Collaborative Community Planning:

Incorporating community's needs into an action plan.

A case study in Westhaven, Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, Montréal.

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ABSTRACT

This Supervised Research Project (SRP) studies how collaborative community planning happens in practice with a particular focus on community action plans and business-community partnerships. This report focuses on a case study of a collaborative community planning underway in Westhaven, a neighbourhood in the Montreal borough of Côte-des-Neiges / Notre-Dame-de-Grâce. The analysis is based on literature reviews and direct observations of the local community planning process. The report is divided into four parts: an introduction, a chapter on community planning in theory and practice, a chapter on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as a basis for business-community partnerships, and a conclusion.

The chapter on community planning examines how three approaches – collaborative planning, needs assessment and advocacy – function in theory and have been applied in practice, using the example of the creation of an action plan for community development in Westhaven. The field research specifically shed light on how well the community planning approach adopted allowed for local voices and knowledge to be taken into consideration. An essential part of the analysis is a detailed exploration of the step-by-step elements of the planning process; the analysis provides insight both as to outcomes and how those outcomes were achieved.

The subsequent chapter examines one initiative that emerged out of the Westhaven action plan: establishing partnerships with locally-situated businesses. Local context, size and profile of companies as well as their business values and goals determine to what extent companies will be willing to collaborate with local groups. The SRP argues that CSR could play a vital role in such collaborations. Communities should know and understand the concept of CSR in order to be able to develop projects that will be more appealing to businesses. This research also provides a CSR tool to assist community groups when reaching out locally-situated businesses.

The SRP concludes with outlining the advantages and disadvantages of the community-driven planning process observed in Westhaven as well as it suggests future research on CSR from a community's point of view as a way to enhance community groups chances to establish partnerships with companies.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce travail dirigé (SRP) étudie comment la planification communautaire concertée se déroule dans la pratique, en particulier dans les plans d'action communautaire et les partenariats entre les entreprises et les collectivités. Le rapport se concentre sur l'étude de cas de la planification communautaire concertée à Westhaven - un quartier de l'arrondissement de Côte-des-Neiges—Notre-Dame-de-Grâce à Montréal. L'analyse est basée sur des revues de la documentation complémentée par des observations directes du processus de planification communautaire locale. Le rapport est divisé en quatre parties : introduction, un chapitre sur la planification communautaire dans la théorie et dans la pratique, un chapitre sur la responsabilité sociale des entreprises (RSE) lors de l'établissement des partenariats entre les entreprises et les collectivités et conclusion.

Le chapitre sur la planification communautaire examine comment les trois approches — la planification concertée, l'évaluation des besoins, et le plaidoyer — fonctionnent dans la théorie et ont été appliqués dans la pratique, en utilisant des exemples de la création d'un plan d'action pour le développement communautaire de Westhaven. La recherche sur le terrain, en particulier, explique comment le processus adopté permet de prendre en considération la voix et les connaissances locales. Une partie essentielle de l'analyse est une exploration détaillée des éléments du processus de planification étape par étape pour donner un aperçu non seulement sur les résultats, mais aussi sur la façon dont ces résultats sont atteints.

Le chapitre suivant examine une initiative mise en œuvre pendant la création du plan d'action de Westhaven : l'établissement des partenariats avec des entreprises locales. Le contexte local, la taille et le profil des entreprises ainsi que leurs valeurs d'entreprise et leurs objectifs déterminent dans quelle mesure les entreprises seront disposés à collaborer avec des groupes locaux. Ce travail fait valoir que la RSE peut jouer un rôle essentiel dans telles collaborations. Les collectivités devraient connaître et comprendre

le concept de RSE afin d'être en mesure de développer des projets qui seront plus attrayants pour les entreprises. Finalement, cette étude fournit également un outil de RSE pour aider les groupes communautaires à rentrer en contacte avec les entreprises locales.

Le SRP se termine par décrivant les avantages et les inconvénients du processus de planification communautaire observée à Westhaven et il suggère une recherche supplémentaire sur la RSE du point de vue des groupes communautaires comme un moyen de renforcer leurs chances d'établir des partenariats avec les entreprises.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Nature of the problem, research design and methods

Collaborative planning is a powerful tool for starting a dialogue, building consensus, facilitating conflict resolution and initiating transformation. Collaborative community planning brings various local actors together to consider the future of the community they work and live in. This process suggests conducting discussions and reaching agreements among the community members on what the needs of the residents are and how these needs could be met. A community action plan is one possible outcome of an effective, collaborative planning process.

My SRP focuses on a case study Westhaven, a neighbourhood in the Montreal borough of Côte-des-Neiges / Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (CDN/NDG). The processes I study here present a recent example of a collaborative community planning in Montreal. I decided to examine this particular case as I did my summer 2013 internship with the Westhaven Community Council through McGill University's CURA Making Megaprojects Work for Communities[1]. After my internship was completed, I kept attending the Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee meetings and I have had the opportunity to observe directly the planning process undertaken by the committee over the past year.

Nature of the problem

Westhaven has been identified as one of four vulnerable sectors in the Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (NDG) district in Montreal (NDG Strategic Plan 2013-2016). As a response to that

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[1] Making Megaprojects Work for Communities is an action-research project supported by the Community-University Research Alliance (CURA) program of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).

vulnerability, in 2012 a local non-for-profit organization, the NDG Community Council[2], approached various stakeholders and key actors within the community and established the Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee. The mandate of the committee is to voice community concerns and to create a vision for the future development of neighbourhood. The main goal of the committee is to prepare a Community Action Plan based on a collaborative planning approach. The community planning process in Westhaven, which is currently underway, tries to address the community's unmet needs and to foster the social and economic development of the area.

My SRP seeks to address two problems. First, I am interested in researching how collaborative community planning happens in practice. My research examines the planning process and its effectiveness as well as how it influences the outcome. My research interests in Westhaven fit the agenda of McGill University's CURA Making Megaprojects Work for Communities, which study whether having a community process that is driven from the bottom makes a difference to urban outcomes. The bottom-up approach allows local voices and concerns to influence the community's future development. For that reason, I examine the development of the local action plan for Westhaven. Second, I am interested in the potential of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) model for establishing business-community partnerships. The planning efforts in Westhaven have resulted in the development of several initiatives, one of which is building business-community partnerships in the neighbourhood. I decided to concentrate on this specific initiative because I observed that the community groups lack knowledge of CSR, as this business practice is beyond the scope of their areas competency. With this paper I aim to introduce the idea of CSR to the community organizations and portray it as a useful tool for them to negotiate projects with the businesses that could bring benefits both to the community and the company. CSR could offer a "win-win" scenario, but only if the community knows how to take advantage of it. In my opinion, the mutual interests of the community and the businesses could be matched through raising the awareness of CSR among the

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[2] NDG Community Council Annual Report 2012-2013

community organizations and educating both the community organizations and the businesses that the engagement of the companies with the local communities should be more than "writing the check". Establishing long-term relationships with businesses in a neighbourhood could empower the whole community.

Research design and methods

My SRP contains two distinct parts and each part discusses its own research question.

- ### Research Question No. 1

  What are the advantages and the disadvantages of a community-driven planning process? In my SRP I explore to what extent the planning process in Westhaven incorporates the needs of the local community into an action plan. The analysis outlines the lessons that can be learned from the bottom-up approach as well as some of the challenges observed in this collaborative community planning process.

- ### Research Question No. 2

  How can community organizations approach locally-situated businesses to partner for local development? In this part of my SRP I focus on how the community organizations in Westhaven have attempted to establish relationships with companies located in the neighbourhood and challenges that have emerged during that process. In addition, I explore the policy of Corporate Social Responsibility as a tool for establishing partnerships between businesses and local community organizations. Finally, I draw lessons from the Corporate Social Responsibility literature and the Westhaven case and propose a CSR tool for community groups to use when approaching businesses for local community development contributions.

Research Objectives

The research objectives have been identified as follows:

1. Study the ongoing community planning process in Westhaven by focusing on three sub-questions:
    a. What has been done so far in terms of planning work?
    b. Who is involved in the planning process?
    c. How does the planning process incorporate the community's needs into the action plan?
2. Study the action plan in order to assess to what extent local voice is heard and to draw preliminary conclusions about the foreseen outcomes from the planning process
3. Determine to what extent the collaborative approach benefited the community planning process in Westhaven
4. Study the business-community collaboration process in Westhaven and answer the following questions:
    a. How did this idea emerge?
    b. Who led the process?
    c. What steps have been taken towards establishing business-community partnership?
5. Suggest ways for community groups to apply Corporate Social Responsibility when trying to establish business-community partnerships
6. Draw lessons from the case of Westhaven that could be useful for other community groups interested in establishing business-community collaborations.

In carrying out these objectives, reviews of relevant literature and qualitative field research were conducted as described below.

Literature reviews

A scan of the literature on collaborative planning, corporate social responsibility, business-community collaboration and motivations that stand behind establishing business-community partnerships provide the backdrop for the elaboration of research questions, field methods, assessment approaches, and precedents for policy and community planning.

A major part of the literature review in my SRP covers material from previous research papers that I had submitted as partial fulfillment of academic classes at the School of Urban Planning at McGill University:

- o The literature review on strengths and weaknesses of the collaborative planning approach represents material from a paper submitted in November 2013 to Professor Lisa Bornstein as partial fulfillment of the Cities in a Globalizing World course, URBP629.

- o The literature review on Corporate Social Responsibility, as well as certain elements of Chapter 3, represent material from a paper submitted in December 2013 to Professor Richard Shearmur as a partial fulfillment of the Urban Economy course, URBP616.

Field methods

Direct observations of meetings and a review of documents produced in Westhaven, such as meeting minutes, the committee's mission, goals and vision statements, action plan, proposals, reports, and summaries of past public engagement and consultations, provide the essential material for examining both the community planning process in Westhaven and the committee's business-community partnerships initiative. To preserve anonymity, I do not mention any personal information or data that may reveal the identity of the persons involved in the process.

Data are derived from documentation of the Westhaven process. In addition, I was granted permission to attend the meetings as part of my internship, under the auspices of Making Megaprojects Work for Communities, a SSHRC – funded community university research alliance directed by Professor Lisa Bornstein of McGill University's School of Urban Planning. In that capacity, I was able to work with statistical data for Westhaven and to prepare a socio-demographic analysis of the neighbourhood to assist the planning process in Westhaven, which was published on McGill University's CURA Making Megaprojects Work for Communities website. In section 1.2. of my SRP I include some of the statistical data and conclusions that came from this analysis.

