



Ville de Saint-Lazare

Mayor's office



Saint-Lazare (Québec)
April 7, 2010

A word from the Mayor

Schools for the families of Saint-Lazare

We are a family community. Parents enrolling the children in school are concerned about available places for their children; they also expect to send their children safely to local schools. I was given the mandate to help bring schools to Saint-Lazare since 24% of Saint-Lazare residents are under 14 years of age. I take this mandate seriously since it impacts our children's education and safety.

The Lester B. Pearson School board and La Commission Scolaire des Trois Lacs have each expressed a need for a new school in Saint-Lazare. In order to be able to accommodate these requests, council proposed a zoning change in two sectors of Saint-Lazare. The sectors were selected because of their suitability for a school from a town planning perspective. The proposals were made in order to provide greater options in the planning of our community in order to accommodate for this need. We began a process for a zoning change in two residential sectors to allow for primary schools. The proposal is specific for primary schools and will not allow any other institutions. Pedagogical experts recommend schools be integrated within residential developments. In view of the request for two schools, council is creating options for locating a school. The proposed zoning change is presently undergoing the usual process where residents can voice their opposition to the proposals. In one of the two proposed for zoning change, as announced yesterday and at the request of residents, a registry will open allowing for opposition to the zoning change proposal.

Yesterday, at the April 6th council session, Council approved the conditional purchase of land in a sector which was considered attractive for a school from a town planning perspective as well as from the school boards' perspective. The parcel of land which the municipality is purchasing previously belonged to the municipality. In autumn of 2009, the previous Council authorized the sale of this municipal land to a land developer, prioritizing further residential development over a new school. We have now bought this land back, and slightly more, at about the same sale price, in order to be able to offer this land to one of the school commissions. I am proud the new council has chosen to give Saint-Lazare families priority.

The purchase of the land is conditional to reaching an agreement with one of the school commissions in the next couple of years for the transfer of the land to the school commission. The Town is now in a strong position to negotiate and ensure, as much as the law will allow, that Saint-Lazare children are prioritized in this new school and that Saint-Lazare residents benefit from schools on our territory as much as possible. I am proud that my council is getting the job done and getting the job done responsibly.

It is conservatively anticipated that the amount of Saint-Lazare children needing English schooling in Saint-Lazare will increase from 986 to 1109 in 2012 and near 1200 by 2014. Even with a new school, this would translate to over 80% of the English classrooms in Saint-Lazare being occupied by Saint-Lazare children over the next few years. This is the proportion currently observed in our English schools.

My council is dedicated to providing services to our families and to our community. We are committed to the mandate with which residents entrusted us. I also wish to thank and congratulate the Urban and Environment department for its diligence and dedication in accomplishing the objectives placed upon them by the new council on the school dossier.

Pierre Kary, mayor