

J'inviterais le prochain intervenant de Green Chinatown Montreal, Leslie Cheung.

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**GREEN CHINATOWN
MONTREAL**

Mme LESLIE CHEUNG :

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Bonsoir, mon nom est Leslie Cheung. Aujourd'hui, je représente un groupe qui s'appelle Green Chinatown Montreal, ou l'Espace vert du Quartier chinois de Montréal. C'est un jardin communautaire avec un groupe de 10 bénévoles qui gèrent un jardin maintenant au Plateau, et on était ici au Quartier chinois dans l'espace devant l'Hôpital chinois de Montréal.

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Je suis plus confortable en anglais, donc j'avais écrit mes....

LE PRÉSIDENT :

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C'est bien correct.

Mme LESLIE CHEUNG :

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Merci. So, just a little bit about Green Chinatown Montreal or GCM.

Our mission is twofold. To build a community environment of intercultural and intergenerational sharing and exchange for Chinatown residents by exploring and practicing urban gardening and organic food culture, as well as to increase awareness of food security and urban sustainability in Chinatown.

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I see you have accepted my written statement on behalf of our group in support of the height and density restrictions, and to affirm the heritage designation with extended borders in Chinatown.

360 Rather than repeat what's in the *mémoire*, I'll just quickly summarize some of the pieces in there and provide some extra context and relay some of my own personal perspectives as well as provide some comments regarding the inclusivity of this consultation.

365 So, GCM would like to see more green spaces and community gardens in Chinatown to encourage this intergenerational intercultural exchange.

As you know, there are nearly no green spaces in Chinatown. The one outdoor gathering space, Sun Yat (Sun Garden), has limited and quite uncomfortable seating for anyone, let alone our senior residents.

370 This results in them gathering in Guy-Favreau, on benches and with no tables in quite, I would say, a dark area.

375 I've been gardening with GCM since 2016, and during that time, we've seen benefits of this exchange on the ground.

For one, it can break isolation, so the residents of the hospital or other folks would come down when they would see us gardening.

380 Sometimes just for company, sometimes to taste our vegetables, sometimes to give us advice about traditional vegetables and growing techniques. This results in knowledge transfer.

385 So, in addition to sharing these techniques about growing, they would also sometimes give us cooking tips, things to do with certain herbs, vegetables, etc.

And in these exchanges, people shared stories about their life, stories about the neighbourhood, as well as spoke in their own language, which allowed for our gardeners, particularly young folks, to practice their language skills, which sometimes we do not have those opportunities.

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We would also share our vegetables occasionally with the hospital kitchen, as well as the hospital staff, as well as we would sell some to the Frigo vert.

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So, these small gardens can provide additional income and financial independence for some residents with limited ability to work outside the home.

So GCM believes that adding community gardens in Chinatown aligns with its *stratégie d'agriculture urbaine*, and we would advocate that any green spaces built are done through engagement with residents and community members to ensure that it meets their needs.

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For example, I heard, during one of your other consultations last week, someone was talking about Feng shui characteristics for Chinatown, including these garden spaces.

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In my *mémoire*, I also spoke about how height and density lowering, keeping the height lower, will allow for more sunlight, and limiting the density of spaces will therefore provide additional space for green spaces or underutilized concrete. It's usually concrete.

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In addition, I have actually just returned, which is why I couldn't participate last week, from a trip to Edmonton where there's a garden in Chinatown that grows traditional indigenous flowers and medicine.

Given that Montreal's Chinatown is also on unceded territory, as well as that, we share our space with, I believe it's Projet autochtone du Québec, the PAQ, I would also support that green spaces and gathering spaces and community gardens could act as sites of cultural exchange

415 between Chinese, Pan Asian and indigenous communities, and can support reconciliation and
collaboration between communities.

Gardening with GCM is just one of the ways that I've been involved in Chinatown. I've
been involved with Montreal's Chinatown since 2002, when, as a student, a group of volunteers
420 created and facilitated social justice, walking tours of Montreal Chinatown.

Growing up in Edmonton, Alberta, I was not particularly attached to my Chinese roots as
my mother and her family are Trinidadian. My grandparents, my mother nor I grew up speaking
425 Cantonese or celebrating Chinese holidays.

These tours and my participation in this community connected new generations with their
history through storytelling from within their community, passed down through the generations and
our peers.

430 As an example, in researching the content for these tours, we met Mr. Timothy Chan who
will speak later today to hear his research and his stories.

We worked under the tutelage of May Chiu, who just spoke, as well as Walter Tom, who's
presented to you as well already, community activists established in their career. This was
435 20 years ago and so they have continued in that vein.

