

Consultation Report

# **A Vision for the Charles-E. Frosst Site**

Participatory Planning Workshop

February 2020

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## Introduction

For several decades, the Charles-E. Frosst site was home to the Merck Frosst industrial campus that encompassed a variety of activities including research and development, drug manufacturing and offices, with over 1,000 employees. In 2010 Merck Frosst relocated their operations elsewhere in Kirkland and in 2012, the land was sold to a real estate developer. Today, 75% of the site is vacant and in dire need of attention.



With the arrival of the *Réseau express métropolitain* (REM), West Island municipalities will undergo a significant transformation over the next few years. In the context of this new reality, the Kirkland Town Council saw a unique opportunity to look at the feasibility of repurposing the northern part of the Charles-E. Frosst site into a sustainable residential sector with easy access to public transportation. To this end, the Town opted for a participatory approach involving residents of the neighboring sector.

These residents were invited to the Kirkland Sports Complex on two separate occasions:

- **On October 23, 2019** : To hear about the suggested planning approach and get answers to their questions (135 participants).
- **On November 26, 2019** : To participate in a planning workshop to create a collective vision for the future redevelopment of the entire site (86 participants).

A Web page also facilitated the dissemination of information relating to the process. This web page can be found at: <http://www.ville.kirkland.qc.ca/charlesefrosst-en>.

This report presents a summary of the results of the November 26, 2019 planning workshop. It was prepared by Hill+Knowlton Stratégies, duly mandated to coordinate and facilitate the consultation process.

## Promotion of the planning workshop

Letters of invitation for the November 26 workshop were delivered by post to 770 addresses (see distribution map in annex 1).

## Conduct of the meeting

The meeting began with a brief presentation by the Town of Kirkland on the Charles-E. Frosst site, followed by a presentation by H+K Stratégies on the proposed participation process and the formation of a task force. Participants were then invited to discuss the following two topics in round tables, for approximately 45 minutes:

- Expectations and concerns regarding the development of the Charles-E. Frosst site
- Conditions of a successful residential development on the site

Participants were organized into self-led round tables of approximately 8 residents, each table choosing one spokesperson from among themselves. Each spokesperson was provided with a note sheet on which to write down the highlights and main ideas of the discussions at their table (see Annex 2). These note sheets were handed over after the activity and served to identify the elements of convergence reached.

A plenary followed the round table discussions. Each spokesperson was given the floor for a few minutes to share with all the participants the main ideas retained at his or her table.

Participants were also asked to provide individual feedback on what was presented to them using the form in Annex 3. The feedback forms were handed over after the activity and were used in the preparation of this report.

## Participation in numbers

The November 26 planning workshop at the Kirkland Sports Complex was attended by more than **80** residents. A total of 76 feedback forms were filled out on site.

## Results of the consultation

Answers to the questions provided on the feedback forms were regrouped, compiled and analysed by Hill+Knowlton Stratégies to prepare this report. The main results are presented in the following section.

### Opinion with regard to a residential development on the site

The questionnaire also asked participants whether they were in favor of the Charles-E. Frosst site being developed for a residential use. 60 people (80 % of respondents) indicated being favorable to the site being developed for a residential use.

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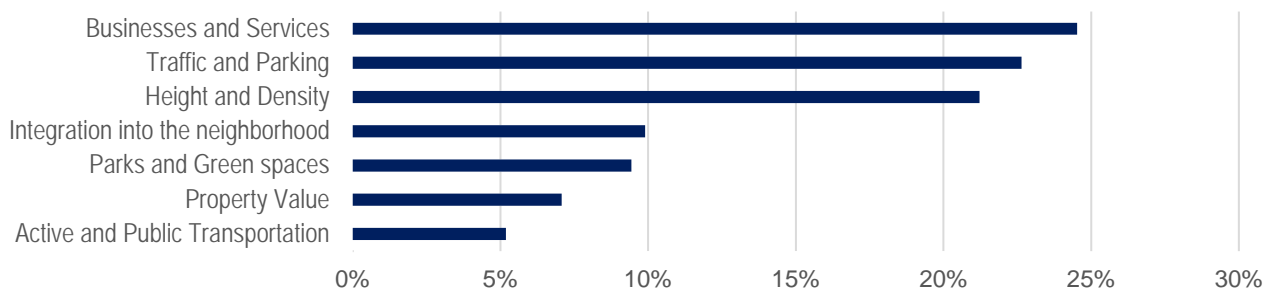
<sup>1</sup>The slides presented at the November 26, 2019 planning workshop are available on the Town of Kirkland's website at: [http://www.ville.kirkland.qc.ca/client\\_file/upload/document/Charles%20E%20Frosst/meeting%20Nov%2026%20-%20ang.pdf](http://www.ville.kirkland.qc.ca/client_file/upload/document/Charles%20E%20Frosst/meeting%20Nov%2026%20-%20ang.pdf)

## Expectations and concerns regarding the development of the site

Open questions allowed participants to define their expectations with regards to the development of this site and identify other aspects of concern to them.