1.2. The neighbourhood of Westhaven and its challenges

Westhaven is a neighbourhood in the NDG district, located in the Côte-des-Neiges / Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (CDN/NDG) Borough in Montreal. The neighbourhood is situated between Sherbrooke, St-Jacques, and West Broadway Streets, and the city of Montréal West (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1. The Westhaven neighbourhood.
Source: Google Earth. Accessed and adapted by the author on March 7th, 2014.

Westhaven is home to 2,490 residents according to the 2011 Census survey conducted by Statistics Canada[3]. The neighbourhood is one of the most vulnerable sectors in NDG. To address local concerns, the Westhaven Neighbouhood Committee has started working in collaboration with residents, community organizations and businesses to

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[3] More statistical data and tables about Westhaven are included in Appendix A.

improve the quality of life in the neighbourhood. The main challenges in Westhaven can be divided into three groups:

1. The first group of challenges is related to the physical layout of the neighbourhood (Figure 1 and Figure 2). On the one hand, there is a major physical barrier, the train tracks of the metropolitan transport agency AMT pass through the area and split the neighbourhood into two parts. On the other, there is a large traffic volume on the local streets. St-Jacques is a major road and main corridor for the trucks that enter and leave Parmalat, a large dairy products manufacturer that has located its Ingredients & Export facilities in Westhaven. The train tracks further aggravate the traffic in the neighbourhood. They are a major barrier, and also, due to the train station (Montreal-West) located in Westhaven, cause traffic problems. Near the train station, at the crossing point of Elmhurst Street and Coffee Park (Figure 1), there is a traffic barrier, which assists the safe crossing of the train tracks for both pedestrians and cars. Right next to the barrier, though, there are also traffic lights (at Elmhurst and Sherbrooke streets) and this part of the neigbourhood is often congested especially during peak hours, which raises serious safety concerns.

    The intersection of Elmhurst Street and the train tracks is the main entry point in the neighourhood from Sherbrooke and one of two routes, also the closest one, which residents can use to cross the train tracks (regardless of their mode of transportation). Many pedestrians use this route to take buses on Sherbrooke Street. Residents of Westhaven use public transit more than the average resident of the Island or of the rest of NDG: 25.3 percent of the residents of Westhaven use the STM buses versus 15 percent of the residents of NDG and 12.4 percent for the Island. In terms of train use, 4.8 percent of the residents of Westhaven use the train versus 0.3 percent for NDG and 0.6 percent for the Island of Montreal.

Another safety concern arises from the number of people residing around Coffee Park and crossing the train tracks on a daily basis: 828 people or one-third of the total population of Westhaven live in the Coffee Park residential area, just west of the train tracks. Students going to or coming from school also cross the Elmhurst Street-train tracks area. In addition, many young children play in Coffee Park. The Coffee Park residential area has a larger ratio of children than the average for Westhaven (14.5 percent for Coffee Park versus 12.9 percent for all of Westhaven), especially 5-9 year olds (7.2 percent for Coffee Park versus 5.0 percent for all of Westhaven), who tend to play more independently than younger children and may cross the streets on their own, thus raising concerns for their safety.

2. The second group of challenges relates to the socio-economic profile of the residents. According to the 2006 census, the neighborhood has a significantly higher percentage of low-income and unemployed people than the average for Montreal. In Westhaven the share of low-income families is 2.5 times higher than the average for the Island of Montreal (43.0 percent versus 16.6 percent). Their concentration is even higher in the Coffee Park area – 46 percent. The share of unemployed people in Westhaven is 1.8 times higher than the average for the Island of Montreal (16.1 percent versus 8.8 percent). When it comes to family distribution, the results indicate a significantly higher share of single parents, especially female single parents, than the entire Island (24.6 percent versus 16.9 percent respectively).

A lack of community engagement is also observed among the residents. This may be an outcome of a high number of temporary residents, such as students (due to the proximity to Concordia University Loyola campus) and immigrants. In 2006 immigrants composed 50.3 percent of the population in Westhaven which is significantly higher than the average for NDG – 38.6 percent[4].

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[4] NDG Strategic Plan 2013-2016. Data collection section presentation.

3. The third group of challenges relates to the provision of essential services (public, social, and commercial), housing (in terms of quality, type, maintenance and rental rates), and access to parks and recreational facilities. Figure 2 below shows a deficiency of social services for adults and seniors as well as a lack of access to grocery stores in the area. In terms of housing, the majority of the residents in Westhaven are renters (96.5 percent); only 3.5 percent of the dwellings are owner-occupied. The tenure of the rental apartment buildings is split between two main owners (one owns most of the buildings in the sector around Patricia Street and the other owns most of the buildings in the sector around Trenholme Street). The fact that there are only two rental property owners in the area allows the owners to monopolize the lease conditions and neglect building maintenance (problems declared by local residents). In Westhaven there is only one public park – Coffee Park – and only one gym – the Westhaven community centre gym – and both of them are mainly targeted to children and teenagers. There are no options available for adults and seniors when it comes to recreation and sports within the neighbourhood boundaries.

To sum up, Westhaven is a neighbourhood that faces several major challenges related to its physical and socio-demographic profile as well as to the services provided in the area. Community organizations are engaged with local issues, willing to work on site in collaboration with other parties (the borough, the businesses, and the residents), which seems to be a step towards the neighbourhood's improvement. The neighbourhood has its own strengths, such as proximity to downtown and public transportation, low rent rates, and a good mix of people (including young people). All of these factors present a good base on which the interested parties could build to enhance the future development of Westhaven.

Figure 2. Westhaven – physical layout and services available.

Source: Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee, prepared by Kate-Issima Francin and the author. Adapted by the author on February 10th, 2014.
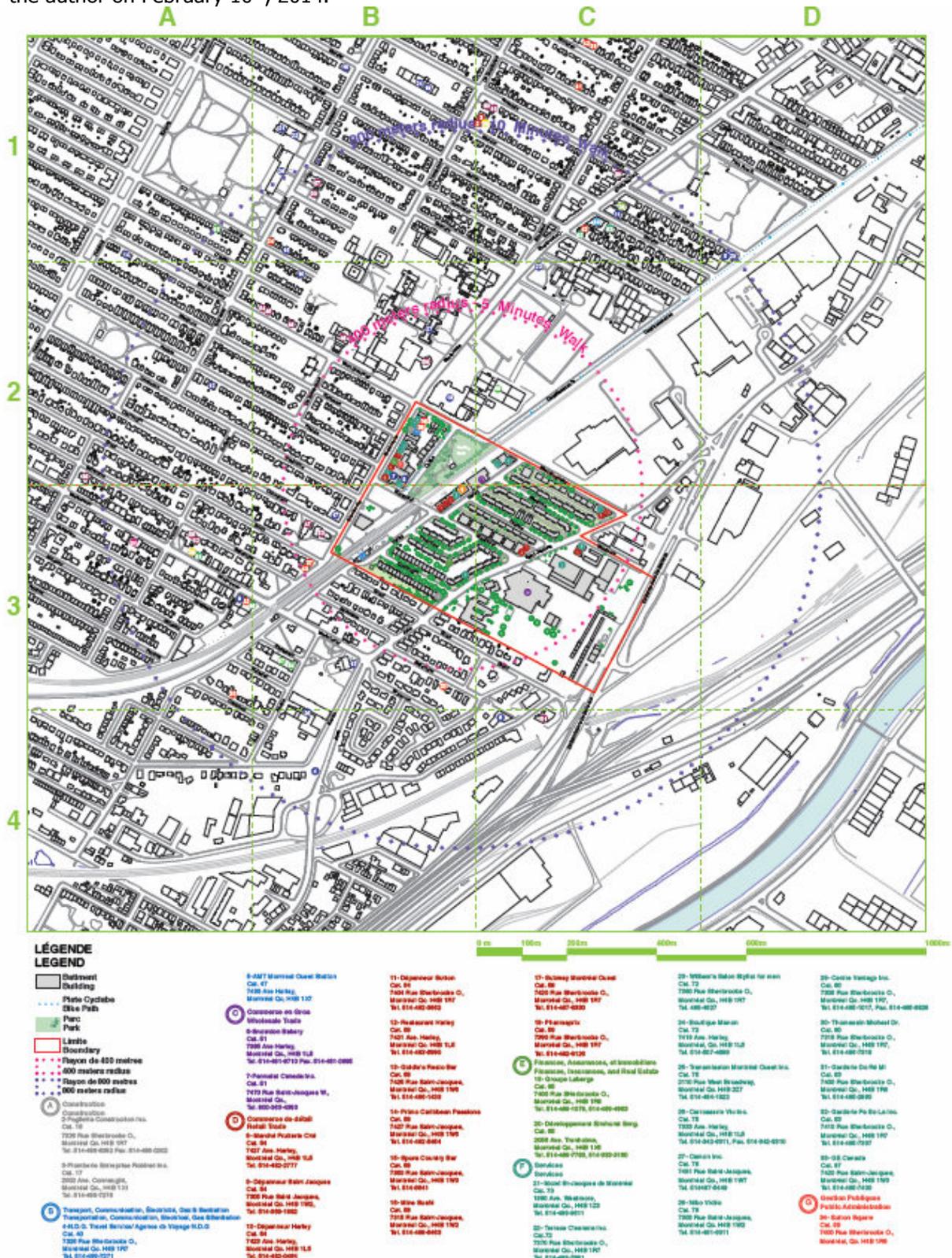
CHAPTER 2: COMMUNITY PLANNING IN WESTHAVEN

2.1. Introduction

Chapter 2 focuses on the community planning process in Westhaven. First, I explore the literature on collaborative planning. Then, I discuss the process (what has been done, who was involved, how they did it). At the end of the chapter, I examine the action plan itself and how the use of a collaborative approach has affected the planning process in Westhaven.

2.2. Literature review

In this section, I first review approaches to community planning and then explore strengths and weaknesses of collaborative planning, an approach that is applied widely in the practice of urban and community planning. For the purposes of this paper I am focusing on the collaborative approach, but I will briefly describe another two community planning mo0dels – needs assessment and advocacy planning – as I find them relevant to the Westhaven case.