And I continue to meet people who took that tour many years ago that were inspired to get
involved in Montreal's Chinatown or their Chinatowns in other cities.

440 Watching my time... lots of time.

Learning about the history of Chinatown in Montreal was a pathway for me, and now my
lifelong friends, to finding our identity within the Quebec narrative.

445 This is how I learned about the impact that policy can have on communities, whether it is
how families were developed due to the Chinese head tax, why there was a need for a Chinese
hospital to begin with, how zoning and land expropriation limited the growth of Chinatown and its
communities and today's proposal in terms of limiting this height and density as well as the
heritage designation.

450 I haven't mentioned this, but I have a doctorate in sociology where I studied immigrant
identity in the context of subnational states, particularly in Quebec, with Quebec as the main case
study.

455 From my work, the biggest take away is that most people here in Quebec interpret
traditional Québécois ethnic narratives of the nation to exclude the diversity of what it means to be
Québécois. So, it does not necessarily reflect the reality of who is in this territory.

460 Ensuring the preservation of Chinatown and actively promoting and encouraging and
making space for Chinese and other histories embedded in Chinatown are mechanisms for
actually strengthening Quebec identity among ethnic groups by including minority groups in the
narrative of Quebec and what it means to be Québécois, help people feel an increased sense of
attachment to this territory, to the history, and to the nation.

465 I.E., we feel Québécois because we are Québécois, but if we are excluded from that
narrative or are erased from that narrative, it's very difficult to build those attachments. And that's
what my doctoral dissertation is about.

470 Thank you for listening and allowing the opportunity to share my thoughts and expertise.
I'd be happy to answer questions on behalf of GCM as well as from my personal perspective.

However, I'd like to spend the last few minutes, of which I believe I have three... spend the
last few minutes of my presentation addressing some of the lessons learned during this
consultation in terms of inclusion and accessibility.

475 First of all, I would like to thank the OCPM and their commissioners on some of their best practices in inclusion.

480 Providing inclusion and accessibility, for example, providing sessions at staggered times in the day to allow people with work or care commitments to participate when a time is most convenient to them.

I believe that you did mail distribution of the information within Chinatown territories door to door. I believe you probably paid for that which is appreciated.

485 Providing online participation options, at least during the Q&A, we've provided an in-person and telephone town hall participation as well as a live feed. This helps bridge the digital divide, particularly among our senior groups who are unable to participate in person for whatever reason, as well as a telephone town hall not requiring a computer, as well as providing multiple ways for people to participate in person, in writing, guided questions, etc.

490 These are all great practices in inclusion and accessibility, as well as providing these additional sessions with the added interest of participation.

495 However, I would also like to discuss some of the issues that compromise the inclusivity and the accessibility of this consultation and actually provided additional barriers to participation not only of our most vulnerable groups, but to community members at large.

500 First of all, which I believe has been on the record, the lack of translation services into Cantonese and Mandarin provided in person and writing, was not provided and limits who may be participating in this consultation and what kind of feedback you may be getting.

I would also note that the lack of knowledge translation for a lay audience and what the potential changes mean.

505 During the question period, I had asked a specific question about... I'm not an expert in urban planning, I don't understand heightened density, what this may do. I can make guesses, and I have, but it was very unclear to a lay audience on what limitations of heightened density might mean for the issues that we happen to care about. I would have appreciated a little bit more knowledge translation on what these specific things mean for a variety of issues.

510 The lack of virtual participation options. This was provided for the Q&A session and I was told that... I thought I understood that there would be a telephone town hall as well as online participation for these sessions. Those were not provided and people are not able to participate in real time.

515 That also means that we're limited to in person consultations only, or in person participation only, and during a COVID climate, you can understand that there may be members of our vulnerable communities who may not want to participate.

520 Two more points. Registration. I agree that telephone options are useful for those who may not have access to the Internet, so while that helps bridge the digital divide, it also provides an additional barrier for people to call in. It was actually quite difficult. Monsieur Vézina was very, very helpful, but it was quite difficult for our members, particularly those who didn't speak strong English or French, to register for the event.

525 So, you know, providing online registration, or a different way to register would have been helpful.

530 I would also like to thank the Committee for the extension of the deadline to allow for additional time for community members to submit their written statements, but it's not clear to me why the deadline was not changed in any formal communications, such as on a website or social media.

I was told that this would not be done despite the... You know, if I was a community member and didn't know this, I would go and say that I missed the date and likely would not have submitted. So, I would have appreciated that was done.

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Again, thank you very much. One minute extra. Thank you so much.

