

Dear Editor,

Objet: Gros remous aux rapides de Cheval-Blanc

The Mayoress of Pierrefonds, Madame Worth is reported to say (Le Devoir, Aug. 18) that neither Pierrefonds nor Montreal has the financial means to conserve all of the western part of the Rapides du Cheval Blanc Ecoterritory. "Trop cher, dit la Ville." This is hard to believe!

In May, the city approved a land swap to cede the buildable land it owned in the ecoterritory to a developer, giving a green light to the large-scale residential project proposed for Cheval Blanc West. Prior to the land swap, the city owned about two-thirds of the proposed building site. Calculations based on the land exchange documents show the city could have purchased the developer's portion of the building site for about \$700,000. (Almost all the rest of the ecoterritory, apart from the building site, is protected by flood-plain zoning and can never be built on.) Thus, for a modest investment the city could easily ensure the protection of all of Cheval Blanc West. Instead, the city voted to trade away its publicly-owned ecoterritory green spaces for private profit - and this with no prior public consultation.

Daniel Hodder, responsable des espaces verts et des parcs à la Ville de Montreal, is reported to say that "qu'il y a des limites à la réglementation" que la Ville pourrait imposer au promoteur... If the tiny hamlet of Frelighsburg can save Mount Pinnacle for posterity, then the great City of Montreal can do the same for this rare shoreline green space at Rapides du Cheval Blanc.

Al Hayek

President, Green Coalition