design.htm.



Dame-de-Grâce residents of the event. In addition, a Web site (www.bennyfarm.org) was set up to keep the public informed.

Nearly 400 people attended the public presentation. The presentation was followed by an Open House at Benny Farm during which members of the public could view the plans and speak with the architects and CLC representatives. The plans were then put on display for ten days at four public locations in the district as well as on the project Web site.

A form was provided at each location and on the Web site so that the public could provide comments on each of the proposals. Nearly 300 forms were filled in and sent to CLC. After quantitative and qualitative analysis, a summary of the comments was presented to the Task Force.

Development Plan Preparation

In November, the Task Force held a number of meetings to study the design alternatives and public feedback. In addition, an independent firm assessed the cost of each of the proposals to make sure they were financially viable. Analysis of the strengths and disadvantages of each design helped guide the Task Force in formulating a set of recommendations regarding redevelopment of the site.

On the basis of these recommendations, on December 5, 2002, CLC engaged the services of one of the participating firms, Saia Barbarese Topouzanov architects⁸, to draw up the redevelopment plan. The firm revised its earlier design to take into account the Task Force's recommendations. The revised plan was presented to the Task Force in January 2003 and officially submitted to the Borough of Côte-des-Neiges/Notre-Dame-de-Grâce on February 24, 2003. It was also presented on the project Web site.

Community Consultation

From February to April 2003 the plan was presented to the residents of Benny Farm and the adjacent streets. Four meetings were held, and approximately one hundred people attended; the plan, as outlined, was well received. On March 26, 2003, nearly 200 people attended a special information session on the project organized by the NDG Community Council. Meanwhile, CLC held a number of meetings with groups interested in establishing a community housing project at Benny Farm and also held talks with the NDG/Montreal West CLSC.

These meetings allowed CLC to gauge the opinions of the public and future residents and make adjustments to the plan in response to the needs, expectations and concerns that were expressed.

Discussions with the City

While the community consultations proceeded, professional staff of the borough of Côte-des-Neiges/Notre-Dame-de-Grâce conducted a preliminary analysis of the project, determined the

⁸ For more information on the firm, see www.bennyfarm.org/en/design.htm#.



follow-up studies that would have to be carried out and sent their general comments to CLC on April 17, 2003. On June 2, 2003, the Côte-des-Neiges/Notre-Dame-de-Grâce borough council passed a resolution for the central city to examine the project in accordance with Article 89 of the Charter of the City of Montreal⁹. Analysis of the project with the professional staff of central city departments continued through the summer of 2003.

Following CLC's completion of the required studies¹⁰, the company and the municipal departments agreed on modifications to the plan. At the same time, other studies were conducted on the affordability of the units intended for home ownership.

On August 15 an amended version of the plan was submitted to the City of Montreal's Architecture and Urban Planning Committee, which issued a favourable opinion on the project.

Validation by the Task Force

The Task Force held regular meetings to follow progress of the project and validate adjustments to the plan. On September 10, 2003, the Task Force validated the final version, which would be submitted to City Council for public consultation.

Guiding Principles

At its first meeting, the Task Force adopted a set of principles that would guide its decisions at every stage of the process for preparing the plan:

1. Integrated community: Build, on the Benny Farm site, a community that blends harmoniously with the site's immediate environment and the neighbourhood as a whole.
2. Social balance: Achieve a level of social diversity that reflects the community by ensuring a proper balance with respect to the site and its immediate environment.
3. Inclusive community: Consider the needs of those segments of the local population that have difficulty finding adequate housing or services which are essential to their quality of life.
4. Adequate housing diversity: Ensure that the needs and social diversity of the target populations translate into housing diversity and adequate tenure.
5. Services that meet residents' needs: Provide appropriate facilities and services to ensure the health, well-being and quality of life of NDG residents and those who will be living on the site.

⁹ The charter of the City of Montreal is available online (in French) at www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/vie_democratique/charte.pdf.

¹⁰ Studies conducted: traffic and parking, feasibility of renovating existing buildings, volume measurement, sunlight, and architectural guidelines.



6. Building quality: Ensure quality buildings that meet current construction standards are adapted to intended uses, provide adequate comfort and quality of life for those for whom they are intended and contribute positively to the value of the overall urban layout.
7. Qualities of the urban environment: Create a high-quality urban environment that makes optimum use of space with well-defined public and private areas, accessible public spaces, buildings that respect the size, density and architectural character of the surroundings and a significant amount of green space.
8. The site's symbolic value: Preserve the heritage and symbolic value of the Benny Farm site for neighbourhood residents and Montrealers alike.
9. The impact of redevelopment on the neighbourhood: Provide measures to alleviate the impact of increased activity on the site, notably in terms of traffic, parking, security and tranquillity.
10. Project feasibility: Ensure all projects are economically sound, technically feasible, sustainable and completed within a reasonable timeframe.