LE PRÉSIDENT :

Merci, thank you. Effectivement, je crois bien que tout ce que vous avez dit à la fin sur les moyens utilisés pour la participation d'un plus grand nombre de gens, vous avez... je pense que c'est tout à fait juste, à l'exception d'un élément, en fait. Il était possible de participer virtuellement à toutes les séances, incluant les séances d'audition des opinions comme celle-ci. À ma connaissance, il y a une personne qui a manifesté son désir, puis, finalement, elle a décidé de se présenter en personne. Ah, c'est vous.

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Mme LESLIE CHEUNG :

C'était moi qui ai fait la demande, et il m'a dit que ce n'était pas possible.

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LE PRÉSIDENT :

Ah, c'était possible.

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Mme LESLIE CHEUNG :

O.K. Monsieur Vézina m'a dit que ce n'était pas possible.

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LE PRÉSIDENT :

565 O.K., bien, je vous confirme que c'était possible, et que oui, c'était offert, la possibilité de le faire en virtuel.

Mais cela dit, tout le reste, on prend très bonne note de vos commentaires, puis on va y aller avec quelques questions. Bruno-Serge?

570 **M. BRUNO-SERGE BOUCHER :**

Oui, bonsoir.

Mme LESLIE CHEUNG :

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Bonsoir.

M. BRUNO-SERGE BOUCHER :

580 Vous nous parlez de l'importance d'avoir des espaces verts dans le Quartier chinois. Il y a plein, plein de gens qui sont venus nous dire ça aussi, mais la question qui suit, c'est où? À quel endroit?

585 Il y a très peu de terrains, il y a très peu d'endroits, alors si on ramenait le jardin dont vous occupez, dans le Quartier chinois, où pourrait-on l'installer? Est-ce que le jardin plus ou moins privé, si je comprends bien, de Guy-Favreau pourrait faire l'affaire? Bref, où est-ce qu'on la met, cette verdure-là?

Mme LESLIE CHEUNG :

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Oui.

M. BRUNO-SERGE BOUCHER :

595 Si votre vision des choses se réalise? Et deuxième, ou sous-question : si jamais ce n'est pas possible, quelqu'un nous a parlé hier d'immenses pots de fleurs qu'on pourrait déplacer, d'immenses bacs qu'on pourrait déplacer, dans lesquels on pourrait faire un peu d'agriculture également.

600 Est-ce que ça pourrait être une solution de rechange si jamais on voit que c'est à peu près impossible de recréer un jardin communautaire?

Mme LESLIE CHEUNG :

605 Je ne suis pas une experte dans... Je n'ai pas fait une grande recherche dans tout le territoire du Quartier chinois. But we did make... GCM made a request to use a piece of city land which is just in front of the Montreal Chinatown Hospital which we were... We did not receive the use of it. It is a city lot. It's quite small. It's on the corner of Saint-Dominique and Viger. It's right behind the parking lot and right in front of the Hospital, and we were told that it was going to be used as a city dump for the construction at Champ-de-Mars metro. As far as I know, I don't believe 610 it was ever used for that, but it also was not given to us as a space.

615 So, that is one space that we did look into. You're correct a lot of the other spaces are privately owned, so the one right across, at the corner where the... I forget the name of it, but at the corner of René-Lévesque and Saint-Laurent, I believe, it's private space. The lot that was at 1055 is also private space. So, those were very difficult for us to find.

620 I believe there were some studies and maybe Francis, who's speaking right here, can speak to this, but although I don't mean to put him on the spot, but I believe that some research was done at Concordia University regarding reuse of underutilized space, so. in front of buildings, as you're suggesting, flower beds in front of Palais des Congrès, etc. Putting in some seating there, making it... allowing people to use that land.

Again, I have not done a full study of what plots are available, or what lots are available, but I did do a quick search on the city's open data portal to find out which land... who owned those pieces of land that happened to be open in 2017 when we needed to move.

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M. BRUNO-SERGE BOUCHER :

O.K.

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Mme LESLIE CHEUNG :

Ça répond à vos questions?

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M. BRUNO-SERGE BOUCHER :

Thank you, merci.

Mme LESLIE CHEUNG :

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Merci.

LE PRÉSIDENT :

Danielle?

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Mme DANIELLE SAUVAGE :

Je voudrais poursuivre un petit peu sur cette question-là, des espaces disponibles. Quand vous étiez sur les terrains de l'Hôpital chinois, c'était avec l'autorisation de l'Hôpital, de la Ville, ou enfin, c'était...?

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Mme LESLIE CHEUNG :

655 Non, c'était avec la permission de l'Hôpital, c'était un partenariat avec l'Hôpital. Ça a
commencé en 2001, ça faisait partie de la thérapie des résidents.

