

Friday May 10, 2013

To: the city of Sud-Ouest Montreal

I am writing regarding the renovation being undertaken at parc de la Vérendrye – specifically the tennis portion of the park.

Speaking from my perspective being:

- owner of a building in Sud-Ouest (Pointe-St-Charles) since 2001
- tennis player of 30+ years and coach since 1993
- founder and a 10-year volunteer with the Académie de Tennis du Sud-Ouest de Montreal (ATSOM)
- and as a full time physical education teacher

The parc de la Vérendrye project is a fantastic investment in the health of the Sud-Ouest Montreal community for the following reasons:

1-increase in hours of play - adding lights will dramatically add to playing hours since most of the tennis playing population likes to play at night either due to work hours or the excessive heat during the summer days

2-increase in safety - a court monitor will mean play is supervised

3-increase in service – citizens will be able to reserve their court times for a minimal fee (ATSOM has proposed the lowest fee structure in the surrounding areas)

4-decrease in vandalism and the destruction of city property - the court monitor will provide a sense of security as well as a deterrent to vandals

5-progressive tennis centre – with the 4 x 36 foot courts + 3 x 60 ft courts (double lined) + 9 full courts Sud-Ouest will now have the biggest and best outdoor Progressive Tennis Centre in Quebec. This will allow many children the opportunity to start tennis at the age of 4 or 5 with Le Petit tennis all the way up to adult programming.

6-increase in programming – with the new 9 courts the number of courts in Sud-Ouest will more than double to 17 (from 8). This will allow ATSOM to offer an even more dynamic and vast range of programming for all ages and abilities.

7-increase in parascolaire activities – the 4 “mini-courts” and the 9 full size courts are within walking distance of hundreds of students. This will allow many more children the opportunity to play

8-increase in participation – the location of the park is fantastic for citizens to take the metro to and from their activity whether it be tennis, soccer or football

9-increase access #1 – the 4 “mini-courts” will always be free for children and their playing partners – gone is the myth that tennis is expensive – ATSOM will even lend out equipment for the mini courts for FREE! No more \$\$\$ excuses.

10-increase access #2 – FREE! – the past several years the 8 other courts in 3 parks were open to ATSOM members only during weekday evenings and weekends during the day. Now those 8 courts will be FREE at all times day, evening and weekends

11-Modern design – the 9 courts with community area (instead of 12 squeezed side by side) will allow for many benefits – players will have a chance to interact and meet more players thereby building a larger tennis community and not just more tennis games, but more personal relationships

12-Large, New state of the art facility! – this is a chance for Sud-Ouest to shine! Let's invite the greater tennis community of Montreal and the province of Quebec to visit us by hosting some tournaments. This is going to be a "bijoux" in the tennis world!

13-Positive economic impact - The tournament players and their families have to stay and eat somewhere –why not send them to Monk's restaurants and we can all benefit in the \$\$\$ spent in S-O

14-Positive economic impact #2 – ATSOM will hire minimum 8 teenagers and young adults this year in the park for at least 8 full weeks

15-Positive impact on school performance – just as the Honore Mercier football team has encouraged the boys to stay in school and have fun with football, ASTOM also will look to provide a Team Tennis activity for the local youth. There is a very successful program in Toronto that combines after-school tennis with time for homework that has benefitted the students and the whole Jane Finch community. We can't wait to get started!

16-Tennis a sport for all ages – now children as young as 4 can play and there are still tournaments for those players 90 and over! Tennis is a sport children can play with their parents and grandparents.

17-Les Petits As – the program in partnership with Tennis Quebec and Tennis Canada focussed on children 12 and under - will only grow stronger in the future especially since the Sud-Ouest has shown its commitment to tennis through the major investment in renovating the courts

18-Building a facility that will help Build the Community! – the people who sign up for ATSOM programming come from different backgrounds. Last year we taught students that spoke at least 25 different languages. Sport is universal – it breaks down barriers and gives people a chance to talk to one another. Sport is fun! The hundreds of relationships I have made on the court stretch back 30 years now and counting...

Players who come to the tennis court and those who participate in ATSOM programming come for many reasons such as one or more of the following:

- to exercise
- to learn something technically (mental)
- to improve their skill (physical)
- to be social and meet people

But regardless of the reason they come, they are more likely to come back if the environment is:

- 1-well supervised and lit - making it safe and secure
- 2-clean and well kept
- 3-welcoming – someone to greet them
- 4-positive environment with clear rules and regulations
- 5-quality service offered and provided at reasonable cost
- 6-and above all a **pleasant and FUN atmosphere!**

As you may have noticed #2 (clean and well kept) is the only point referring to physical equipment like: courts, benches, nets, fencing etc. The physical part is already fantastic and almost complete!

The other 5 points that will make this park project a success are the people involved in the day-to-day delivery of the service that the citizens of Sud-Ouest deserve. ATSOM looks forward to working in partnership with the Ville de Sud-Ouest, Tennis Quebec and Tennis Canada in trying to constantly meet and exceed the community's expectations in the years to come.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment and feel free to contact me at any time to discuss the numerous benefits the park will bring to our community. (I am sure I can come up with more!) Please do not be discouraged by the few people who had negative comments to share during the meeting of March 26, 2013. The **thousands of people** in favor of the park project did not feel the need to participate since they are in favor of this amazing project!

Best regards!

Norman Rothsching

President and founder of ATSOM

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