

West End Achiever - He's been keeping a close eye on council

CSL resident Jack Cabot has been attending meetings since the mid-'60s

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

Côte St. Luc resident Jack Cabot was attending sessions of his city's elected council years before its current mayor, Anthony Housefather, was born.

Cabot, who will only say he is retired but won't reveal his exact age, has known four mayors: Samuel Moskovitch, Bernard Lang, Robert Libman and Housefather, who was born in 1970.

"My first question was to Mayor Moskovitch," Cabot, a snowbird who spends his winters in Florida, said in a phone interview with The Chronicle. He recalled his initiation to city council back in the mid-1960s.

Like many others who end up attending council meetings, Cabot said it was curiosity that impelled him to go to his first one. "I saw a need to speak up," he said. "As a matter of fact, there were times when I did speak up because others didn't (and) we got things done."

Cabot credits Mayor Moskovitch for having initiated the idea in the early 1960s of building the Cavendish underpass, which led subsequently to the development of north-eastern Côte St. Luc.

Comparing the style of Mayor Moskovitch with that of Mayor Lang, who had a reputation for firmness in his conduct of council business, Cabot described Mayor Moskovitch as "quite easy ... He let the council act."

Cabot claims a question he posed to city council some years after the construction of the Cavendish underpass is still reverberating as Côte St. Luc continues to deal with the idea of coordinating traffic lights in many parts of the City.

"To Lang at the time, I said let's have lights to ease up the situation," Cabot said, also recalling how there were huge traffic jams at Cavendish and Fleet Road which council had not anticipated.

In addition to his interest in city council, Cabot is also known as an outspoken advocate for the preservation of the Meadowbrook Golf Course as a publicly accessible greenspace. He attributes his interest in the issue to childhood memories he still cherishes.

"I recall going on a street car to Belmont Park," he said, referring to the defunct amusement park in Montreal's Cartierville sector. "There were farms all along the way and I used to get up on my knees and look out the window and admire the cornfields. Going through the Laurentians I would admire the greenery.

"We need our greenspaces" and "Meadowbrook is a buffer," Cabot added, pointing out that the area helps prevent polluted air from industrial areas in Ville St. Pierre and Lachine from drifting into Côte St. Luc, Montreal West and NDG.



Chronicle, Martin C. Barry Long-time council watcher Jack Cabot.