Redevelopment Program

General Objectives

The Task Force first confirmed that Benny Farm would continue to be used predominantly for residential purposes; housing targeted at low to middle income groups would take up at least three-quarters of the site. A quarter of the area was reserved for the NDG/Montreal West CLSC, a recreational and community centre and daycare services.

The Task Force called for 500 to 550 units in the residential component of the development, two thirds of them for rental and one third for home ownership. These proportions reflect the district average. A wide variety of types and sizes of housing are proposed. Approximately 200 rental units in community projects will be allocated to segments of the population with the greatest needs: seniors, young families, single-parent families, and individuals with limited mobility. Remaining rental units are destined to a more varied clientele. Finally, approximately 200 home-ownership units will target young middle-income families. More than a third of the dwellings will be designed to accommodate people with limited mobility.

The Task Force also made a series of recommendations for the development plan, including:

- Housing distribution: locate seniors' housing next to veterans' apartments to establish a quiet zone and promote sharing of services; locate private units on the edge of the site to promote a better match with the residential fabric of the neighbouring streets;
- Services: concentrate community-service facilities facing Benny Park to allow for integrated uses for all these facilities; create a buffer between these facilities and housing.



- Height: respect the size of the buildings in the neighbouring residential streets by restricting the height of buildings facing housing on Benny, Walkley and Monkland Avenues to three storeys; locate the higher buildings in the southern part of the site.
- Architecture: avoid front facades facing the back of other buildings; set strict standards for renovated buildings; provide an outdoor space for every housing unit (balcony or terrace).
- Landscape design: keep the existing community garden; have a clear distinction between private and public spaces; preserve most of the mature trees; eliminate physical barriers for individuals with limited mobility.
- Circulation and parking: maintain private character of road serving veterans' complex; limit access from Cavendish for safety reasons; open site with pedestrian pathways; provide sufficient parking for housing and services; where feasible, target underground parking.

Affordable Housing¹¹

Rental Units

Strong demand and the lack of available rental units have led to rent increases in Notre-Dame-de-Grâce and have gradually put this type of housing out of the reach of low to middle-income households in the area. By providing almost 350 rental units for this market, the Benny Farm redevelopment plan presents a partial solution to the problem.

Over 200 of the rental units are offered in co-operatives¹² and non-profit housing organizations¹³. This housing targets groups that are often the most vulnerable in terms of shelter or that are in need of services. These projects are being made possible through the support of City of Montreal subsidy programs (Accès Logis¹⁴, Affordable Housing Québec program: social and community component¹⁵). The programs set obligatory standards for rent levels and controls remain in effect for a period of 25 years.

Six co-operative and non-profit housing projects are planned for Benny Farm: the Résidences Benny Farm (84 units for seniors), the Coop Zoo (45 units, young families), the Coop Benny Farm (24 units, mixed population), Project Tango (18 units, individuals with limited mobility), Elizabeth House (18 units, single mothers returning to school) and Maison Chance (24 units, single mothers returning to work). These groups were selected by the City of Montreal and receive technical support from Groupe CDH¹⁶ to carry out their project.

¹¹ CMHC defines affordable housing as housing of adequate size and quality on which a household spends less than 30% of its pretax income.

¹² For more information on housing co-operatives, see www.coop-habitation.org.

¹³ For details, see www.shq.gouv.qc.ca/publications/M06504.pdf.

¹⁴ For information, see www.shq.gouv.qc.ca/publications/M16854.pdf.

¹⁵ For information, see www.shq.gouv.qc.ca/publications/fiches_en/M1685305.html.

¹⁶ For more information on Groupe CDH, visit www.groupecdh.com.



The plan also calls for three buildings with more than 130 private rental units. Developers of these projects will be able to take advantage of the Affordable Housing Québec program: private component¹⁷, a City of Montreal program offered in partnership with the Société d'habitation du Québec and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). This financial assistance is available to developers who respect rent ceilings set by the City of Montréal, in effect for ten years.

Home Ownership

House prices have quickly increased in NDG over the past few years, putting the purchase of a first home out of the reach of most tenant households in the area. With more than 200 private units available for home ownership, however, the Benny Farm project offers many of these households an opportunity to buy. This additional housing will also free rental units in the district and make them available to new tenants.

