

Côte Saint-Luc District 2 Newsletter Summer 2013



Mike Cohen

City Councillor for District 2

Responsible for Corporate Identity, Communications and Inter-Community Relations

Community at Large

Portfolio Report

Each member of City Council has specific portfolios to deal with. I am responsible for communications, sponsorship, naming opportunities, intercommunity relations and the CSL Cats Committee. During this mandate I co-chaired the Human Rights Walkway inductions the past two years, the annual CSL Golf Classic for the past seven years, the recent Volunteer Night and Canada Day celebrations in 2011.

We have revamped our website at CoteSaintLuc.org. It has a lot more interesting content, is updated frequently and houses the public documents, city addresses, announcements, videos and more. We also provide daily updates via Facebook, Twitter, and Google+, send an email newsletter about once a month, and post videos from events. We continue to offer for traditional communications, such as this district newsletter and the Côte Saint-Luc Courier newspaper and district newsletters. You can also see highlights from our events calendar at the start of each month in The Suburban and the Côte Saint-Luc Corner column in the Free Press.

Communications with residents

Mayor Anthony Housefather and City Council work very hard. We meet face to face on a very regular basis, attend numerous community functions and most importantly make ourselves readily available to respond to the concerns of our constituents. If someone calls the City Councillor's Office, we will get back to them right away. Most constituents, though, now contact us via email. On any given night, I will have dozens of emails to respond to. I urge residents to stay tuned to my website (www.mikecohen.ca), where I publish frequent updates on community activities.

Marc Chagall Land

As promised in the last election campaign, I worked successfully to have the land at the corner of Mackle Rd. and Marc Chagall Ave. rezoned to a lower density. Whereas it was originally zoned for twin tower 16 storey buildings, any future project cannot be higher than 12.

Mayor's Message



Mayor Anthony Housefather

Dear fellow residents of District 2,

It gives me great pleasure to communicate with my neighbours in District 2 and I want to congratulate Councillor Mike Cohen on his phenomenal work in this district. I recently attended Mike's district meeting, which was not only well attended but informative. District meetings and newsletters such as this allow for direct communication between elected officials and residents, which is the cornerstone of a city like ours. We are available by email at all times and will return your calls promptly. We may not always be able to accommodate your requests but we are always there to listen and explain and justify what we have done or are planning to do.

One such example is the rezoning of the land next to Chabad at the corner of Kildare and Marc Chagall. Before proceeding to rezone the land to allow for a small one- or two-storey commercial establishment we met the neighbours, held a public information meeting and listened to concerns expressed about

parking and types of businesses and have tried to ensure these concerns are addressed. We are also responding to requests to improve the green space on Marc Chagall, installing benches this year and in the future making it into a park as well as resurfacing and installing new lights this fall on the tennis courts at Rembrandt Park.

Your City Council has worked hard to lead the fight against Bill 14 at the municipal level and has coordinated the campaign against the provisions within the bill on bilingual communities. We have successfully secured the support of almost every bilingual municipality in Quebec as well as many non-bilingual communities and both of the major groups representing Quebec municipalities. Please visit bilingualstatus.com, a website established by the city to learn more.

Have a great summer to all!

It is hard to believe, but I am about to conclude my second mandate as the city councillor for District 2 in Côte Saint-Luc. While I am excited about representing this constituency for many years to come, I wish to provide an update on some of the important issues affecting this area of town in particular.

New developments

Following many years of negotiations with City Council, the owners of the Cavendish Mall (now known as Quartier Cavendish) were granted permission to rezone a portion of their land as residential and proceed with the demolition of nearly half of what at one time was a very busy shopping centre. The City Council showed due diligence to ensure that the number of housing units permitted would not create significant traffic congestion.

As the councillor responsible for naming opportunities, I am pleased with three new streets (The Avenue, Jubilee and Park Place) we introduced while extending Kellert. A beautiful new development is now taking shape. When all is said and done there will be 68 townhouses, 31 single-family homes, 18 semi-detached homes and a mixed-use building where the number of units is still to be determined.