2.2.1. Community planning models

The literature review shows that when it comes to community planning, there are different inclusionary models that can be used: needs assessment, advocacy, and collaboration (Neuber et al., 1980; Peterman, 2004). These models differ in the ways in which the "citizen's voice" is heard and respectively in the effect of the public on planning outcomes.

Needs assessment, as described by Neuber et al. (1980), serves as a mechanism to plan better and deliver more effective human services to the consumer-citizen. Without having information about the community and the people within it and their needs, the value of the programs and services planned for these people is clearly reduced. Structuring and designing programs or services that are consistent with the actual needs of the community increase the chances that the respective program or service will be better accepted by the community. Such an approach to planning focuses on the effectiveness of service delivery.

Advocacy planning, in contrast, focuses on the people. Advocacy planning, founded by Paul Davidoff, dates back to the 1960s. Davidoff describes advocacy as "the means of professional support for competing claims how the community should develop … making definitions of social costs and benefits more explicit … stimulating consideration of future conditions by all groups in society" (Davidoff, 1965, p.333-334). Advocacy planning was seen as revolutionary for its time because, in contrast to conventional planning, it provided a way to give people, especially those excluded from society, the chance to voice their wishes (Peterman, 2004). Peterman compares advocacy planning with equity planning, noting that they are similar. He states that many cities in the 1970s and 1980s started implementing equity planning as a more pluralistic form of planning (Krumholz, 1994, as cited in Peterman, 2004). In the 1990s, university planning programs as well as governmental institutions started supporting advocacy planning and put efforts into developing university-community partnerships (Peterman, 2004).

Collaborative planning, on another hand, is a complex and nuanced notion that has been developed since the 1990s. My review shows that there is a discussion in the literature about similar approaches of public involvement, all based on communicative discourse, but each defines it in their own terms (Innes and Booher, 1999; Fainstein, 2000; Sandercock, 2000; Forester et al., 2011; Listerborn, 2008). Some authors call it the *communicative model*, others call it *collaborative* or *participatory planning*, and still

others use the term *consensus building*, yet all of them are discussing the same process. Fainstein (2000, p.454) description is clearest; she states that the *communicative model*, also called the *collaborative model*, puts the planner in the role of mediator among a number of stakeholders and "[his or her] primary function is to listen to people's stories and assist in forging a consensus among different viewpoints". Citing Healey (1997), she states that collaborative planning is "an arrangement on action that expresses [all parties] mutual interests" (Fainstein, 2000, p.457). Sherman further refines the definition of the communicative model and stresses the importance of having a *constructive dialogue* – a technique that refers to *collaborative problem solving* and *consensus building* – and argues that "urban planners need somehow to become facilitators, to help people have constructive dialogue" (Forester et al., 2011, p.290). Based on his own professional experience, Sherman argues that mediating people's attempts to resolve their own issues helps practitioners do better planning. He differentiates between two other processes, *public consultation* and *negotiation:* public consultation is to find out what people's interests are; negotiation is a process of "some give and take" in order to reach an agreeable conclusion.

The definitions described above show the complexity and the nuances of the collaborative process. The collaborative approach allows for all stakeholders to be heard and respected; "group members sometimes [become] highly creative in a collaborative way, gaining energy from others' ideas to spin out more" (Innes and Booher, 1999, p.18). However, as described by Peterman "planning collaboratively for a place, neighbourhood or community involves coordinated and cooperative efforts by a variety of individuals or organizations each having an interest or stake, often widely varying, in issues, policies or programmes" (Peterman, 2004, p.270-271). In order to have a successful collaborative process it is necessary for all parties to adopt "shared rules, norms and structures of decision-making, and the acceptance of joint ownership and responsibility for decisions" (Gray, 1989 & Wood and Gray, 1991, as cited in Peterman, 2004, p.271). Yet, it takes time to reach the level of comfort for achieving it. As

presented by Margerum (1999, p.182-183), the collaborative process has three general phases:

- "The *problem-setting phase* includes the steps necessary to bring together stakeholders, obtain commitment, and develop the 'infrastructure' to facilitate collaboration;
- "The *direction-setting phase* occurs when stakeholders identify problems, exchange information, resolve conflicts, agree to common goals, reach consensus, and identify implementation actions;
- "During the *implementation phase* stakeholders specify actions, roles, and tasks; they design the implementation approach, and monitor and measure outcomes".

Some of the steps within the phases above may mix, especially in problem-setting and direction-setting phases, which I will discuss further in my SRP. Also, the approaches to complete those steps may vary. For that reason, combining different community models seems to be a good way for improving the planning process.

Peterman (2004) discusses the application of the advocacy planning and collaborative planning, making a clear distinction between the two. According to him, advocacy is a useful tool that provides resources to excluded people to compete against others, but it does not guarantee that those people's voices will be heard and given fair consideration. Collaboration builds relationships between various stakeholders, allows all interested parties (including residents) to express their opinion, and allows their voices to be taken into consideration. As a way to improve the effectiveness of the two approaches, Peterman promotes a combination of the two: "a careful and judicious application of collaborative planning, followed when necessary by advocacy planning may be a good strategy for use by community organizations and their supporters" (Peterman, 2004, p.274).

2.2.2. Strengths and weaknesses of the collaborative planning approach

Collaborative planning is becoming a very popular mechanism for inclusionary consensus building and joint planning. The purpose of this part of my literature review is to discuss the merits and the deficiencies of the collaborative planning concept. I base my analysis on the works of S. Fainstein, L. Sherman (as described in Forester et al., 2011), C. Listerborn, and L. Sandercock, authors who have done extensive research on the topic.

For the authors, the collaborative process comes with its undisputable merits but also has deficiencies. According to the authors, the main strengths of collaborative planning relate to conflict resolution and transformation. Constructive dialogue makes people less confrontational than they might be in other situations; for example, within a collaborative setting such as a "talking circle" people tend to be less positional and speak for the mutual interests of the whole community (Forester et al., 2011). The approach helps communities strengthen themselves by resolving their own issues; as Sherman points out "planners taking on mediating roles sometimes can be seen as helping a community to rebuild itself, to rebuild its relations, however full of conflict; and those people, once they've begun to feel better about themselves as a community, and feel better about talking to one another, will then want to come back to the problem of planning" (quoted by Forester et al., 2011, p.300). Collaborative planning can help in situations characterized by stakeholder diversity and fear of the "otherness". Sandercock provides the example of multicultural societies, and particular situations in direct face-to-face meetings among different parties are unthinkable due to pre-existing history and conflicts; she contends that the "best solution" for dealing with issues of "otherness" is a *dialogical approach* (which she calls a *therapeutic approach*) that "brings antagonistic parties together to talk through their concerns" (Sandercock, 2000, p.23) through a "speak-out" or similar process. In sum, collaborative planning can create a safe space where public perceptions might shift and new forms and types of agreement can emerge.

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Despite those strong arguments in favor of collaborative planning, the four authors pay great attention to the deficiencies of the approach. The communicative theory has several weaknesses. First, the communicative theorists make planners the central element in the discussion and "instead of asking what is to be done about cities and regions, communicative planners typically ask what planners should be doing, and the answer is that they should be good (i.e. tell the truth, not be pushy about their judgments)" (Fainstein 2000, p.455).

Second, the communicative theorists do not deal with issues of producing unjust results. Fainstein (2000, p.458) argues that "changing speech alone does not transform structures" (i.e. having good process does not bring good outcomes). For transforming structures and building new public policies there needs to be more than consensus building among stakeholders. Often, planning efforts that are based on dialogue only maintain the dominance of the already powerful groups (Fainstein, 2000). Furthermore, there is a conflict of outcomes when planning for too narrow special boundaries (e.g. small municipalities). As Fainstein (2000) argues, because of the "homogeneity imposed by spatial segregation", the likelihood of having just and diverse outcomes is very low. Listerborn (2008) also touches on the issue of homogeneity and states that there are obstacles for developing inclusive participatory approach, because of the complexity of planners' practice and the uncertainties in planners' role; therefore, there are difficulties in reaching out to the whole community. Citing Allmendinger and Tewdwr-Jones (2002), Listerborn points out that the communicative planning might create a hegemonic situation and work against a plurality of thinking. The problem of the "ideal speech" situation is that it does not take into account the fact that often conversations originate from pre-existing culture (Listerborn, 2008). Another difficulty relates to a social and cultural gap between citizens and planners, especially when it comes to interaction with ethnic communities. Therefore, it is critical for planners to have local perspective, "the closer a planner is to the inhabitants, the more engaged in the community he or she would be" (Listerborn, 2008, p.70), which sometimes is not the case.

A third problem of the communicative model is the gap between rhetoric and action. Sometimes, especially within a decentralized power system, local active groups, whose interests have been not addressed, may block the planning power of the stakeholders and limit the implementation of a particular plan (Fainstein, 2000). The participatory approach could be highly problematic in areas where the residents do not want to collaborate with the surrounding communities, and thus, participatory planning should be considered as one tool among others (Listerborn, 2008). Sandercock (2000, p.23) challenges the planning literature related to communicative action and collaborative planning approach because of the assumption that "rational discourse among stakeholders is both appropriate and achievable". By using a case study in Sydney, the author provides a very extreme example of hostility between three neighboring community groups, which makes it difficult for the planners to develop a Master plan for an area that is immediately adjacent to these community groups. Another critique that Sandercock makes is that the outcomes of applying collaborative approach are not necessary "transformative". By transformative approach the author means "a process of public learning that results in permanent shifts in values and institutions". Citing Baum (1999), Sandercock states that "the planning process must create a transitional space, between past and future, where participants can share the illusion of being apart from time … they must be able to imagine alternative futures without feeling obligated to enact any of them" (Sandercock, 2000, p.27). Her main point is that the collaborative planning literature does not recognize the need of emotional involvement. Only by providing the opportunity for the resentful groups to "speak out" their feelings will make them hear each other and eventually achieve consensus. At the end of her article, Sandercock makes a very clear remark, saying that collaborative planning can complement the political and legal framework of a place, and sometimes, especially when it comes to protecting the rights of those with less power, it is even more appropriate to use the legislative processes.