In the current real estate market, providing affordable private units for the target groups presents two major challenges: to make the units affordable for first time buyers and to limit speculation upon resale while letting the first owners profit from their investment.

To resolve these issues, CLC called on the services of Avi Friedman¹⁸, Director of the Affordable Homes Master's program at McGill University, to develop models of housing units for Benny Farm that would fit the budget of the target market¹⁹.

Discussions were also initiated with such partners as the City of Montreal and Human Resources Development Canada on measures to subsidize the cost of purchasing the land, or offering financial assistance to the builders or first-time buyers.

Luba Serge, an urban planner and sociologist specializing in affordable housing, was commissioned to conduct a study of strategies to prevent speculation. One approach may be to offer buyers a second mortgage equal to the difference between the property's market price and the original purchase price, with payment due upon resale. The money thus recovered would be used to help the next buyer. Procedures for applying this formula to Benny Farm are to be determined by the end of 2003. This method was used in Toronto by Options for Homes²⁰, an organization that helped thousands of households become homeowners in an especially tight market.

Community Service Facilities

Notre-Dame-de-Grâce is one of the city districts least well served in terms of quality recreational and community facilities. Little has been invested there over the years, leaving existing facilities out of date and unable to meet current standards²¹. Residential redevelopment of Benny Farm will heighten demand for this type of facilities. However, since new community services can be

¹⁷ For more information, see www.shq.qc.ca/en/pg/la/en_logement_abordable_quebec_privé.pdf.

¹⁸ For more information on Dr. Avi Friedman, see www.mcgill.ca/architecture/faculty/friedman/.

¹⁹ For more information, see Dr. Avi Friedman, Architect, *Affordable housing for Benny Farm*, August 2003.

²⁰ For more information on Options for Homes, visit www.icomm.ca/options/.

²¹ Presentation by John Richardson of the Côte-des-Neiges/Notre-Dame-de-Grâce Borough to the Task Force on the redevelopment of Benny Farm, October 2, 2002.



incorporated into the plan, redevelopment provides a unique opportunity to correct the situation, at least partially.

In terms of location, Benny Farm has some major advantages: it is at the very heart of the district near two transit thoroughfares (Cavendish and Monkland) and is well served by public transport. It faces one of the area's main parks and is also one of the few tracts of land available that can accommodate major institutions.

The Task Force therefore suggested reserving 25 per cent of the area for two establishments: the NDG/Montreal West CLSC and a recreational and community centre that would also house daycare services. The inclusion of such facilities in the Benny Farm Project is in keeping with the nature and dynamics of the district; since many of NDG's facilities, institutions and public services (schools, hospitals, sports centres, libraries, churches, and daycare centres) are located in residential areas²².

The Task Force also recommended locating both service facilities in the northeast part of the property facing Benny Park. This location has two advantages: it reduces the impact of increased traffic on the neighbouring residential area and promotes synergy, while facilitating shared services. This would also promote the development of an integrated wellness centre focusing on prevention and health promotion and improvement. This innovative concept was put forward by a number of stakeholders and merits further study as part of the plan.

NDG/Montréal West CLSC

The NDG/Montreal West CLSC has been seeking a location at the corner of Monkland and Cavendish for a number of years. Access to its current premises on Cavendish between Sherbrooke Street and De Maisonneuve Boulevard poses problems and is considered dangerous for its most vulnerable clients. The Benny Farm location is optimal in terms of proximity, accessibility and safety for the CLSC's priority clientele: seniors, people with limited mobility, young families, and single mothers. The building shown in the plan reflects the CLSC'S program for the new location.

Recreational and Community Centre

Area residents have been calling for the construction of a new recreational and community facility for a number of years²³. They point to the lack of gymnasiums and of indoor pools of a reasonable size and to the need for more daycare facilities, a need that can only grow as families with young children move into Benny Farm.

Though some interest in such a facility has been evident over the past few years, the project for a new recreational centre has yet to be clearly defined. The local YMCA has expressed an interest in relocating on the project and wishes to enter into partnership with the City of Montreal to realize

²² See the map of NDG at www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/mtlcarte/pdf/ndg4.pdf.

²³ A residents' petition presented to CLC in October 2002 asked that a portion of the site be reserved for community services.



this²⁴. After serving the NDG community for over seventy years, the YMCA is faced with renovating its Hampton Street facilities or finding a new location.

Due to the lack of a clearly defined program, the building shown in the development plan was designed to accommodate the usual activities of a neighbourhood recreational centre as well as a daycare centre serving 45 to 60 children. It is also compatible with a potential move by the YMCA. The Task Force has proposed a period of one year following the rezoning for municipal officials to assess the needs for recreational and community services on the property.