A total of 212 statements outlining the respondents' expectations and concerns with regards to the site's development were noted. These statements were grouped into 7 themes. The following chart outlines in percentage terms, the number of statements pertaining to a given theme in relation to the total number of statements (for example, 24% of the 212 statements refer to Businesses and Services).

**Expectations and concerns: statements grouped according to their relevance to each theme, as a percentage of the total number of responses**



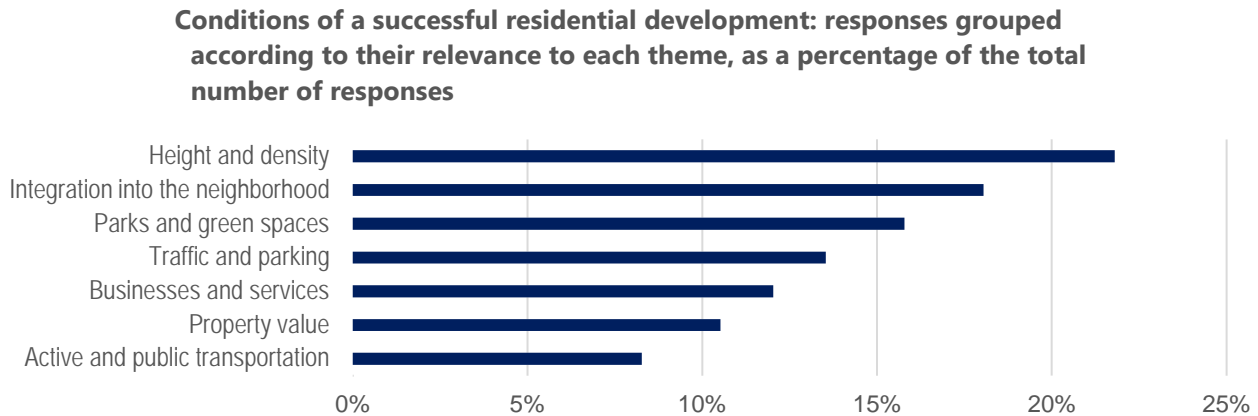
The dominant theme with regards to expectations is the presence of businesses and proximity services in the future development, such as a medical clinic, municipal recreational services, coffee shops and boutiques. The elements of response under this theme outlined in particular the lack of health services in the area and the absence of an indoor municipal pool.

Another prominent theme was traffic and parking, reflecting concerns linked to the lack of incentive parking at the future REM station in Pointe-Claire and hypothetical overflow on neighbouring streets due to the increase in the number of vehicles. The themes of height and density were also frequently mentioned. Several respondents would like to see a gradation in height and density on the site. In the northern part, building typologies of lesser height are preferred, such as single-family or semi-detached dwellings, to match with neighbouring houses. Larger buildings could be implemented in the southern portion of the site to offer a diversity of building types to meet the needs of a variety of residents while providing a transition with the industrial buildings along the highway.

These results are drawn from the completed individual questionnaires and echo the essence of the round table discussions that took place at the November 26 public session. Indeed, the most frequently mentioned aspects in the round table reports were the impact of the development on local traffic and the lack of services, such as general and emergency health care services for the local community, and in particular for seniors. With regards to height and density, a majority of the discussion tables mentioned a preference for a diversified residential offer and a gradation of heights on the site, namely same height as that of existing houses along Brunswick Boulevard, and higher buildings afterwards, such as rental multiplexes or condominiums in the southern part of the site.

## Conditions of a successful residential development on the site

Participants were asked to give their opinion on the conditions favoring a successful residential development on the site. A total of 133 suggestions were collected. Once again, these statements were grouped by theme. The following chart outlines in percentage terms, the number of statements pertaining to a given theme in relation to the total number of statements (for example, 22% of the 133 statements refer to height and density).



As shown in the above chart, height and density is the theme that generated the most comments, namely 29. Once again, the majority of the opinions collected for this theme touch upon the importance of gradual increased heights from the north to the south of the site. Several people also indicated a preference for 4 to 6 storey buildings throughout the site.