Two other problems of communicative planning relate to the amount of time that such process requires and the difficulties of framing alternatives when a community creates

an action plan without a pre-set agenda from the planners. In such cases there is a risk of spending a number of years on formulating a plan, which at the end turns out to be too vague and too hard to implement (Fainstein 2000).

As displayed by the analysis above, collaborative planning could be a powerful tool for starting a dialogue, facilitating conflict resolution and initiating transformation. However, S. Fainstein, L. Sherman, C. Listerborn, and L. Sandercock bring up meaningful critiques of collaborative planning, especially when it comes to the inclusiveness of the participatory approach, the interaction with ethnic communities, the rationality of the discourse, and the transformation of the existing structures (both in terms of power and social interactions). By bringing up these areas of concerns, planners could take them into account and improve the collaborative process they lead, as collaborative planning has been proven to be a very powerful tool.

In my opinion, these critiques should be interpreted as an alert for potential risks that the collaborative planning may have. For that reason, questions about the effectiveness of the process in Westhaven, the types of community planning models applied, the diversity of outcomes, and the inclusion of local voice and local knowledge, will be further discussed in my SRP.

2.3. The process in Westhaven

In this section I provide more details about the collaborative process in Westhaven. Examining the process step by step allows analysis of what works well and what does not. This narrative part is essential; in many case studies articles, this information is missing and authors tend to discuss the results of the planning process but not how the planning took place. While the outcomes of the planning process are important, I argue that even more crucial is the process through which the outcomes were achieved. Knowing what works well in practice and what does not is the first step for improving the outcome of the planning process. I consider the process in Westhaven an interesting

case study, as it manages to incorporate the community's needs into an action plan without any help or influence from elected officials or city's urban planners. The decision-making is based on a "bottom-up" ideology that provides diverse stakeholders with the opportunity for equal contribution.

2.3.1 Key actors

The Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee has been formed under the leadership of NDG Community Council and consists of different partners, community representatives, and residents with a mission of developing projects that improve the quality of life of the neighbourhood. The committee includes representatives from NDG Community Council (NDGCC), Department of Recreation and Sport of the CDN/NDG Borough, Loyola High School, Concordia University, Westhaven Community Center, NDG Senior Citizens Council (NDGSCC), Prévention CDN/NDG, Action Communiterre, Corporation de Développement Économique Communautaire CDN/NDG (CDEC CDN/NDG), Jeunes en Santé NDG. These actors play a key role in the planning process as they attend most of the meetings and significantly contribute to the committee's discussions. Furthermore, the committee members continuously extend invitations and strive to raise awareness among the local community groups located in NDG about the work they do. Membership in the committee is open to other interested parties.

It is also essential to note that a representative of the Department of Recreation and Sport of the CDN/NDG Borough participates in the committee in the capacity of a liaison person between the borough and the local community centre. This person is a member of the Board of Directors of the Westhaven Community Centre and has a key role when planning projects for the park and community centre in Westhaven. Hence, the participation of the borough in the Westhaven process is limited to recreation and sport and does not engage the expertise of their urban planning department.

Those who contribute with urban planning expertise are the representative of NDGCC (who also coordinates the Westhaven process) and the representative of the CDEC. Both of them are urban planning professionals. Their planning expertise plays a key role in the creation of the action plan as well as in the business-community initiative.

Interns from NDG Community Council, NDG Senior Citizens Council, and McGill University's CURA, including myself, played essential role in conducting research and analyzing data. I participated in the committee meetings, conducted interviews with the residents, processed data from surveys, prepared analyses for the neighbourhood, conducted research for specific issues that the committee was dealing with, volunteered in local activities.

2.3.2. Committee meetings

The committee meets monthly to exchange information and work collaboratively on Westhaven neighbourhood issues. Although the committee was established in the middle of 2012, the active monthly meetings only started in April 2013. By March 2014, there had been about 17 meetings in total. The meetings are usually moderated by the NDG Community Council's representative and each time they follow a specific agenda. The agenda includes time for discussion of the particular issues for the month as well as a time for creation of the action plan for the future development of the neighbourhood. The meetings usually take place at the Westhaven community centre.

2.3.3. Vision and mission[5]

In April 2013 the Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee started reflecting on its vision and mission. Two months later, in the end of May 2013, the committee came up with the following statements:

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[5] Published on the NDG Community Council website. Westhaven sector.

> The vision of the Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee is to create a lively, vibrant and integrated environment in which diverse discussions are initiated, goals are set and relevant connections are made through mobilization and partnerships within the Westhaven community for the purpose of developing projects that improve the quality of life of the neighbourhood and Notre-Dame de Grace as a whole. (NDGCC, 2013, para. 3)

> The committee's mission is to act as a catalyst of social and economic development by facilitating consultations, encouraging discussions and supporting residents and those who have a vested interest in the Westhaven community at large in the planning and implementation of projects and activities. As a catalyst, the committee aims to empower residents and partners within the Westhaven community, by providing an initial support and creating a positive space in which they can further build a community which they envision (NDGCC, 2013, para. 4)

Having a common vision and mission is fundamental for the *direction-setting phase* of the collaborative process. The agreement on common goals plays a key role when tackling issues and conflicts. In terms of wording, the statements above reveal the importance of local voices and sharing local knowledge, which has indeed been observed in the Westhaven process.

2.3.4. Priorities

When it comes to the community planning in Westhaven, there are several priorities that the committee would like to achieve, namely:

- Gain a deeper understanding of the specifics of the Westhaven community and develop a portrait and analysis of the neighbourhood through conducting survey with the residents, organizing visioning days for the community, exchange knowledge and information between the committee members, etc.
- Involve more stakeholders and partner with key community organizations to organize activities and provide services to the residents

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- Engage the residents of Westhaven to participate in different initiatives: become members of the neighbourhood committee, volunteer in activities, interact with other residents in the area, etc.
- Establish partnership with the businesses in the area and engage the businesses to invest in the local community
- Develop projects that will benefit the community – for example, creating a community garden in the neighbourhood
- Create an action plan for the future development of Westhaven

2.3.5. Survey among the residents

A major part of the planning process involves decision-making based on community needs. The committee decided to incorporate locally-defined community needs into the action plan. A first step towards achieving that goal was a survey of Westhaven residents. A sub-committee was in charge of conducting the survey and they set five months (from June to October 2013) to interact with the community to find what was seen as most needed to improve quality of life in the neighbourhood. Informal interaction and formal data collection within this period included:
- door-to-door interviews with residents
- kiosk survey and talking on the street to the people from the neighbourhood
- visioning workshops with the youth attending the summer activities at the Westhaven community centre
- kiosk information desk during the summer festival of the neighbourhood
- focus groups with residents

The sub-committee distributed the survey results to the committee at large (see Appendix B). Since then those results have been a key element in the committee's planning and decision-making process, serving as a reference point at all stages of the elaboration of the action plan.

2.4. Outcomes

The main outcome from the collaborative planning process in Westhaven is the creation of an **action plan**. The wish of the committee is to make the action plan a roadmap for all interested parties when it comes to the future development of the neighbourhood. During the process of its drafting, community energy was accumulated, which resulted in three major initiatives undertaken by the committee:

- Submission of a *Forum jeunesse de l'île de Montréal* (FJIM) Funding Application to the *Fonds régional d'investissement jeunesse* for the creation of a **community garden**
- Submission of proposals for establishing **business-community partnerships** with three major economic actors in the area: The Gazette, Parmalat, and Réno-Dépôt
- Submission of a proposal for running a **collective kitchen** in the Westhaven Community Centre

The purpose of this section is to provide more details about the action plan itself.

In October 2013, right after the completion of the survey and the consultations with residents, the committee started working on the creation of the action plan. An accomplishment of the committee and its members is that the plan is shaped according to local community aspirations. The idea behind the action plan was to create a potential pathway for the future development of the neighbourhood, then to involve the residents in its realization, and as a result, to empower the local community to shape its future development and to maintain a better quality of life in the neighbourhood.

The action plan creation process was moderated by the NDG Community Council representative. At every meeting this representative would provide documents and general guidelines on how to proceed with a given topic. She would encourage the committee members to use them in the brainstorming process but by no means was she

making those materials mandatory. These guidelines were meant to facilitate the process, especially for those members who did not have experience in creating plans. In the instances when a committee member proposed an alternative, it was considered by the committee and therefore the guidelines did not play a definitive role. Due to the efforts of the moderator, the dialogue amongst the committee members during the discussion sessions appeared open and constructive. Along with the brainstorming exercises, there were parts of the meetings during which members split in teams and worked in groups on specific tasks assigned by the moderator. Every decision was documented by the moderator and shared with all the members of the committee.

At the time I am writing my SRP (March 2014), the action plan is not yet complete. However, its table of content provides a good basis for my analysis. The action plan contains nine items (the unofficial draft is included in Appendix C):

1. Issues
2. Definitions
3. Goals
4. Actions
5. Time frame
6. Responsible sub-committee or organization
7. Targeted population
8. Funding
9. Indicators

The committee identified major issues in the neighbourhood and grouped them as related to seven thematic areas: recreation, housing, social cohesion, safety and circulation, employment, environmental quality, and food security. Issues were translated into goals and actions that the Westhaven community would tackle in the future. Responsible actors for implementing the action items were considered. The action items were classified as short-term (1 year), medium-term (2 years), and long-term (3+ years) priorities. The committee selected, as well, the ones to be implemented

first, i.e., in before the end of 2014, based on selection criteria set by the committee; the most important criterion was cost – both in terms of funds and time. The rest of the items in the action plan, such as responsible organizations, targeted population, funding, and indicators are not discussed in this paper as they are not yet complete.

In the following sections of my SRP I discuss some of the initiatives undertaken by the committee and draw conclusions about the outcomes of the Westhaven process.

2.5. Findings and discussion

In my literature review I examined three approaches to community planning: collaborative planning, advocacy, and needs assessment. In the case of Westhaven, all three approaches have been used. Having multiple stakeholders that agreed to work together on issues, learn from each other and share common vision and mission for the future development of Westhaven makes the process collaborative. The fact that the process is run by the local community organizations, which came together because they want to improve the quality of life in the neighbourhood and its residents speaks for advocacy. Moreover, these community organizations serve specific population groups; for example, NDGSCC advocates for services for seniors, Action Communiterre advocates for community gardens, Prévention advocates for urban safety, CDEC advocates for economic development and partnerships with businesses, and so on. To do so, the community groups rely on their local knowledge of the neighbourhood as well as on the local voice of the residents. To uncover local residents' needs the committee ran a local survey, interacted with the community on a daily basis, invited residents to participate in the committee meetings. All these elements represent the needs assessment approach. As demonstrated, the three models complement each other; yet, collaborative planning appears to be the umbrella planning approach.