660 So, originally, it was on... They have a mezzanine space, and originally it was created
there, in partnership with their occupational therapy, and then, they asked us to move down to
their courtyard because it was difficult for patients to maneuver wheelchairs and other things
around on the *terrasse*.

665 And we were there for, I believe, five years until they said that they were going to
relandscape their own courtyard, which is within their rights, and so, we left amicably and have
moved a few times since then, and we currently do not have a space in Chinatown. So that was
through a private relationship with the hospital.

Mme DANIELLE SAUVAGE :

670 Et les heures d'ensoleillement étaient suffisantes pour faire la culture que vous vouliez
faire?

Mme LESLIE CHEUNG :

675 Le soleil, vous voulez dire?

Mme DANIELLE SAUVAGE :

680 Oui.

Mme LESLIE CHEUNG :

685 Oui, c'était correct. Je crois qu'il n'y a pas beaucoup d'arbres sur l'autre place juste avant,
c'était le terrain de la Ville. We did look into Guy-Favreau as well, and we were... I think they were
willing to offer us a space but there was very little sunlight on the courtyards and the *terrasse* of
Guy-Favreau, donc c'était vraiment difficile. It's difficult to access spaces at Guy-Favreau,
because some of it is private, so they offered us, I think, a ground floor courtyard, which had no
sunlight.

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Mme DANIELLE SAUVAGE :

Alors, l'enjeu, c'est de trouver un terrain qui soit bien ensoleillé...

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Mme LESLIE CHEUNG :

Oui.

Mme DANIELLE SAUVAGE :

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... et disponible pour vous.

Mme LESLIE CHEUNG :

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Oui. On a besoin, c'est difficile, mais je veux dire... L'espace qui appartient à la Ville
devant l'Hôpital, c'était un espace, mais il y aussi des... des espaces de stationnement.

Right now, our garden is above ground. It's planters, smart pots, and our current garden is
about 70 smart pots that are above ground, so they sit on cement.

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Mme DANIELLE SAUVAGE :

715 Quand vous étiez à l'hôpital, est-ce que la clientèle qui fréquentait le jardin était surtout
des patients de l'hôpital ou si c'était ouvert...

Mme LESLIE CHEUNG :

720 Pour la plupart.

Mme DANIELLE SAUVAGE :

...ou si c'était ouvert à tous les résidents du quartier?

725 **Mme LESLIE CHEUNG :**

730 C'était ouvert pour tous, il y a juste une petite... a small fence that you could pass through
to enter in, but I would say mostly people would come in when we were in there, usually patients
taking walks with their families, sometimes family visiting, etc. But the hospital is a little bit off the
beaten path of Chinatown, so it's not... it was a nice space because it was a bit more private, but it
was certainly open to anybody.

Mme DANIELLE SAUVAGE :

735 Merci.

LE PRÉSIDENT :

740 Peut-être une petite question. Vous avez parlé d'un projet avec la communauté
autochtone de Montréal, c'est bien ça? Est-ce que vous pouvez nous en parler un petit peu?

Mme LESLIE CHEUNG :

Je n'ai pas un projet spécifique que je veux dire, mais...

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LE PRÉSIDENT :

C'est une idée.

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Mme LESLIE CHEUNG :

Yes, it's just an idea.

LE PRÉSIDENT :

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Et pourquoi avec les autochtones?

Mme LESLIE CHEUNG :

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I would say that I believe that our neighbourhood is... That the Quartier chinois is occupied... We are on unceded territory of... I apologize, I do not know the nation, but on traditional indigenous territory, as well as those communities are part of Chinatown as well, given their new presence with the two, PAQ 1 and PAQ 2. And we would like... I mean, I speak individually as well as for colleagues of mine, but in terms of looking for everyday occurrences or everyday tasks or activities of reconciliation, I think this could possibly be one of those.

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Je n'ai pas de modèle spécifique, mais il y a plein dont on pourrait tirer, mais je ne suis pas une experte.

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LE PRÉSIDENT :

775 Merci, on va vous souhaiter bonne chance pour vos projets, puis je veux m'excuser s'il y a eu malentendu ou erreur de communication par rapport à votre présentation virtuelle, donc je suis désolé, donc j'apprécie... nous apprécions d'autant plus votre présence ce soir et votre participation.

Mme LESLIE CHEUNG :

780 Merci. J'étais hors de la ville dans les dernières semaines, donc il m'a dit que ce n'était pas possible. Il a ajouté une autre session aujourd'hui pour aider parce que je n'étais pas là pendant les dernières semaines.

LE PRÉSIDENT :

785 Et vous êtes ici avec nous, donc un grand merci.

Mme LESLIE CHEUNG :

790 Merci.

LE PRÉSIDENT :

795 Bonne fin de soirée.

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