Integration into the neighborhood is the next aspect most frequently cited with 21 mentions. It is also wished that preference be given to an architectural character reflecting the one currently found in neighbouring sectors, to maintain a certain uniformity in the area.

Thirdly, several respondents mentioned favoring the integration of public spaces (parks, green spaces, play areas, sports fields and playgrounds).

The aim is also for sufficient parking on the site and for implementing measures to reduce traffic in the area. The importance of including businesses and services in the future development, of preserving property values and of favoring access to public transportation also received several comments.

Once again, comments drawn from the individual questionnaires are consistent with the content of the workshop's group discussions: various types of residential buildings, gradual increased heights from north to south, housing and services for seniors, addressing traffic issues, availability of parking for residents, improvement of access to public transportation.

### **Satisfaction with the November 26 public session**

One question concerned the level of satisfaction with the November 26 session. 86 % of the respondents indicated being satisfied or very satisfied with the meeting.

### **Concerns according to area of residence**

The 75 respondents who live in Kirkland and provided us with their postal code, reside in the area surrounding the Charles-E. Frosst site. In essence, the analysis of the results according to the area of residence, reveal that the height of buildings is a major concern for those who live in close proximity to the site, while concerns relating to the impact of the development on local traffic are shared by all.

While these results are fragmentary, we noticed a similar trend based on proximity to the project. Of the 16 respondents who are not in favour of a residential development on this site, 10 are from sectors farther from the site, while 6 live in the immediate vicinity.

In terms of concerns expressed, height and density are a major concern for residents closest to the site, with 30 out of 34 having broached these aspects in their written questionnaire.

### **Participation in the Task Force**

Participants were also given the option to submit their application to take part in a task force, by answering a question to that effect on their feedback form. Once set up, this task force will meet on a regular basis to make recommendations to the Kirkland Town Council on the proposed development of the Charles-E. Frosst site. 28 people, 37% of those who participated in the planning workshop, indicated their interest in participating to this task force.

## **Conclusions**

According to the results, it can be said that the idea of a residential development on the Charles-E. Frosst site is, overall, well received by residents who live in the zones close to the site, north of Autoroute 40, provided certain conditions are in place, including a reduced impact on local traffic, respecting the character of the sector (height of buildings, types of houses) and integrating proximity services and public spaces (park, green spaces, play areas).

The November 26 participatory planning workshop thus allowed to seek input from residents on the arrival of a residential development on the Charles-E. Frosst site.

A task force formed of citizens, representatives of the site owner and City representatives will, as of this coming winter, be entrusted with a mandate to pursue the reflection initiated at the workshop and eventually make recommendations on a vision for the future of the site.



# Annex 1

## Distribution map of invitations to the planning workshop





## Annex 2

Note-taking sheet remitted to each table's spokesperson at discussion time

<p><b>A VISION FOR THE CHARLES-E. FROSST SITE</b>          Planning Workshop, November 26, 2019 – Roundtable discussion</p>		<p>TABLE NUMBER :</p>	
<p>Are the participants at your table generally in favour of the northern portion of the site being developed for residential use?</p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>If you responded NO, please specify the (1) main reason:</p>	
<p><b>I. EXPECTATIONS TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE</b>          What are the main expectations and concerns of the participants at your table regarding the development of the Charles-E. Frosst site?</p>	<p><b>II. CONDITIONS OF A SUCCESSFUL RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT</b>          According to the participants at your table, what are the main conditions of a successful residential development on the Charles-E. Frosst site?</p>		
<p>MAIN IDEA to communicate in plenary</p>	<p>MAIN IDEA to communicate in plenary</p>		
<p>OTHER ASPECTS OF THE PROJECT YOU WISH TO COMMUNICATE TO THE CITY</p>			
<p>PLEASE LEAVE THE COMPLETED SHEET ON YOUR TABLE. THANK YOU!</p>			

## Annex 3

### Feedback form remitted to participants at the planning workshop



#### A Vision for the Charles E. Frosst Site

1. First and last **name** : \_\_\_\_\_

2. Are you in favour of the site being developed for a residential use? (check box)

Yes  No

3. What are your expectations and concerns regarding the development of the site?

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4. In your opinion, what are the main conditions for a successful residential development on the Charles E. Frosst site?

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5. Please provide your postal code: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

6. I want to submit my candidacy to participate to the Task Force Yes  No

If **yes**, please provide your email address: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Please indicate your level of satisfaction of tonight's meeting. (circle the answer)

Very satisfied	Satisfied	Indifferent	Unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied
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