I will now discuss several important questions about the process, the voice of the residents, conflicts, and the just outcomes when it comes to Westhaven.

To what extent was the community planning process in Westhaven a collaborative one?

The process in Westhaven has followed the main components of collaborative planning, as described in the literature, including all the steps within the problem-setting phase and the direction-setting phase. As the community planning in Westhaven is currently in its implementation phase, I do not include it in the analysis. For the first two phases, however, it is interesting to observe how the Westhaven collaborative planning process happened. A potential hypothesis for explaining why the process in practice and in theory correspond is that the coordinator of Westhaven's action planning, the representative of the NDGCC in charge of both coordinating the committee and facilitating the meetings, is an urban planner with specialization in participatory planning. The expertise of this person has shaped, to some extent, the collaborative planning in Westhaven and guided the committee – through the pre-set guidelines and meeting agendas – to follow a framework that replicates the one that we find in the literature on collaborative planning.

The collaborative process in Westhaven did not begin with precise targets, but, to the contrary, the committee had its own pace and only defined its specific goals after getting the results of the survey and consultation with residents. The main reason for that "openness" and bottom-up orientation was the commitment of the committee to incorporate the expressed needs of the local community in the planning process. The problem-setting phase in Westhaven took more than one year (from mid-2012 to September 2013). The direction-setting phase has been taking 6 months to date and probably will continue for another couple of months. Although the committee did not map out what precise steps the collaborative planning process should follow, it is in line with what the planning literature describes as general process.

Yet, it is important to mention that the Westhaven's case differs from conventional collaborative planning, which often relies on considerable consulting with external

entities such as private consultants or the local government (usually the urban planning department). In Westhaven, the collaborative planning process is largely combined with advocacy planning.

To what extent have local voices been heard?

Westhaven managed to incorporate, to some extent, the community's needs into the planning process. The community organizations, and their representatives, has been working with the local population that is mostly immigrants, renters, facing numerous socio-economic challenges and letting the concerns of that population dictate the committee meetings. Due to the numerous consultation sessions with residents the committee was able to get the sense of wishes and concerns and to follow up on them, when possible. If we compare the results of the survey (Appendix B) and the preliminary draft of the action plan (Appendix C), we can see the impact of some of the ideas – particularly those related to local concerns – in the action plan. However, the initiatives undertaken by the committee are driven more by the committee members, based on their interests and capabilities, with a concern to include only feasible actions in the plan.

An example of an "internally pushed" initiative is the community garden. The idea came initially from the committee and it was then tested in the survey with the residents. The community garden was planned as a community-building activity that will improve food services in Westhaven and strengthen the community as a whole. The idea of a community garden arose in the very early stage of the planning process (April 2013). One of the committee member organizations (Action Communiterre) has collective gardening as its core activity. Another member – Loyola High School – demonstrated a strong interest in lending some of Layola's Westhaven land to the Westhaven committee for community gardening. The correspondence between these two factors made the idea viable. In May-June 2013, the committee started exploring different options for the community garden. In July 2013, the committee tested with residents the idea of having

a community garden in Westhaven. There was a question in the survey questionnaire asking the residents if they "would be interested in having a collective garden or shared garden space in the neighborhood". Community garden supporters turned out to be 74 percent (out of a sample of 114 people). With land, expertise, and residents' support for its creation, the main challenge left for the committee was funding. A sub-committee was formed with the mandate of finding financial support. After several months of exchanging ideas and exploring options, two funding applications were submitted – one, in September 2013, to the *Fonds régional d'investissement jeunesse* (FJIM goal: *Les saines habitudes de vie*) and another, in December 2013, to the Walk-a-Thon committee of Loyola High School. As of March 2014 the Westhaven committee had not received a decision on either application.

However, some limitations were also observed when "hearing" local voices. On the one hand, the participation of local residents in the committee was limited. Only two residents sat on the committee and only one of them was regularly attending the meetings. The question of including more residents in the committee was a recurring discussion topic and the decision of the committee was to contact more residents after the action plan was complete. The main argument supporting this decision was that the action plan would make it easier for residents to realize local projects. The neighbourhood committee could do more to include larger number of residents in the decision-making process, yet it would require more time, resources and dedication for encouraging residents to participate. My observations show that the committee experiences a shortage of human resources and tends to constantly postpone dedicating efforts to involve more residents in the decision-making process. On the other hand, ideas from the "wish list" (see Appendix B) of local people were hardly presented in the action plan. Residents generated ideas that were not feasible to implement: walk-in clinic, swimming pool, basketball and football fields, bigger supermarket, dog park, and others. Although the feasibility of actions is a relevant criterion, it does not justify not hearing local voice. If local people are asking for swimming pool and sport fields, for example, then the community planning process should remain open to incorporate that

wish in the action plan with a focus on providing better access to facilities available nearby (Loyola High School, Concordia University, Montreal West). Yet, other short-term solutions from the "wish list" were incorporated in the action plan, such as services for elderly people and a collective kitchen (more about the collective kitchen in the paragraph below).

To what extent was the Westhaven process capable of dealing with conflicts?

A major strength of the collaborative approach – both in theory and as experienced in Westhaven – was that it helped in dealing with conflicts. During committee meetings, situations occurred in which two of the committee members could not reach an agreement. Such dynamics were apparent, for example, in the collective kitchen initiative. The collaborative approach employed meant that although the initiative was threatened, dialog was re-established and an alternative solution was found. The collective kitchen was an initiative that the committee, and particularly one of the committee member organizations (NDGSCC), proposed to run at the Westhaven Community Centre. The idea of having a collective kitchen came from the survey with the residents in Westhaven and overlapped with one of the programs that the Senior Citizen Council offers. In February 2014, NDGSCC submitted a proposal to the board of directors of the Westhaven Community Centre for locating its program in Westhaven. Right after the idea was presented in front of the board some complications emerged. These complications related to who will cover which costs. The proposal was well-perceived by the board, but there were some extra staff cost that the board asked NDGSCC to cover. This request was not acceptable for NDGSCC since they already had proposed to cover the cost related to the program and its coordination (including facilitator's salary, food, and other ingredients). This issue was brought for a discussion during the committee meetings in late February and mid-March as both NDGSCC and Westhaven Community Centre were member organizations. The main theme of the discussion was the partnership concept and what it implies in this particular case. The NDGSCC found unacceptable the unwillingness of the Westhaven Community Centre

board of directors to invest in this program; the board transferred all responsibility for logistics, including the costs for having Westhaven Community Centre personnel in the building during the collective kitchen's hours, to the NDGSCC. The committee supported the NDGSCC and tried to find a solution so that the program could be realised. The representative from the Department of Recreation and Sport of the borough, who is also a member of the board of the directors of the Westhaven Community Centre, went back to the board with several alternatives that the committee suggested together. There were some time slots that were tested with the coordinator of the centre and it turned out that they might work well. Ultimately, the project was confirmed and first collective kitchen classes were planned for April 2014. The realization of the collective kitchen visualizes how Westhaven stakeholders complemented each other, and how NDGSCC's expertise and advocacy contributed to collective learning and enthusiasm about the project.

To what extent are the outcomes in Westhaven diverse?

The outcomes in Westhaven do not seem to be diverse enough i.e. they concentrate on a limited scope of solutions and do not tackle all major issues facing the neighborhood. This is a major weakness of the collaborative planning process as described by Fainstein (2000), which I find particularly applicable to Westhaven. First, having a good collaborative community process does not necessary mean good outcomes or, in Fainstein's words, "changing speech alone does not transform structures" (2000, p.458). In Westhaven, this gap is observed with respect to tackling issues linked to the physical layout of the neighbourhood such as train tracks or high-volume arterial roads. A collaborative planning on its own is not enough to change the physical layout, which would require political decisions from external entities (in this case transportation authorities and the city) not a party to the planning process. Second, Fainstein (2000) notes that difficulties may arise in framing alternatives when a community creates a plan without a pre-set agenda or buy-in from the planners. A neighbourhood may reach creative solutions or may struggle with coming up with specific projects, which may take

several years to determine that the plan is too vague and the projects are hard to implement. In the Westhaven case, the coordinator of the committee is an urban planner, but the process excludes the urban planning department of the borough. Collaboration with the urban planning department has never been discussed by the committee. To some extent not having the borough involved is beneficial to Westhaven as it allows the committee to focus on the development of its own programs; for other aspects of neighbourhood planning (train tracks, traffic volume, etc.), however, the committee will not be able to implement desired solutions without the intervention of the borough or other external entities.

These difficulties relate to the bottom-up approach in Westhaven. Many of the ideas emerging from the planning process seem to be unfeasible in short-term, but might be crucial for specific groups in the neigbourhood. Community groups in Westhaven can change the neighbourhood's future, but in order to implement diverse projects that result in more just outcomes for the community, partnerships with strategic alliances (such as with CURA) and with other influential actors are key.

In conclusion, the case study in Westhaven shows that collaborative planning has benefited the community planning process in the neighbourhood. The collaborative approach was key for establishing a constructive dialogue among the committee members. Furthermore, combined with advocacy and needs assessments, it not only benefited the process, but also the outcomes from this process. Because of the belief in the good will of all the participants (all the committee members are actively taking part in the NDG community), the exchange of ideas, knowledge, skills, and even resources was indeed more meaningful and resulted in taking actions and running initiatives that elsewhere would be impossible without the assistance of external entities.

2.6. Lessons learned

In this final section of Chapter 2, I identify several aspects of Westhaven's action plan process from which community groups and community planners can learn.

The first lesson is related to the genesis of collaborative community planning. The case study in Westhaven reveals a relatively unique setup in terms of organizing the process and participating in the dialogue. The Westhaven process could be defined as a collaborative one with elements of advocacy, emerging out of the good will of the local community organizations in NDG. Before the formation of the Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee, someone needed to take the lead and to propose a project. In the case of Westhaven, this someone was the NDGCC, which was the first organization on board to start working on Westhaven's development. After the NDGCC applied for two grants and received funding, it started engaging other community groups and stakeholders and established the neighbourhood committee.

