

We need the intervention of Prime Minister Trudeau to save the green space that is **Golf Dorval**, a community jewel on the West Island of Montreal, Quebec.

We are petitioning that in the interest, the health and well being and the quality of life of the majority of the citizens in the western part of Montreal Island, as well as preserving an important community green space with thousands of trees, wetlands, flora, streams, migratory birds (including blue herons, ducks, egrets and Canada geese), some endangered birds, fauna (including red foxes) and a beautiful 18 (former 36) hole golf course, that the plans to build industrial sites in the territory known as Golf Dorval be halted, until such time as a thorough, independent, Environmental Assessment, with full public consultations, can be conducted. 100 hectares remain.

In a move that has nothing to do with airport operations, ADM's 2013-2033 *MasterPlan* has identified its intention to create industrial sites on the north side of Golf Dorval. This land would be used to generate revenues for ADM. It is pure land speculation, a cash grab and is totally detrimental to the environment.

ADM claims to be a "Non-profit corporation", however, it has destroyed valuable green spaces, to enhance its profits by building a warehouse and a trucking depot (see photos above). Both could easily have been located nearby in the more than 20 million sq ft of available industrial space. ADM's financial statements show a strong cash flow and profits in the \$50 Million range. Destruction of a part of Golf Dorval, in favour of a speculative industrial park, will probably only marginally increase profits, if at all. These additional funds are not required in order for ADM to pursue its mission.

Eight years ago, SOS Dorval, a group formed to preserve Golf Dorval, collected more than 22,000 signatures on a petition to save Golf Dorval. It was presented in Parliament by the Honorable Marlene Jennings to Transport Minister Lawrence Cannon and the Harper government. Sadly, it was ignored.

We are concerned that ADM is not respecting the rules and regulations that are in place to protect our environment and our social infrastructure, including the principles of Sustainable Development. The land is zoned as a recreational green space by the City of Dorval. We believe that ADM is in a conflict of interest with our community.

ADM's proposal to build industrial sites on an existing green space and parkland contravenes "Montreal's Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development" to which it was a signatory in 2003. It is responsible for a huge environmental footprint. (Just one Air Bus A350 taking off and landing, will taint the air that 8,000 people require to breathe for one day.) PET has over 650 plane movements a day.

ADM boasts of its ISO 14001 Certification, however, that authority requires proper consultation with community and environmental groups as well as concerned citizens.

Their failure to respond is a violation of ADM's lease with the Minister of Transport. We hope that Environment Canada will ensure that the *Canadian Environment Assessment Act* (CEAA) is being followed, including full public consultation, and will provide leadership and help to save our valuable community resource, as mandated in the CEAA. NO CEAA has ever been done at PET and we are paying for this in many ways.

Most of Golf Dorval sits on what was once a huge garbage dump. It was also a dumping ground for a variety of toxic chemicals that were jettisoned over the years by the airport which served as the base for Ferry Command during WWII. No doubt, someone developing a section for an industrial site could trigger a great deal of damage if a sensitive area were to be upset by bulldozers and other heavy machinery. This activity, in addition to violating the recreational zoning by the City of Dorval, also contravenes the rules of the Quebec Environment Ministry, which had stipulated that it would not grant provincial certification unless there had been proper public consultation for the project by ADM, as well as a zoning change by the city of Dorval, from recreational to industrial.

There are important wetlands in and around the golf course. Three streams have their headwaters nearby and run through Golf Dorval. These streams were home to a variety of spawning fish and other aquatic life, however, their numbers have dwindled considerably if not completely, because of pollution from the airport and nearby industries.

An environmental engineer has said that if ADM proceeds with its plan to put industrial buildings in GD, it could cause flooding in the basements of homes in Dorval and in Pointe-Claire, as far as Fairview.

Tens of thousands of trees would be destroyed, many of which were planted by the Boy Scouts of Canada, under the "Trees for Canada Program". Because of their proximity to PET, those trees provide much needed filters for the air pollution that is generated by the planes, trucks, buses and cars that frequent the airport.

More than 33,000 rounds of golf were played at Golf Dorval last year. Many companies, churches and community groups hold and sponsor tournaments there, including fundraisers for charities, and that will all be threatened by this development. Because 18 holes have already been closed, daily, hundreds of individuals must travel off the island of Montreal to play a round of golf. That's a lot of air pollution and it will only get worse if ADM is allowed to continue with its development project.

There has been no public consultation by ADM re Golf Dorval, and this in spite of the fact that the Green Coalition has written to ADM's President, requesting that we be consulted. He did not even acknowledge receipt of the letter. CQV has also requested a meeting with ADM; to no avail. That is also a violation of ADM's lease with the Minister of Transport.

The Mayor of Dorval, Edgar Rouleau, has previously written to Prime Minister Stephen Harper requesting his support to save and preserve Golf Dorval for the next generation. The infrastructure is inadequate to support the increase in local traffic. Nearby Sources Boulevard is already congested with traffic at peak times. Adding hundreds of cars and trucks to the mix will mean a sharp increase in the exhaust emissions and resultant air pollution. Our health will be compromised.

This is not Sustainable Development and it is certainly not in keeping with the Spirit of Kyoto.

Given Montreal Island's acute shortage of green spaces, elected officials should make every reasonable effort to preserve as much existing public green space as possible. Montreal, at 3.2 percent, has the least amount of green space of any large city in North America. Toronto has 9 percent. The UN has suggested 12 percent should be the norm. For Golf Dorval, one can make a conceptual argument that its reduced area (taking into consideration the projected hangar development) would be like the airport's contribution to the 10 percent municipal park tax (which they are exempt from because of their status). In fact its area is significantly lower than 10 percent of the total airport land area.

Finally, one cannot deny that golf is an excellent form of exercise for its participants. The need for affordable facilities will continue to grow as baby-boomers reach retirement age. It is also a sport that can qualify in the federal government's Children's Fitness Tax Credit program, which essentially promotes efforts to combat childhood obesity. GD runs special clinics for youngsters to learn the game during June, July and August.

Elected officials should look at the big picture and protect assets such as Golf Dorval when they have the means of doing so. It would be ironic, in the current preoccupation of climate change, if the majority of Montrealers wanting to play the sport would one day have to drive off island to do so.

On December 12, 2015, Canada and 194 other countries reached the Paris Agreement to fight climate change. The agreement identifies the need to respect, promote and consider the rights of local communities when taking climate action. Saving this vital green space for future generations is a must. It's time for meaningful action.

In May 2016, the Government of Canada launched its *Infrastructure Plan* to invest in communities and preserve green and social infrastructure. Here we have it all wrapped in one neat, environmentally and socially friendly green space, that is Golf Dorval. Ultimately, saving Golf Dorval is a vision thing. A major responsibility of elected officials is to establish a vision that balances, among other items, sustained economic development with quality of life for its current and future citizens. To paraphrase a saying, we are only borrowing the land that will be used by future generations. It would be a travesty if the current generation did not exercise its full powers to preserve an amenity that clearly will benefit future citizens living on Montreal Island.

Paul Wilkinson  
for Les Amis de Golf Dorval