I was excited to meet with brothers Jon and Marvin Gurman recently. Born and raised in Côte Saint-Luc, they decided to build one of their highly successful Yeh! Frozen yogurt & café franchises at Quartier Cavendish, assuring us of the kind of tenant which will help make this area a hub of activity.

Les Cours Marc Chagall, a 21-unit townhouse development, opened last fall on Marc Chagall Ave. near Kildare Rd. The land was originally zoned for a strip shopping centre, which area residents did not want. I was pleased when the majority of City Council agreed to rezone as residential and this project is a nice fit on the street.

This mandate also marked the long-awaited opening of the Beth Chabad Hechal Menachem, a gorgeous building next to Bialik High School, which is home to the Maurice and Nicole Benisti Youth Centre. The new social hall can accommodate close to 600 people and it has already become a very popular spot for simchas. There are two synagogues (Sephardic and Ashkenazi) inside. We have met with Rabbi Mendel Raskin and his staff in an effort to have a new parking lot built. In the meantime, we are thrilled to finally have such an extraordinary institution as part of District 2.

City Council recently rezoned a small section of land next to Beth Chabad for a small two-storey commercial building. We will consider bids for certain types of retail commerce on the first floor and professional services on the second. This represents only about 2,500 square feet of land and it will not be anything close to resembling a strip mall.



Councillor Cohen presents Maisons Fleuries awards to District 2 homeowners Bonnie Roiter and Frank Palucci.

Kildare and Cavendish Intersection Urban Agriculture

There is no question that vehicle and pedestrian traffic at the busy corner of Cavendish Blvd. and Kildare Rd. remains a hot topic. Our city engineers have worked diligently over the years with different experts to try and come up with a happy medium. We have synchronized the lights on Cavendish Blvd., introduced the double left turn on Fleet Rd. and the double left turn on Kildare Rd. to Cavendish Blvd. The total cycle time varies depending on the time of the day. If you are heading westbound on Kildare Rd. and want to turn left onto Cavendish Blvd., these are the delays:

7 am to 8 am: 22 seconds 3 pm to 7 pm: 32 seconds
 8 am to 9 am: 21 seconds 7 pm to 7 am: 12 seconds
 9 am to 3 pm: 22 seconds

I would like to thank our devoted crossing guard Archie Kwiatt, whom I recognized at my District 2 meeting on June 3, for keeping everyone safe as they cross the street. I have started to join Archie at that corner occasionally to observe and speak to pedestrians. The Côte Saint-Luc Traffic Committee continues to look at ways to make this intersection better.



Crossing guard Archie Kwiatt is presented with an award at a District 2 meeting by Mayor Housefather, Councillor Cohen, Howard Liebman (chief of staff to Liberal MP Irwin Cotler) and Police Station 9 Commander Sylvain Bissonnette.

Our Veterans



At the annual V-E Day Commemoration Ceremony, Councillor Cohen with Solomon Susser and Frank Levine.

District 2 is also home to Veterans Park, a piece of land directly beside City Hall/Library, which serves as a fitting venue for V-E Day and Remembrance Day activities specifically. We are so fortunate to still have many veterans with us and honoured to be able to mark these occasions with them.



Urban Agriculture



Dida Berku, Tanya Abramovitch, Mayor Housefather and Councillor Cohen at our Urban Agriculture launch.

There is plenty of enthusiasm for our city's first food charter and action plan to transform our mostly residential suburb into an urban agriculture leader in Quebec. Urban agriculture is the practice of growing food in or around a city. The Côte Saint-Luc Grown urban agriculture action plan we recently announced includes the creation of a demonstration garden behind the City Hall/Library complex to teach gardening skills to adults and children, edible landscaping on city property, new community gardens, a farmers' market, and the distribution of food boxes. This summer two community gardens are being established in our city. In the coming years, the goal is to have these established in each District. Rembrandt Park might be a good spot for District 2.