Second, in order to have well organized committee meetings and an effective work flow, it is very important for someone to take the coordination in his or her hands. In Westhaven, this person was the representative of the NDGCC, who was in charge of coordinating and facilitating the collaborative process. This person was moderating the meetings and due to her participatory planning expertise, she was able to guide the collaborative planning in a productive direction. Having someone with an urban planning background and expertise in collaborative planning was key for the success of the Westhaven process.

Third, the case of Westhaven is a good example of a process that builds on the strengths and skills of the various participants. For example, the community garden project came to life because one committee member organization – Action Communiterre – has collective gardening as a core activity and another member – Loyola High School – had land available for the creation of a community garden. The

openness and the willingness to put a project together is not something that could happen easily. However, the case study in Westhaven shows that once trust among the committee members has been built then this process is more likely to happen.

Fourth, Westhaven shows that collaborative community planning combined with advocacy is possible, but both the process and the implementation may be difficult. Funding is a major weakness when running a planning process without a pre-set agenda and without a planning project from the city planning department. Implementation, particularly where it entails implementing actions to change the physical layout of the neighbourhood, will likely require assistance from or the leadership of local authorities. Although the exclusion of the planning department has its positive aspect (there is no political interference in Westhaven), it also comes with major constraints in terms of financing, institutional buy-in, and the resulting scope of the possible changes. Such a lesson should be born in mind when attempting to organize collaborative community planning without the support of local authorities.

And last but not least, this process requires the establishment of partnerships between the committee members – a notion that sounds simple but is difficult to realize in practice. Establishing those partnerships requires a number of months up, even a year, and ultimately affects the general timeframe of such community planning processes.

CHAPTER 3: BUSINESS-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS IN WESTHAVEN

3.1. Introduction

In Chapter 3, I focus on the initiative to establish business-community partnerships in Westhaven. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the collaborative community planning efforts of the Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee have resulted in the development of several initiatives and one of them is to build business-community partnerships in the neighbourhood. The committee has decided to approach the three major businesses in the area: The Gazette, Parmalat, and Réno-Dépôt.

My main goal in this chapter is to research how community organizations can approach locally-situated businesses to partner for local development. One practice that I find very suitable for this kind of collaboration is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). I first explore the literature to examine how the policy of CSR can act as a tool for establishing partnerships between businesses and community organizations. Then, I focus on how the community organizations in Westhaven approached the issue of establishing partnership with the locally-situated businesses in the neighbourhood and what challenges emerged during that process. At the end of the chapter, I discuss what lessons can be learned and propose a CSR tool for community groups to guide them when they approach businesses.

3.2. Literature review

In this section, I review literature on the concept of CSR with attention to its importance in the business world, types, forms of collaboration with communities, and competing

explanations of why a company would be motivated to adopt a social responsibility approach. Due to limited sources of information, the literature review focuses more on how businesses perceive potential collaboration with community groups and less on how it is perceived by community organizations.

CSR definition and importance

In the literature, there are various definitions of Corporate Social Responsibility but the most commonly used one is:

> CSR generally represents a continuing commitment by an organization to behave ethically and contribute to economic development, while also improving the quality of life of its employees (and their families), the local community, and society at large. (Watts and Holme 1999, as cited in Lindgreen and Swaen 2010, p.3)

CSR has increased in prominence since the 1990s (Lindgreen et al. 2009; 2010; Hess 2002; Garriga 2004; Sen and Cowley 2012). Corporate interest in CSR is driven by the belief that CSR can be good for business (Kotler and Lee 2005, as cited in Lindgreen and Swaen 2010) because it enhances the corporate image and reputation and creates competitive advantage over competitors (Porter and Kramer 2006; Fombrun and Shanley 1990, as cited in Lindgreen and Swaen 2010, Hess 2002). It is also considered a "win-win" scenario for the organization and its community as it fosters positive employee attitudes and creates customer goodwill (Lindgreen and Swaen 2010, p.3).

Theories and concepts

The literature demonstrates that CSR is a fluid concept and there are a series of problems associated with it. On the one hand, there is a struggle within academia to develop a "CSR paradigm" and use a common language to guide the discussion (Godfrey and Hatch 2007, as cited in Lindgreen et al. 2009). Furthermore, the literature points out that "CSR has moved from ideology to reality, and many consider it necessary

for organizations to define their roles in society and apply social and ethical standards to their businesses" (Lichtenstein et al. 2004, as cited in Lindgreen and Swaen 2010, p.1). However, precisely because there is no common theoretical framework, each company understands and applies CSR in its own fashion which makes it even more difficult for theorists to conceptualize it. On the other hand, even though "organizations increasingly adhere and demonstrate their commitment to CSR" (Pinkston and Carroll 1994, as cited in Lindgreen and Swaen 2010, p.1), "many struggle with this effort" (Lindgreen et al. 2009, as cited in Lindgreen and Swaen 2010, p.1). Such an observation implies that if a company were presented with a strong vision and action plan for CSR, the business would be receptive to its adoption.

The literature also provides a definition of the different types of CSR. Garriga and Mele (2004) classify the main CSR theories in four categories: instrumental, political, integrative, and ethical theories. These four categories represent the four CSR dimensions related to: profits (i.e., instrumental theories, where social activities are instruments for wealth creation), political performance (i.e. political theories, where corporations use their power in a responsible way), social demands (i.e., integrative theories, where corporations respond to social demands), and ethical values (i.e., ethical theories, which consider the ethical responsibility of corporations to society). As stated in the article, some of these theories combine different approaches to studying CSR. However, there is no consensus about the boundaries of the field and the terminology, and the field of CSR is "broadly rather than focused, multidisciplinary" (Carroll 1994, as cited in Garriga and Mele 2004, p.52).

Specifics in the collaboration between businesses and NGOs

Nowadays, there is greater demand by NGOs and communities to see corporations responding in a way that they consider socially responsible. To answer to this pressure corporations have started establishing a *dialogue* with a wide range of stakeholders (known as stakeholder dialogue). This dialogue helps the parties find solutions to issues

that relate to signals from the environment that are generally unclear. The dialogue "enhances a company's sensitivity to its environment but also increases the environment's understanding of the dilemmas facing the organization" (Kaptein and Van Tulder 2003, as cited in Garriga and Mele 2004, p.59). This relation works in both ways: businesses need to be better understood by the community and the community needs to be better understood by the businesses.

There are different ways for the NGOs to relate to businesses. They could be customers, suppliers, subcontractors and collaborators. Galaskiewicz and Colman (2006) focus on the last one, business-NGO collaborations, which they classify into four main types: philanthropic, strategic, commercial, and political. Philanthropic collaborations are those where a company funds a nonprofit organization to provide services that advance social welfare. Strategic collaborations, called also strategic philanthropy, aim to realize executive benefits while advancing social welfare through the activities of the nonprofit. Commercial collaborations increase the revenues for both the company and the nonprofit, and the political collaborations aim to reproduce or change institutional arrangements by finding mutual satisfying solution to a problem. Galaskiewicz and Colman (2006, p.181) clarify that philanthropic partnerships "often entail more than check writing and equipment donations" and include getting involved in volunteering programs, participating of company representatives in planning and policy sessions, adopting projects from the company, and etc.

The management of such collaborations can be challenging, as each business has its own set of people responsible for the CSR initiatives. Some programs are driven from top management (e.g. CEO) and others from community relations personnel (e.g. Public Relations department). These people tend to vary with the size of the company. Galaskiewicz and Colman (2006) state that the traditional way of approving contribution initiatives comes from the CEO and his or her secretary, assistant or other corporate officer. In cases when they receive requests, they first review all the requests and then decide which one to support and write the check from their office funds. This description

applies to small companies and family-run businesses (Burlingame and Frishkoff 1996, as cited in Galaskiewicz and Colman 2006), but it is observed in larger companies too, especially when the CEO initiates and/or guides programs that entail a significant use of company's resources and competencies. Another management approach, especially characteristic of large firms, is to delegate decision-making to the company's community affairs, public relations, communication, or human resources department (Tillman 1997, as cited in Galaskiewicz and Colman 2006).

Developing volunteering programs in a community is a good example of collaboration between businesses and NGOs. However, many executives experience difficulties in deciding about "levels and types of support to provide and whether to promote specific volunteer opportunities or to let employees feel free to follow their interests" (Kotler and Lee 2005, Chapter 7, section 6). Instead, having employees volunteer through a company-sponsored program could be an option. Kotler and Lee (2005) argue that companies should consider sponsoring employee volunteering under six circumstances:

1. "When current social initiatives would benefit from a volunteer component…;
2. "When a group of employees express an interest in a specific cause that has strong connections with business and corporate citizenship goals…;
3. "When a community need emerges, especially an unexpected one that is a good match for the resources and skills of a workforce…;
4. "When technological advances make it easier to match employees to volunteer opportunities;
5. "When a strong community organization approaches a business for support, represents an issue of interest to employees, and has a natural connection to strategic corporate citizenship and business goals;
6. "When a volunteer effort might open new markets or provide opportunities for new product development and research…." (Kotler and Lee 2005, Chapter 7, section 6)

The first, third, and fifth options refer directly to a successful strategy of how a company could be approached by the community. For example, in Westhaven, the community groups can benefit from the third option as they can approach Reno Dépôt, the Gazette and Parmalat with local needs that link to the resources and the

competencies of the companies. The literature defines corporate community involvement that entails a use of companies' resources and competencies as "corporate social initiatives" (CSI) (Hess et al. 2002). Below I discuss the driving factors for CSI implementation and motivation of businesses for CSR.

Motives and driving factors

CSI programs relate to the core values of the company (Hess et al. 2002). CSI has two important aspects. The first aspect relates to CSI's nature. On the one hand, CSI programs reflect the corporate recognition of specific community issues or needs (Hess et al. 2002). Hess, Rogovsky, and Dunfee provide McDonald's as an example of a company that has developed CSI program based on the needs of the communities in which it operates. The company has committed to hire entry-level employees, to provide training and support programs to their employees and help them succeed in their carriers. This is especially meaningful for local hiring in low-income areas where people do not have degrees and such on-the-job-training provides a good opportunity for having a carrier. On another hand, CSI may be linked with the core competencies of the companies (Hess et al. 2002). As described by Hess, Rogovsky, and Dunfee, UPS is an example of a company that links its corporate social initiatives with its specialization in mail delivery by collecting and delivering humanitarian aid on as-needed basis. Yet, these are examples of programs that are initiated and guided by the top corporate management and need to be distinguished from programs delegated to the community relations personnel.

