

Dec. 5, 2003

Mr. Jean Paré and Ms. Hélène Lauzon,  
Commissioners,  
Office de la consultation publique de Montréal  
ocpm@ville.montreal.qc.ca

Regarding the public consultations on the redevelopment of the Benny Farm Site  
in the Borough of Côte-des-Neiges/Notre-Dame-de-Grâce

Dear Sir and Madam,

On behalf of Chez Soi, Coop Z.O.O., Les Maisons Transitionnelles O3, Projet Tango, Résidence Projet Chance and Coopérative d'habitation Benny Farm, I would like to clarify some points regarding the brief we presented on Monday, Dec. 1st, 2003, at approximately 9:45 pm, in order to ensure that there is no misunderstanding of the intentions of our groups concerning services and programs offered by the community recreation centre on the Benny Farm site. Briefs presented by other citizens later in the evening of the 1st of December made it apparent that there was some misapprehension or misinterpretation on the part of some members of the public regarding our brief.

Our groups are planning to develop community housing on the Benny Farm site. In our presentation, we stated that services and programs offered by facilities on the Benny Farm site should take into consideration the special needs of groups for whom community housing is being developed, and that spaces in these programs be reserved for residents of the community housing projects.

We would like to clarify that we do not ask that all the spaces be reserved exclusively for residents of the specialized housing projects, and would like to emphasize the importance of social integration with the greater community for the residents of our housing projects, especially Les Maisons Transitionnelles O3 (transitional housing and services for young mothers at risk) and Project Tango (housing for physically handicapped young adults). For example, one of the goals of the O3 transitional housing project is to help young mothers who have no social or family network to rely on to develop just such a network, and to become part of the community. Social isolation is an unfortunate reality for the target clientele of both the O3 project and Project Tango. For both of these groups, participation in programs alongside members of the broader community would help decrease social isolation. Reserving a number of spaces in community programs for residents of the community housing at Benny Farm will assist their integration into the greater community.

The number of spaces reserved for residents with special needs would be negotiated, and an individual could only use this reserved space as long as he or she was a resident of the project for whom the space was reserved. For example, Les Maisons Transitionnelles O3 is transitional housing and thus it is expected that as one young family moves on into independent living in the community, another young family will quickly move in to take their place in the O3 project. Having reserved spaces in the daycare facilities for the residents of O3 would mean that the child of the family that is moving into the O3 project could take the space of the child who has moved out of the O3 project. Finding childcare services for a child is one of the issues that the former resident would have received assistance in resolving prior to moving out of the O3 project and into independent living. (In regards to childcare facilities on the Farm

site, we believe that any childcare facilities developed on the Benny Farm site must increase the number of childcare spaces available in the borough of NDG.)

In conclusion, we ask that

- the special needs of our residents be considered when developing programs and services which will be offered by institutions on the Benny Farm site, and in constructing these facilities, to allow their participation in community programs;
- our organizations be involved in the development of programs and services offered by the community/recreation facility on the Benny Farm site;
- spaces be reserved in community recreational programs offered on the Benny Farm site for residents with special needs or from “at risk” groups, in order to ensure that those with the greatest need may participate in these activities while being integrated into the community;
- any childcare facilities developed on the Benny Farm site increase the total number of childcare spaces available in the borough.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to present these clarifications.

Yours sincerely,

Tania M. Lesack  
Vice-President, Les Maisons Transitionnelles O3