Redevelopment Plan

The redevelopment plan was drafted to reflect principles and objectives defined by the Task Force. It was then adapted to take into account the concerns voiced by owners of adjacent properties during consultations, comments made by borough and central city departments and conclusions of the various studies that were conducted.



The overall plan proposes opening up the site to the neighbourhood and integrating it into the district while respecting the original development layout (see plan on the next page). The complex is coherent and respectful of the adjacent homes. Private and common spaces are well defined, fulfilling an essential condition for good relations between neighbours and for the future residents' role in the management of the property (see aerial perspective above).

²⁴ See YMCA news release at www.bennyfarm.org/en/documents/pr042303.pdf.



On the west side, Prince of Wales Avenue is to be extended, as provided for in the 1997 plan. Lined by row-houses (see illustration below) and triplexes, the new street follows the grid and scale of the area, while providing a transition between the neighbourhood and the Benny Farm redevelopment.



In the middle, on either side of Cavendish Boulevard, renovated buildings and new structures are linked together to reveal the garden-city layout of the original post-war project (see illustration below).



A tree-lined pathway separates the residential and service areas. The service facilities stand three or four storeys high, except for the low wing of the recreational and community centre on the Benny Avenue side. This part of the building houses the daycare centre and corresponds to the height of neighbouring dwellings (see illustration below).



On the east side, along Benny Avenue, construction of the sequence of veterans' apartment buildings begun in Phases II and III is continued. The scale of three storeys facing the street and four storeys on the garden is maintained.



On the south side of the property, two buildings may reach six storeys in order to achieve the desired density: one building is destined for seniors with loss of autonomy and the other building can serve general housing needs.

Landscaping

The landscaping features help distinguish the property from its surroundings and provide for a coherent unity of the site. The landscape design draws inspiration from the first phases of the project, characterized by a series of yards and gardens marked by pathways.

The landscaping plan, developed by Claude Cormier, landscape architect, proposes planting an ornamental orchard that will serve as a unifying symbol, recall the site's agricultural past, and give the Benny Farm landscape a distinctive look.

With its network of walkways linking the neighbourhood, streets and semiprivate backyards, the Benny Farm Project is a pleasant and open housing complex. Circulation follows property lines and generates a combination of semi-public spaces with clearly defined boundaries. Benches mark out



the walkways; when night falls, lamp posts and bollards create an atmosphere of comfort and security. The community garden will stay in its current location at the centre of the site, to create a sense of community and of belonging.

● POMMETIER (PROPOSÉS) / CRAB APPLE (PROPOSED)



Malus makamik
Pommetier Makimik
Makamik Crab Apple
H./ H 9m. L./ W. 11m.

QUANTITÉ / QUANTITY: 167

Some 400 new trees will be planted, including an ornamental orchard of about 170 crab-apple trees. The crab apple species selected produces blossoms but not fruit, requiring less maintenance. About 20 per cent of the existing trees – some sixty in all – will have to be cut down to make way for construction. The mature trees on the edge of the site are to be preserved.

All these elements will help make the Benny Farm landscape a pleasant one, with special places, yards, access routes and walkways creating a project open to the neighbourhood.

Architectural Guidelines

Planning, architectural and design guidelines were drafted to ensure the unity and quality of the project.

Construction and alteration permits will have to comply with the Côte-des-Neiges/Notre-Dame-de-Grâce borough urban plan and with additional general guidelines set out in the by-law authorizing the project. These guidelines are applied by the borough and deal mainly with alignment of the structures, rhythm and treatment of the facades, apertures, facings, projections, and landscaping.

Architectural treatment of the buildings will also be governed by additional quality guidelines set by CLC, specifying, among other things, the colour and bond of the bricks, the coverings and



materials for the facades, the shape of the roofs, as well as the types of flashing, doors, windows and projections²⁵. CLC will ensure compliance by all the developers.

Accessibility

The plan provides for special attention to the needs of individuals with limited mobility. The project provides for a significant supply of accessible housing (314 units), most of which (284) is made up of special-needs or adaptable housing²⁶ in buildings with elevators.

One project will specifically serve seniors with slight loss of autonomy (the Résidences Benny Farm, 84 units) and a second project, people with physical or cognitive impairments (Tango project, 18 units).

The property layout eliminates obstacles and the new CLSC location will greatly improve access for seniors and people with limited mobility who live at Benny Farm and in the area.



²⁵ For a detailed description of CLC’s architectural guidelines, see Saia Barabarese Topouzanov architectes - Claude Cormier architectes-paysagistes, *Proposal for the Redevelopment of Benny Farm*, September 2003.