There are three categories of drivers behind the adoption of a social initiative within a broad CSR approach: competitive advantage, moral marketplace factors, and the comparative advantage (Hess et al. 2002, p. 112-116).

- **Competitive Advantage.** Corporate social initiatives are considered as "soft sources" of competitive advantage that can benefit corporate image and

reputation more than – "traditional sources" such as finance, internet technology, and location. Traditional sources of competitive advantage remain important but it is more difficult for a business to distinguish itself with traditional factors than with soft factors, opening space for social initiatives within a competitive corporate startegy. As Hess, Rogovsky, and Dunfee (2002, p.113) observe, "long-lasting community involvement programs are more likely to improve the image of the corporation than after-profit cash contributions", particularly when business is operating in foreign countries or entering new markets.

- **Moral Marketplace Factors.** A company's performance depends on various factors related to markets, competition, technology, and the economy. In addition, it is also related to the capacity of the company to adjust to changes in the attitudes of consumers, employees, investors, and others stakeholders, including those related to ethics and morality. Moral desires are "embodied in capital, consumer, and labor markets" (Hess et al. 2002, p.114) and sometimes companies make trade-offs between their moral desires, better productivity and return on investment, and consumers' moral desires. A failure to respond to the changing marketplace morality and high expectations for CSR leads to negative impacts on companies' performance.

- **Comparative advantage.** A firm gains comparative advantage over other companies by making the best use of resources (Hunt and Morgan 1995). When a firm has a resource that is rare among competitors, it has the potential for producing a comparative advantage for that firm (Barney 1991, as cited in Hunt and Morgan 1995). In terms of CSR, companies develop unique competencies that provide them not only comparative advantage over other companies, but also comparative advantage over governments in the way they respond to particular issues. Companies play complementary role to governments when they respond to social needs by exercising their core competencies. There is certain pressure on firms to enact social initiatives as a way to respond to public

expectations, which in result would give a firm comparative advantage over others.

Galaskiewicz and Colman (2006) group the motives of the companies to engage in philanthropic partnerships into three categories: increase profits and improve financial performance, advance managerial utility, and further social welfare. The first motive, to **increase profits and improve financial performance**, is a common strategy for companies to generate "good will" among stakeholders i.e. "customers, employees, investors, regulators, or the communities in which firms operate" (Galaskiewicz and Colman 2006), by using philanthropic contributions. Webb and Farmer (1996, cited in Galaskiewicz and Colman 2006) state that "a good image can either increase product demand or help reduce operating costs". Corporate managers favour philanthropic initiatives for this reason. The second motive is to **advance managerial utility.** As Galaskiewicz and Colman (2006, p.186) argue, in such cases "executives may use corporate contributions to further their own interests, thus making contributions a form of executive compensation". The authors argue that if firms are disciplined by tight management, in general they tend to give less to charity; but if firms have more decentralized ownership and greater managerial autonomy they tend to give more. Another factor that influences contributions is the "inner circle" and peer pressure. A company may increase its contributions if other companies in their city have higher contributions too (Siegfried 1986; Useem 1984, as cited in Galaskiewicz and Colman 2006). The third motive, to **further social welfare**, refers mainly to social responsibility and the moral obligation of companies to advance social welfare. According to a study by Jerry Marx in 1993[6], the most important goals of corporate giving programs are: "high-quality community (93.4 percent)", "improved community services (93.8 percent)", and "racial harmony (83.5 percent)" (Galaskiewicz and Colman, 2006, p.188). However, behind the three drivers mentioned above, the basic one is to increase company's profit:

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[6] Nationwide study of 194 strategic philanthropy programs in the U.S.

> Companies are seeking to increase their profit or market share by doing things that attract or retain customers and/or that distinguish them in a positive way from competitors. Except from exceptional circumstances – some business people may simply be philanthropists – most corporate social initiatives will be implemented only if it adds to the company's bottom line … However, furthering social welfare may be a 'consequence' of the more self-seeking motives, so one should not discount the fact that social welfare can be enhanced through actions taken to increase profits or to advance management utility (Richard Shearmur, personal communication, December 19, 2013).

As demonstrated above, most of the literature covers CSR practices done by large corporations. Relevant questions for further understanding the CSR practices are: what motivates small and medium-size businesses to engage with communities and are there specific elements and conditions that need to be considered? The role of companies and how they relate to surrounding communities and environment is also something that needs to be considered.

Small and medium enterprises (SME) differ from large companies. To understand how SMEs get involved in CSR initiatives one "must consider the motivations, constraints and uncertainties facing smaller firms and recognize that these differ from those facing large firms" (Westhead and Storey 1996, as cited in Sen and Cowley 2012, p.417). Smaller firms have different organizational structures and management styles than larger companies. SMEs have simple, flexible and highly centralized management structures that are "further reinforced by the limited number of hierarchical levels" (MacMillan 1975, as cited in Sen and Cowley 2012, p.417). Such organizations are usually quicker, flexible, and responsive to the change of the business environment (Goffee et al. 1998, as cited in Sen and Cowley 2012). Yet, decisions are strongly influenced by the owners' personal values rather than long-term planning and rationality, thus in the literature SMEs "are accused of being strategically myopic" (Mazzarol 2004, as cited in Sen and Cowley 2012, p.417). The influence of the owners' personal values is an important distinction between large corporations and SMEs. Smaller companies are more likely to be motivated by the social welfare aspect as the owners' personal values have stronger

impact on companies' policy (Richard Shearmur, personal communication, December 19, 2013). Another SME characteristic that needs to be considered when analyzing the tendency to CSR initiatives is *visibility*. Citing Bowen 2000, Sen and Cowley argue that visibility plays a crucial factor in shaping business behavior. SMEs in particular "tend to rely heavily on few customers within their local community, they are highly visible and their activities are under constant public scrutiny" (Hadjimonolis 1999 and Quayle 2002, as described in Sen and Cowley 2012, p.417).

There is controversy in the literature about the way SMEs perceive CSR. According to some authors, SMEs do not acknowledge CSR and the social and environmental impact of their business (Hitchens et al. 2005; Petts et al. 1999, as cited in Sen and Cowley 2012). SME owners and managers perceive CSR initiatives "as costs affecting their bottom-line" (Anglada 2000; Gerstenfield and Roberts 2000; Tilley 1999, as cited in Sen and Cowley 2012, p.418). On the other side, there is the understanding that "the smaller size of SMEs provides little space to hide mistakes, and therefore the moral proximity with community and customers strongly influences their perception of CSR" (Spence 2007, as cited in Sen and Cowley 2012, p.418). Spence also argues that SMEs tend to react on "an ad hoc and personal basis to social needs because they do not have the resources to focus on strategic gains" (quoted by Sen and Cowley 2012, p.418). Other supporters of the idea that local community influence SMEs to do CSR claim that "local business community culture is often strong enough to replace owners' personal values, and therefore, social control is a powerful form of governance on smaller networked businesses" (Brown and King 1982; Larson 1992; Leifer and White 1986, as cited in Sen and Cowley 2012, p.418). The reason why there are such contrasting results might be the context within which SMEs operate – small towns vs. large cities (Richard Shearmur, personal communication, December 19, 2013). For example, SMEs in a small town will be more likely to take part in community activities due to the close scrutiny from the general public. On the contrary, SMEs in a large city, located for example in a business park, will be far more anonymous and independent, and therefore will perceive CSR as an unnecessary cost that would probably have very

little effect on their bottom line or on their clients' perception (Richard Shearmur, personal communication, December 19, 2013).

Another debate in the literature relates to the notion that "social interaction with stakeholders shapes responsible behaviour of SMEs more than in large organizations" (Fuller and Tian 2006, as cited in Sen and Cowley 2012, p.418). Some authors suggest that stakeholders who have an economic stake in the business have greater influence on CSR decisions. However, recent studies show that SMEs participate in CSR by engaging more and more with their community and those activities do not necessarily bring direct benefits to the businesses (Spence and Schmidpeter 2003; Jenkins 2006, as cited in Sen and Cowley 2012). Sen and Cowley's review of ten publications about SME motivations to participate in CSR shows diverse motivations attributed to firms. For example, five of the articles reviewed mention business reputation, four mention meeting stakeholder expectations, three mention long-term survival or ethical reasons or competitive impact, and so on. As mentioned above, the context within which SMEs operate is also an important factor that should be taken into account when analyzing these different motives for social engagement.

Sen and Cowley's research with a limited number of businesses[7] in Australia finds that the top three rationales to engage with CSR are philanthropic – looking after people who support the business, giving back to the community, being a community member – and only after comes the ethical perspective. Sen and Cowley underline that the main motivations documented were building "relationships and networks with community members that improve the business' image and at the same time, increase their personal satisfaction", which implies that the economic goals are not the sole motivation for SMEs (Sen and Cowley 2012). The interviewees also said that these relationships and networks increase the negotiation power of their companies and give them the opportunity to influence stronger stakeholders, e.g., governments (Sen and Cowley 2012).

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[7] In-depth interviews with 12 companies

To summarize, small businesses are different from large ones. SMEs have simpler and highly centralized management structure, thus they are usually quicker and more flexible to respond to changes in the business environment. Smaller companies are more likely to be motivated by the social welfare aspect as decisions are influenced by owner's personal values rather than long-term planning and rationality. SMEs tend to react on an ad-hoc and personal basis to social needs, because they do not have the resources to focus on strategic gains, while this is not the case of larger companies. Local community may influence SMEs to do CSR through social control and visibility; these are factors that shape SMEs business behavior as they usually rely on fewer customers than larger companies and their activities are more visible in the local community.

CSR is a business behavior that does not have a strict universally-accepted definition. The review of the literature shows that companies' motivations to participate in social initiatives vary and they differ between larger and smaller businesses. Also, one can assume that companies in smaller towns and more tightly-knit communities will behave differently than companies in larger cities and more anonymous locations because of public scrutiny. Location, visibility and pre-existing community ties are thus important factors to be taken into account when approaching businesses and asking them to participate in social initiatives.

