

My husband and I have lived on Ile des Soeurs since 2002 as home owners and tax payers. We chose to live on the island for its proximity to the city and for its bike paths and green spaces. In 2009, our daughter was born and we discovered that we also live in a wonderful community of young families who have chosen to raise their children here. Our daughter has met a number of wonderful little friends and we have gotten to know our neighbours not only on our street but from all across the island as well. We live across the roundabout from where the new school will hopefully be built. The new school will essentially be right outside our front door and visible from the front windows of our home. I can assure the commission that traffic is not an issue. My husband leaves for work at the time that other concerned citizens have insinuated that traffic is a nightmare and that would supposedly only be worsened with the addition of the new school. I can assure you that the vast majority of the time, traffic around that roundabout between 7:30 and 8 AM is essentially non-existent. In fact, the heaviest traffic, which is still quite limited in our view, is around 8:30-8:45 AM, well after the school day has started. I can say with certainty that my daughter will walk to school and I feel that the arrival of the school and a school crossing guard will only make that roundabout safer. Often, people speed through the roundabout and ignore the law by not stopping for pedestrians trying to cross at the crosswalk. Therefore I think that the presence of the school and the school crossing guard will hopefully force drivers to proceed with more caution, not less, which I would view as being a good thing overall.

My daughter will start kindergarten in Sept.2014 and I have no intention of sending her on a 45 minute bus ride to Verdun. I am an Anglophone Montrealer who went to French Immersion elementary school and French high school. I want to send my daughter to a school in her community; a vibrant, French neighbourhood school. Even though I have my certificate of attestation of English language education and would be willing to make the financial sacrifice to send her to one of the top private schools in the city, I would prefer that she attend a local French school so that she can truly feel like a member of Quebec society.

I believe that as a future contributor to society, she has the right to go to school in her community, to get to know her neighbours and learn about what living in a society means. I hope that means an Ile des Soeurs that includes both young and old, schools and retirement homes, high rise towers and single family homes. I hope that she learns that to live in society sometimes means that one has to compromise. I love open green spaces but if I have to give a very small portion of that up for young members of our community to have a beautiful school that is designed to fit within its surroundings; then I am more than willing to do that.

Thank you for your attention.

Megan Melville