²⁶ Accessible housing is housing in which there are no obstacles to entry by people with disabilities. Adapted housing is housing that has been altered to take into account the disabilities of the occupant and to minimize handicaps (e.g., width of doorways, height of counters). Adaptable housing is housing designed to be altered to suit special needs. www.infoblac.org/lexique.asp



Conservation of Existing Buildings

Of the fifty-two existing sixplexes, twenty-two located on either side of Cavendish Boulevard are slated for complete renovation under the redevelopment plan. New wings will be built, offering additional units that can be reached through the renovated structures.

Certain aspects of the development program were crucial in determining the choice and location of the buildings to be retained, including:

- establishing a community services area facing Benny Park;
- maintaining quality and coherence of the urban environment;
- attaining a diversity of types of housing;
- increasing the number of units on the site; and
- maintaining significant green spaces.

Another factor was the desire to retain a portion of the site to reflect the original development and show the evolution of Benny Farm, a feature of the Montreal landscape for over fifty years²⁷.

The retention of some of the original dwellings is supported by an exhaustive study of the condition of the existing buildings and their renovation potential²⁸. The firm L'OEUF-Pearl Poddubiuk architects was commissioned to conduct the study and called on the expertise of consultants in several specialized fields: structure, masonry, energy and heating efficiency, environment, acoustics, and regulatory compliance. The scope of the proposed work respects the rigour, simplicity and economy of the original architectural design and includes:

- Restoring and improving the appearance of the brick facing
- Re-roofing
- Insulating exterior walls and roofs
- Replacing doors and windows
- Installing new balconies with outdoor staircases

²⁷ See Pierre-Richard Bisson, architecte et historien de l'architecture, *Avis sur la valeur patrimoniale de l'ensemble résidentiel Benny Farm*, November 1993, for more information on the heritage value of Benny Farm.

²⁸ See L'OEUF - Pearl-Poddubiuk architectes, *Benny Farm, étude sur la rénovation des bâtiments existants*. August 2003.



- Soundproofing between dwellings
- Altering the configuration of the hall, kitchen and dining space in the dwellings
- Replacing most of the plumbing
- Replacing the electrical system
- Modifying the heating system
- Bringing the buildings into compliance with regulations

The scope of the work includes the removal of asbestos, the presence of which in some parts of the buildings has been known since the 1990s. When the Benny Farm complex was built, asbestos was often used as insulation for pipes and as a binding agent for plaster. All materials containing asbestos in the existing structures are to be removed using safe methods approved by the CSST. The same methods will be used both in structures slated for demolition and in those to be retained.

A number of studies on the financial feasibility of renovating the buildings have been conducted, including studies by architects Blouin, Faucher, Aubertin, Brodeur, Gauthier, who assessed the existing buildings in the early 1990s as part of a CMHC veteran-relocation project, and concluded that adapting the residential units to the needs of an aging clientele entailed too much work. Retention of the buildings was also seen as an obstacle to densification, which was deemed necessary to finance the construction of modern buildings to suit the veterans' needs.

In the present project, most of the renovated buildings are intended for use by co-operatives and non-profit housing organizations subsidized by the City of Montreal to carry out their initiatives. The proposed work ensures that dwellings comply with subsidy programs requirements and provide accommodation appropriate to the needs of the target clientele, mainly young households.

Finally, the costs of renovation, estimated at \$67,000 per dwelling for all the work described, are lower than the costs of new construction, providing affordable rents at a lower cost.

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development focuses essentially on three objectives: ecological integrity, social equity and economic efficiency²⁹; these objectives are reflected in several aspects of the Benny Farm project.

In terms of ecological integrity, the project calls for large green spaces, including a community garden, the preservation of 240 trees and planting of more than 400 trees. To better manage surface runoff, paved areas and impermeable surfaces for parking are limited.

²⁹ See Ministère de l'Environnement du Québec www.menv.gouv.qc.ca/programmes/dev_dur/definition.htm.



Preserved existing buildings will be renovated to ensure good energy performance. The layout and low height of the structures maximize sunlight and help make the buildings more energy efficient. The dismantling of buildings not retained will focus on the reuse and recycling of construction materials. Materials containing asbestos will be removed safely, in compliance with standards in force.

The social-equity objective is reflected first in the participatory process used in preparing the plan. Residents and community groups availed themselves fully of the numerous opportunities for involvement they were offered at every stage of the decision-making process. The result is a project concerned with serving the basic needs of the local population and enhancing quality of life in the district. It thus provides a varied range of affordable housing, dwellings for people with limited mobility and easier access to medical care, community services and quality recreational facilities.

