



attention Nicole Raquette

CREATIVE SOCIAL CENTER

CHEVRA KADISHA B'NAI JACOB SYNAGOGUE

October 12, 2006

Commission de la Présidence
City of Montreal
275 Notre Dame Street
Montreal, Quebec

Dear Members of the Commission,

The Creative Social Center is a seniors organization representing some 300 members residing primarily in the Borough of Cote des Neiges/Notre Dame de Grace and in the neighbouring towns of Cote St. Luc and Hampstead. We have been a partner of the City of Montreal since 1982.

We applaud the City of Montreal and the Commission for consulting citizens as to how public participation in the decision making process can be improved. We wish to propose a few simple measures that would in our opinion enhance municipal democracy.

Accessibility for Seniors

Participation Begins with the electoral process. Citizens should be encouraged to cast their ballot.

1. We have found that advance polling places for past municipal elections have not always been readily accessible. Advance polling places should be close to public transportation and be universally accessible to facilitate those in wheelchairs, those using walkers and canes and those of reduced mobility.
2. The advance poll for municipal elections is currently one day only. Advance voting for federal and provincial elections are over several days. We propose that the advance poll for municipal elections be over two days rather than one.

In co-operation with the Cities of Côte Saint-Luc and Montreal

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attention Nicole Layoune

3. In federal elections, voters may apply for a ballot to be returned by mail. Such a method would aid many seniors vote in municipal elections.

4. We encourage the City to work with groups such as ours to provide the support for seniors to get to the polls during municipal elections. Often seniors living in isolation need additional support to go and vote.

Information

The ability to participate resides on the availability of information. We feel some improvements are necessary.

1. The meetings of the City Council, the Borough Council and the Commissions are advertised in tiny ads in the back pages of the newspapers. The City of Montreal formerly alerted citizens to such meetings in larger ads at the front of newspapers. We wish to see a return to the former policy.

Commissions

The creation of City Council and Borough Commissions provides an excellent method of promoting public consultation and participation. We suggest the following improvement.

1. The example of the Commission de la Presidence which chose to meet outside City Hall should be an example to the other Commissions. City Council Commissions should hold at least some of their meetings in the various neighbourhoods rather than just at City Hall.

We thank to Commission de la Presidence for its attention to our recommendations.

Many thanks,

Helen Knight

Helen Knight
President -
Creative Social Center