Rembrandt Park

I am proud of the many improvements we have made to Rembrandt Park over the years, including new play equipment, the water play area and the removal of the unpopular soccer pit. Via my regular District 2 meetings, frequent visits to the park and focus groups I wanted to know what further changes people really wanted. We certainly looked at a major reconfiguration, which would have seen the basketball court cut in half and moved to the other end of the park. While some people favoured that, the majority simply did not. There are a lot of youngsters in the immediate area who enjoy playing basketball there. However, it was clear that the two tennis courts desperately needed resurfacing and a brand new lighting system was required as well. Following significant efforts, I obtained City Council's agreement to allocate close to \$300,000 for this project. Work will begin in early fall so as not to disrupt the present season.

Cats Committee



D'Arcy McGee Liberal MNA Lawrence Bergman presents Councillor Cohen and Shelley Schecter of Educhat a donation for the Côte Saint-Luc Cats Committee.

The CSL Cats Committee continues to be a labour of love for me. I cannot say enough about my loyal crew of volunteers. We continue to trap, neuter and release or seek the adoption or fostering of homeless cats. Every effort is made to have them adopted, especially the many baby kittens we rescue. During the year we held our first big fundraiser, a concert in August with the Musicians of the World Symphony Orchestra, where we honoured the CSL Hospital for Animals. In addition, after many months of work on the part of staff and some committee members, we adopted our first ever cat licensing by-law. Outdoor cats now require licenses in Côte Saint-Luc. We still need more volunteers to come aboard. Read more at www.cotesaintluc.org/cats.

Log on and subscribe to my blog at www.mikecohen.ca

District 2 encompasses Merrimac, Rembrandt, Kildare (between Rembrandt and Marc Chagall), Sir Walter Scott, Ilan Ramon, Marc Chagall, Mackle (between Cavendish and Brandeis), Quartier Cavendish Mall, Jubilee, Park Place, the new part of Kellert, Cavendish (Manoir Montefiore, Manoir Camelia, L'Excelsior) and Honoré-de-Balzac. For more information, I can be reached at (514) 485-6945 or mcohen@cotesaintluc.org. **Please note that due to the delivery procedures of Canada Post, some homes outside of District 2 are receiving this newsletter. Those of you who don't reside within the boundaries above fall into this category.**

Bialik High School

I continue to work with Bialik High School, specifically in regard to ensuring that parents dropping off their kids abide by traffic bylaws and not block local driveways. I believe we have seen significant improvements in this area and I thank Bialik officials for their cooperation.

Electronic Billboards

One of my major goals long before being elected was to have electronic message boards installed in the city. During this mandate we were able to make this happen at two locales – the corners of Cavendish/Kildare and Westminister/Côte Saint-Luc Rd. This did not cost the city a dime as we have permitted the company to sell advertising and assure us of ample space to publicize our own events. It has been well received by citizens, particularly since it is easy to browse while waiting at the traffic light.

Kildare Rd. Parking

For many years parking on the southern side of Kildare Rd., between Rembrandt and Merrimac, had been prohibited on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Residents approached me numerous times to try and get this changed and for various reasons approval was not within reach. The compromise I was able to reach was no parking on that strip between 7 am and noon on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Since most of the residents I spoke to indicate that it was late afternoon when they generally wanted to park on the street, this turned out to be a winning solution.

The Snow Dump

I continue to advocate for special funds to have equipment brought in each spring to break up the thick and dirty snow in the city snow dump on Marc Chagall Ave. so that we do not have to stare at it all summer. In past summers I have seen people climbing over the fence and walking up the dirty hill.

Graffiti Issues

Residents of Les Villas Merrimac, a small townhouse development located at the corner of Merrimac and Rembrandt (with some units fronting on Cavendish), contacted me regarding a rash of graffiti appearing on their property. I arranged a meeting with the residents and had officers from Police Station 9 join me. We surveyed the area and gave them tips on how to help us identify the perpetrators.

Red Fisher and Gary Carter

In terms of naming opportunities, I was pleased to oversee the naming of the Red Fisher Sports Section in the Eleanor London Côte Saint-Luc Public Library. Red, the legendary sports writer, has lived in Côte Saint-Luc for 56 years and is a devoted member of the library. We also named the main field at Pierre Elliott Trudeau Park after former Montreal Expos star Gary Carter, who lost his battle with cancer in 2012.