As for economic efficiency, densification of the site fosters the use and renovation of the existing water and sewage infrastructure. Furthermore, savings stemming from the renovation of existing buildings give rise to affordable rents at a lower cost to subsidy programs. Finally, on the local economic level, redevelopment and densification of Benny Farm will have a positive impact on the viability of surrounding businesses and the commercial development of Sherbrooke Street.

Traffic and Parking

CLC engaged the firm Trafrix to assess current traffic and parking conditions, to determine the impact the project and suggest mitigating measures³⁰.

Trafrix estimates that the Benny Farm project will generate an hourly volume of 125 vehicles entering the site and 235 vehicles leaving during morning rush hour (7:30 a.m.-8:30 a.m.). During the afternoon rush hour (4:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.), the hourly traffic flow generated will be 245 vehicles going to the site and 170 leaving. The increase will be absorbed mainly by Cavendish and Monkland, the two main thoroughfares serving Benny Farm.

On Benny Avenue between Sherbrooke and Monkland, the project, once complete, will give rise to an increase of approximately 53 vehicles per hour during the morning rush hour and approximately 40 in the afternoon. This increase is due primarily to the residential component of the project. Indeed, during the morning rush hour, only a quarter and, during the afternoon rush, only a third of the increase can be attributed to the service facilities.

In terms of capacity, the main traffic problem indicated by the study concerns the intersection of Sherbrooke and Cavendish, and the situation at this location is already critical. Traffic fluidity at the other approaches is not affected by the project in either the morning or the afternoon rush hours. To alleviate the problem at the Sherbrooke/Cavendish intersection, the firm suggests the following measures:

- Extend the “No Stopping Any Time” zone on the south side of Sherbrooke Street east of Cavendish Boulevard by about 30 metres;

³⁰ See Trafrix, *Projet Benny Farm : étude d’impact sur la circulation*, July 2003.



- On Cavendish Boulevard between the extension of Prince of Wales Avenue and Sherbrooke Street, have three lanes going south, including one for left turns;
- On Cavendish Boulevard, move the centre line off centre and prohibit parking on the west side;
- Synchronize traffic lights in the neighbourhood, at least those on Sherbrooke between Benny and Cavendish.

The daycare facility, CLSC and recreational centre will bring increased pedestrian traffic along Monkland Avenue, particularly at the corner of Benny Avenue. It is therefore recommended to mark the crosswalks at the Monkland/Benny intersection. To improve pedestrian security and comfort, the replacement of pedestrian crossing lights with countdown lights at the Sherbrooke/Cavendish and Sherbrooke/Benny intersections is suggested, as well as the installation of pedestrian countdown lights at the Cavendish/Monkland intersection.

Parking requirements for the residential component are estimated at about 310 parking spaces; they are easily met by the approximately 340 off-street and 170 on-street spaces on the property. In addition, residents who do not have dedicated parking spaces on their own lot will be able to use some 36 parking spaces available in the community-services area outside the establishments' peak hours.

The combined parking needs of the CLSC and the recreational centre may be as high as 110 to 130 parking spaces. Since the planned parking lot only offers 95 spaces in addition to 9 spaces on Monkland, Trafix concludes that some users may have to look for on-street parking in the area. They also suggests the following measures:

- Provide a passenger drop-off zone on the south side of Monkland Avenue at the daycare facility entrance. Parking may be permitted there outside operating hours.
- Limit parking to two hours on the south side of Monkland Avenue between Cavendish and Benny.
- Require a mandatory right turn on Cavendish Boulevard for cars leaving the CLSC and prohibit left turns to the CLSC by southbound traffic on Cavendish.

The project calls for Prince of Wales Avenue to be extended south of Monkland as a one-way southbound street. To keep through traffic from diverting to Prince of Wales to avoid Cavendish, it is suggested that a right or left turn be made mandatory for cars approaching the Monkland/Prince of Wales intersection from the north.



Site Management

The redevelopment plan proposes subdividing the property into a number of lots comprising separate private and common areas. The land contained within the built-up lots will be considered private and for the exclusive use of the occupants. The common areas, made up of the community garden and the pathways that crisscross the site, will be for the use of all Benny Farm residents.

Once redevelopment is complete, management of the property will focus on a number of objectives: maintaining the quality and integrity of the complex, ensuring the occupants take over management of the site and securing savings through the joint management of maintenance services.

To attain these goals, it is proposed to establish a horizontal co-ownership plan³¹ and set up an association embracing all lot owners. The association would then be responsible for ensuring the integrity and maintenance of the site.

