

1800 Rene-Levesque West MEMORANDUM:

Submitted by Claire Adamson, Architect and Chairperson of the History and Culture Committee of the Shaughnessy Village Association. I live at 1812 Baile, one street north of Rene-Levesque, since 1978, 30 years. Heritage, views and sunlight are important to Montreal, especially in this historic area of the Shaughnessy Mansion and its neighbouring greystones.

1. Heritage:

- a) Full view from CCA: This property is within the 500' radius of protection centered on the Shaughnessy Mansion part of the Canadian Centre for Architecture, therefore there should be a full view of the complete convent and chapel visible from its windows and grounds.
- b) East convent wing: Demolishing the north addition is a good idea, but Groupe Pacific should retain the east convent wing because it is the balancing reflection of the west wing. The Sisters of the Poor paid a great amount of money to build the east wing in the same style as the west wing.
- c) The Chapel: Retaining the chapel is an excellent advantage. It would make a great meeting and event room. The convent and chapel would benefit from being visible directly from Rene-Levesque and from Joseph-Manseau to warrant the expense of restoration and to increase the heritage value of the total site.
- d) The exterior materials: should harmonize with the existing convent and the Oasis. We recommend enforcing the current city specifications for 80% masonry, especially on the north and west sides. It is fortunate that the CCA is to the northwest.
- e) The south and east sides: could have 60% masonry to allow for solar heating. Balconies should be provided for the upper storeys on the south facades to shade the windows below.

2. Entrance to the City:

- a) No canyon: The Guy exit from expressway should have more than a day-light corner; it should allow a wide view of the city skyline as cars slow down for the Rene-Levesque traffic light. Subjecting vehicular arrivals to our great city with an overburdening canyon 15 storey barrier on the right, the direction most people turn, would be neither comforting nor welcoming. What is now a terrible parking lot should be landscaped. Landscaping and a wide view of the city is a good entrance to the city.
- b) Masonry: Harmonious building materials are more welcoming than clashing reflective glass and zinc.
- c) Sculpture: A modern sculpture in the corner park would respond to Groupe Pacific's desire to add something special to this entrance to the city. The sculpture should compliment the style of the totems in Esplanade Ernest-Cormier.

3. New construction:

- a) Freeing up the foot print is an excellent goal for this site. Block A should be 10 storeys height to align with the height of the Oasis. The footprint should be approx. 80' from Joseph-Manseau along Rene-Levesque x 60' along Joseph-Manseau.
- b) Block B should be 15 storeys in height which would make its top floor at the same elevation as Block A., with a footprint of approx. 60'x140' built in the southeast corner of the site.
- c) Parking and site access: The underground parking of 1 space per condo is excellent with access from Joseph-Manseau.
- d) Phases: We agree with Groupe Pacific's plan to have Block B to the south, built first, as Phase 1. With more distance between Block A and B there will be more diagonal views and more trees between the blocks. This building will have the more southern views.
- e) Placing Block B in the southeast corner will add more residents to provide safety and gardening care for the pedestrian walk along the DesSeigneurs former roadway.

4. Related topics:

- a) We recommend the city re-enact the by-law restricting construction to 7am to 7pm. This by-law should also include that Pile-driving be from 8am to 3pm and that letters be delivered to adjacent properties notifying them the dates that pile-driving will take place.
- b) Since the 2 buildings will be separated and since Rene-Levesque is a wide street, we recommend that wind studies not be required. The money saved from not having this study should be used for the sculpture and for additional landscaping.
- c) Grounds being open to the public like other buildings in the area, should be required by the city. Residents and tourists come to Montreal for open and welcoming developments without gates or tall fences.
- d) New traffic lights would be required for increased pedestrian safety in the future.

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