

Network of green spaces could save Meadowbrook, say activists

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Members of les Amis de Meadowbrook, a group that is spearheading efforts to save the Meadowbrook Golf Course, want to create a network of linked green spaces in southwestern Montreal in order to help keep the site from being redeveloped.

During a standing-room-only meeting held by the group at Montreal West town hall last week to rally support against Groupe Pacific, a company that wants to create a residential development on the Lachine portion of Meadowbrook, MPs and MNAs from the West End threw their support behind les Amis' efforts.

"You don't have to convince me that it's necessary to keep Meadowbrook as a green space," said NDG MNA Russell Copeman. "In the short term, the real issue is to protect Meadowbrook as a green space and I will do everything in my power to ensure that occurs."

D'Arcy McGee MNA Lawrence Bergman said that as a supporter, he wanted to keep Meadowbrook green, because "in my opinion green is gold. We have here a piece of gold and we've got to keep that as gold ... as something which our community, our society can enjoy."

NDG-Lachine MP Marlene Jennings said, "Anytime we can save a green space is a good day and a good deed. So you can count on my support ... The citizens of Montreal West, the citizens of Côte St. Luc and, hopefully, the citizens of Lachine as well, will want to protect this space."

Meadowbrook was originally the property of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The area, on the fringe of railroad yards, has always been used as a golf course. Although it now has a new owner who hopes to redevelop it, les Amis maintains that "this remains a travesty of the public trust originally confided and is a deadly precedent for our remaining spaces."

Les Amis want Meadowbrook designated an ecoterritory by Quebec, which would guarantee its status as a green space. The land is considered important to migratory birds, a home to wildlife and rare species, and is also regarded as the lungs of the West End because of its vast foliage.

To realize this, les Amis believe Meadowbrook must be connected to other green spaces. The plan would encompass linking the golf course strategically to nearly a dozen other green spaces in southwestern Montreal, including the Lachine Canal, Angrignon Park, the Douglas Hospital grounds, the Nuns' Island forests and vacant fields near the Bonaventure Autoroute.



Kay Wolofsky, a longtime Meadowbrook supporter, speaks during the meeting at Montreal West town hall. Seated at the right is Claude Genest, the Green Party's Westmount-Ville Marie candidate (photo credit: Martin C. Barry)