The co-owners' obligations and responsibilities will be set out in a declaration of co-ownership, with clauses regarding the use, layout and maintenance of different portions of the site. The declaration may also include undertakings to respect the established architecture and layout guidelines. Under the plan, a maintenance contract will be awarded by the association every year.

The declaration will establish how maintenance costs are to be allocated among the co-owners. The law provides that these fees include contributions to a contingency fund to cover the costs of any more major work that may arise.

The declaration will provide the framework for the operations of the association and cover such issues as representation, decision-making and the election of a board of directors. Once CLC has drawn up and registered it, the declaration will be binding on current co-owners, people who may subsequently join the project and their successors. It also gives the association legal power to take action against defaulting co-owners if need be.

It is not foreseen that Phases I, II and III, which were built for the veterans, be included in the horizontal co-ownership plan. A legal servitude, however, will give tenants in these buildings access to the pathways in the eastern block and to the community garden. The servitude will determine the financial contribution that Phases I, II and III make to the maintenance of the common areas concerned.

Implementation

In implementing the project, a number of objectives must be met: delivering the housing units as quickly as possible, limiting the impact on neighbouring residents and enabling stakeholders to set

³¹ For more information, see Fasken Martineau Dumoulin, *Organization and Management of Benny Farm Site*, June 2003.



precise construction terms for community facilities. Project phases have been determined with these objectives in mind:

Phase	Description	Completion
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Demolish two existing buildings on Monkland at the western end of the site for the cadastral operation and the extension of Prince of Wales Avenue ➤ Remove asbestos from all existing buildings ➤ Demolish one building at the centre of the western block and one sixplex on the east side of Cavendish at the south end of the site ➤ Renovate three buildings (78 units) along Cavendish ➤ Renovate the other retained buildings (54 units) along Cavendish and build additions (48 units) 	<p>Winter 2004</p> <p>Fall 2004</p> <p>Spring 2004</p> <p>Summer 2004 (July)</p> <p>December 2004</p>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Construct Prince of Wales Avenue extension ➤ Construct units on the west side of Prince of Wales (29 to 36 units) ➤ Construct units on the east side of Prince of Wales (94 to 114 units) ➤ Landscape common areas in the western block 	<p>Summer 2004</p> <p>Spring 2005</p> <p>Summer 2005</p> <p>Summer 2005</p>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Demolish existing building along Benny Avenue ➤ Construct residential buildings on Benny (128 units) ➤ Complete landscaping of common areas in the eastern block 	<p>Summer 2005</p> <p>Summer 2006</p> <p>Summer 2006</p>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Demolish two existing buildings on Monkland ➤ Construct the CLSC ➤ Demolish one existing building on Monkland ➤ Construct recreational and community centre 	<p>To be decided</p> <p>To be decided</p> <p>To be decided</p> <p>To be decided</p>

Note: Phases 3 and 4 may be implemented simultaneously

The City of Montréal will have to carry out work on parts of the municipal infrastructure on the fringes of the site. Details will be provided in due course.

Role of Canada Lands Company

As indicated out at the beginning of this document, CLC is mandated to optimize the financial and community value of strategic properties belonging to the Government of Canada. To perform its role, the company improves and revitalizes properties and then manages or sells them to provide the greatest possible benefit to local communities and Canadian taxpayers.

At Benny Farm, fulfilling this mandate has involved an exhaustive participatory process aimed at ensuring that the community of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce benefits from the project. A task force was therefore established and charged with drafting the guidelines for a project that would meet the needs of the community. These guidelines have been defined, and CLC is committed to adhering to them in both the preparation and implementation of the project. An advisory committee will thus be established to counsel the company during the coming phases.

CLC must undertake some work prior to the sale of lots and the start of construction by the various developers. This work includes the selective dismantling of buildings, which is necessary for approval of the cadastral operation; the removal of asbestos from the existing buildings; and construction of the infrastructure required for the extension of Prince of Wales Avenue.



CLC will select the developers to whom construction lots will be sold. It will also have to enter into agreements with the CLSC, the parties involved in building the community facilities and the six co-operatives and non-profit organizations chosen by the City of Montréal under its housing programs.

In disposing of the other lots, CLC's selection of the developers will follow an open and transparent process in compliance with the company's procedures and policies for the disposal of assets³². Proposals will be evaluated in accordance with established guidelines that will have been communicated beforehand and will deal, most notably, with the quality of the projects, adherence to the development plan and compliance with the affordability objectives.

To guarantee the quality and integrity of the development, the company will also impose control measures on every project with respect to the architecture and landscaping. CLC will also construct the common areas in accordance with the proposed development and landscaping plans.

During construction, CLC will keep neighbouring residents informed about how the work is progressing and will discuss with them measures to reduce the impact of the work.

CLC will establish an association of co-owners and take part in its activities until redevelopment is completed. It will then manage maintenance on the property for a period of one year, during which it will gradually transfer its expertise to the co-owners' association. After this period, the association will assume total responsibility for the site.

³² CLC policies may be viewed online at www.clc.ca.



List of available studies

- Saia Barbarese Topouzanov architectes – Claude Cormier architectes-paysagistes. *Proposal for the Redevelopment of Benny Farm*. September 2003.
- L'OEUF - Pearl Poddubiuk et associés architectes. *Benny Farm : étude sur la rénovation des bâtiments existants*. August 22, 2003..
- Dr. Avi Friedman, Architect. *Affordable housing for Benny Farm*. August 2003.
- Trafix. *Projet Benny Farm: étude d'impact sur la circulation*. July 2003.
- Fasken Martineau DuMoulin. *Organization and Management of Benny Farm Site*. June 23, 2003.

To come :

- Luba Serge, Consultant. *Maintaining affordability for home ownership on the Benny Farm site*. Fall 2003.



Appendix

Benny Farm Redevelopment Task Force

Metu Belatchew, Community Organiser, CLSC NDG/Montréal-West
Rosemary Bradley, Benny Farm Veterans' and Associates and Benny Farm Tenants' Association
Ken Briscoe, Benny Street Resident, Member of the NDG Association of Concerned Residents & Taxpayers
Miriam Green, Resident of NDG, Past President of the Fonds Foncier Communautaire Benny Farm
Necdet Kendir, President, Sherbrooke Street West Merchants' Association
Zane Korytko, Executive Director, YMCA-NDG
Ghislaine Prata, Executive Director, Constance-Lethbridge Rehabilitation Centre
Linda Schachtler, Executive Director, Elizabeth House
Gail Tedstone, Member of the NDG Community Council Board of Directors
Arlyle Waring, Walkley Street Resident, Member of the NDG Association of Concerned Residents & Taxpayers
Jim Lynes, Vice President, Real Estate, Eastern Region, Canada Lands Company CLC Limited
Observer: Cameron Charlebois, Executive Director, City of Montréal Housing Department, Economic and Urban Development

Experts and Resource Persons to the Task Force

Coordination and Animation: Jacques Bénard, Associate Director, Convergence; Andrea Morrison, Attorney and Mediator
Heritage: Dinu Bumbaru, Programs Director, Héritage Montréal
Senior Citizens Needs: David Woodsworth, NDG Senior Citizens' Council
Housing Situation: Suzanne Laferrière, Advisor, Ville de Montréal, Direction de l'habitation
Mixité sociale: Annick Germain, Professor, INRS Urbanisation
Recreational Services in NDG: John Richardson, Côte-des-Neiges/Notre-Dame-de-Grâce Borough
Coop Housing: Douglas Alford, Architect, CDH Group
Renovation Costs and financial evaluation of scenarios: Vianney Bélanger, President, COPRIM

Design Alternatives: Design Teams

Daoust, Lestage Inc
Atelier Braq / Atelier In-Situ
Saia, Barbarese Topouzanov architects / Claude Cormier Landscape architects
L'O.E.U.F, Pearl-Poddubiuk architects

CLC Québec Projet Management Team

Jim Lynes, Vice President, Real Estate, Eastern Region
Basil Cavis, General Manager, Real Estate (Québec)
Johanne Boucher, Project Manager (Québec)
Micheline Charland, Benny Farm Tenant Relations Coordinator

Consultants who participated in the development of the overall plan and technical studies

Coordination : Jacques Bénard, Engineer, Convergence
Urban Planning and Architecture: Dino Barbarese, Architect, Saia, Barbarese Topouzanov
Landscaping: Claude Cormier, Landscaping Architect
Renovation Criteria: Mark Poddubiuk, Architect, L'O.E.U.F.(Pearl-Poddubiuk, Architects)
Parking and Circulation: Aristomen Anéziris, Engineer, Trafix consultants
Affordable Housing: Luba Serge, Urban Planner and Sociologist
Affordable Building: Avi Friedman, Architect
Environment: Jacques Whitford Environnement Ltée
Land Surveyor: Stephane Arsenault, Surveyor, Arsenault Land surveyors
Real Estate Appraisals: Pierre Laliberté, É. A., AACI, Altus Group

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