3.3. The process in Westhaven

In this section I explore the process of establishing business-community partnerships in Westhaven, as a specific form of a potential realization of CSR practice by businesses. I am particularly interested in how this idea emerged, how the process was led by the committee, and what steps have been made by the committee towards establishing relationships with locally-situated businesses in the neighbourhood. I am also interested in the type of businesses the committee decided to approach.

3.3.1. Development of the initiative

As mentioned in Chapter 2, section 2.4., along with the creation of the action plan for the future development of Westhaven, three key initiatives were undertaken by the local community groups. One of them was the establishment of business-community partnerships in the neighbourhood. This initiative emerged in November 2013 when a committee member organization (Corporation de Développement Économique Communautaire CDN/NDG) took the lead of drafting proposals for establishing partnerships with the three major economic actors in the area: The Gazette, Parmalat, and Réno-Dépôt. Yet, the idea of building relationships with locally-situated businesses was not new for CDEC and the committee. In July 2013 CDEC's representative came to visit Westhaven and met with the coordinator of the Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee. They did a tour of the neighbourhood and discussed future opportunities for approaching the businesses in the area and establishing relationships with them. This aspiration aligned well with the vision and mission of the committee and thus it was brought to the Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee meetings in August and September 2013, but the actual work towards the realization of the partnership started in November 2013.

In November 2013 the Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee established a sub-committee to draft proposals to the businesses, which were then brought for consultation with the rest of the committee. From November to January, the drafting of the proposals was led by the CDEC's representative. Expertise in socio-economic development and working with businesses in the borough made CDEC's representative a key person for the proposals' development.

The initial drafts were prepared by CDEC's representative and presented at the first sub-committee meeting in the beginning of November. Important elements were discussed and revised based on the input from the sub-committee members. There was a fundamental characteristic of the initial proposals that was challenged: the structure of

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the proposals. It was important for the sub-committee to agree on a structure that improved readability of the text and made the idea easy to "sell". It was decided that the proposals need to be oriented towards the business interests of the companies. Since the proposals were the first "point of sale", they should offer potential projects from which the company would benefit. This where CSR could come into play.

In order to move forward with a CSR approach, the community groups would have needed to acknowledge and take advantage of CSR practices when approaching the businesses. However, the Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee members did not think through the prism of CSR until I mentioned it as a potential option. I provided some insights and proposed recommendations to the Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee based on the CSR concept so that they could have a stronger position when trying to establish a dialogue with the three largest companies located in Westhaven.

After the proposals were revised and solid drafts were prepared, CDEC's representative presented them to the entire committee. Since the CDEC's representative was coordinating the initiative from the beginning, it was this person's responsibility to update the committee about the proposals' development, to consult with the committee members every time there was a revised proposal or new ideas about the projects to offer, or concerns about legal or financial implications were raised. After several sessions of exchanging ideas, the final versions of the proposals were sent out to the committee in the beginning of March 2014 for final feedback before their submission in late March 2014 (after this study was completed).

3.3.2. Targeted businesses

One of my research aims is to use the CSR notion as a basis for preparing recommendations for improving the process of establishing business-community collaborations on a local level. As such, I provide information on the three companies at stake, focusing mainly on information about their company profile, the industry, and their prior experience with CSR initiatives. A summary for each company is presented below. Subsequent sections explore barriers to be overcome in realizing a CSR partnership with the companies, progress to date, and specific elements of a successful proposal.

- **The Gazette (often called Montreal Gazette)**
  - <u>The company:</u> Daily newspaper, owned by the largest publisher of paid English-language daily newspapers in Canada – Postmedia Network Inc.
  - <u>Size:</u> Large company (201-500 employees).
  - <u>Industry:</u> Information (newspaper – print edition and digital version – combined with printing).
  - <u>Type of facility located in Westhaven:</u> Printing plant.
  - <u>Experience with CSR:</u> Cultural and educational activities: fundraising campaign (e.g. Raise-a-Reader), regional spelling competition for students, mentorship program for students, community support (e.g. theater, Italian music week, Greek festival). Their sponsorships are split into three categories: cause-related, corporate, amateur sports.

- **Parmalat**
  - <u>The company:</u> International company, with a strong brand heritage in the Canadian dairy industry (more than 120 years).
  - <u>Size:</u> Large company (1001-5000 employees).
  - <u>Industry:</u> Manufacturing (food production: milk and dairy products, fruit juices, cultured products, cheese products and table spreads).
  - <u>Type of facility located in Westhaven:</u> Ingredients & Export.

- - Experience with CSR: Sponsor of Kids Help Phone in Canada as well as charitable initiatives.

- **Réno-Dépôt**
  - The company: Warehouse stores chain for home improvement and gardening at lower prices, owned by RONA.
  - Size: Large company (8000 employees).
  - Industry: Retail trade.
  - Type of facility located in Westhaven: Warehouse store.
  - Experience with CSR: Sponsorships.

These three companies are located in immediate proximity to the Westhaven neighbourhood: Parmalat, on the south boundary at St-Jacques Street; Réno-Dépôt, on the north boundary at West Broadway Street; The Gazette, two blocks further away to the north on St-Jacques Street. These companies have a direct impact on the environment as Parmalat generates high traffic volumes on St-Jacques Street, while Réno-Dépôt has a large surface parking area in front of the store, which is in close proximity to local residents and may cause a heat island. The Gazette, on the other hand, maintains a large number of green spaces surrounding its facilities, and thus provides potential for projects that could benefit the whole community.

Westhaven can benefit from partnerships with the said companies for several reasons. All three companies are large, have significant resources, a large workforce, and demonstrate openness towards CSR (as stated on their websites). Westhaven community needs and preliminary ideas about projects match with the resources and competencies of the three companies. For example, Réno-Dépôt may provide materials for the community garden, as one of the core values of the company is to provide materials for home improvement and gardening at affordable prices. Parmalat, from the other side, may provide food products for the collective kitchen, as the company is committed to people's health and wellness by producing high-quality food products. And

the Gazette may, for example, shed light on local community needs, issues, and achievements by printing a neighbourhood newsletter that the committee wishes to launch in Westhaven. Printing a newsletter for the local community, which in its majority is Anglophone, will link with the company's competencies and corporate values.

3.3.3. Challenges in proposing projects

There were two major challenges related to the projects that the Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee included in the business proposals.

The first challenge observed relates to identifying projects that would be a good fit for both the community and the businesses. In Westhaven, several brainstorming sessions were held during the committee meetings but they were not very productive in identifying projects. This difficulty may have been caused by the fact that the action plan was unfinished. If the action plan had been ready, then it might have been easier for the committee members to think of projects that met local priorities as well as generating benefits for the targeted company.

In the second place, there were potential issues of liability associated with proposed urban projects. One of the projects that the committee was planning to propose to one of the businesses in Westhaven had legal implications that the committee needed to check beforehand to know if it is feasible to undertake such project or not. The committee intended to suggest a community garden project to Réno-Dépôt, a project that would happen on land owned by the company in Westhaven. Réno-Dépôt would need to grant public access to the land. However, such access could involve insurance and liability issues related to public access of private land. The committee decided to look for legal information and possible ways for these issues to be resolved. This was not an easy task. The main challenge for the committee was where to find such information and at what cost. Lacking funding for legal input, the committee asked for legal information from a free legal clinic at McGill University. However, the students

working there were not authorized to offer legal advice and only to point out relevant charters and sections in the law applicable to the case. The information received was not clear enough for the purposes of the Westhaven's project. As a result, the committee decided to use personal networks and eventually, they found the information they needed. It turned out that the legal issues could be resolved through a private contract between the Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee and Réno-Dépôt, which would allow for *Right of Use and Passage*, a simple procedure that every real-estate or notary lawyer would be able to do.

This example shows that business-community partnerships hide different sort of obstacles that interested parties need to consider. Some of these obstacles are related to financing and expertise to which the committee does not necessarily have access. In the case of Westhaven, the financial shortcomings were overcome through personal connections.

3.4. Outcomes

So far, the major outcome of the attempt to strike a partnership with locally-situated businesses is the actual submission of the proposals to the three businesses located in Westhaven: The Gazette, Parmalat, and Réno-Dépôt. The proposals are meant to explore the possibilities for and the willingness of the businesses to collaborate with the Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee. The partnership that the committee is attempting to promote in these proposals emphasizes the benefits for both the community of Westhaven and the companies. By listing a number of projects and ideas that could be realized in collaboration amongst the businesses, the committee, and the residents in Westhaven, the committee is aiming to open up a discussion about how the companies and the community can benefit each other.

In addition, there are three aspects of the proposals that I would like underline:

- **Wording/ tone** – the proposals were written in a way that suggests to the companies that Westhaven community needs and ideas about projects match the companies's corporate values. Company's resources and competencies were also taken into account when developing the ideas included in the proposals.
- **Outcomes from the partnership** – the proposals clearly state the outcomes that both the community and the companies could achieve:
  - For the companies: building positive corporate image, tax deductions for financial contributions to the community, publicity in local press and at local events, opportunity to be innovative and to build team spirit among the employees
  - For the community: sponsorships, activities, prizes, a greener and better environment, opportunities for residents to interact with each other and with the companies' employees
- **Local employment services** – the proposals promote local employment services (e.g., free recruitment assistance service) that one of the committee member organizations (CDEC) offers in the borough. By offering these employment services the committee tries to encourage the companies to hire from the local community and to contribute to local economic development.

The aspects of the proposals mentioned above show that the committee is seeking to communicate ideas and to promote services and values to the businesses that correspond to some extent to what companies would consider valuable and could benefit all parties. I further discuss possible ways for improving the process of establishing business-community relationships that could benefit all parties in the next two sections.

3.5. Findings and discussion

My research shows that there are two trends that are happening right now. On the one hand, businesses develop CSR initiatives as a part of their business model for building trust in their customers, improving their reputation and increasing their profitability. On the hand, community groups are interested in getting businesses involved in their local community as a way to improve the economic development and social cohesion of a neighbourhood as well as to gain resources for the realization of local activities. In the case of Westhaven, the community faces a number of challenges and the organizations that work there have realized that if they want to improve the residential environment and bring more stakeholders on the site they need to approach the businesses in the area and to engage them with these various issues. Hence, I argue that those two tendencies – the openness of the businesses to develop CSR and the demands of the local communities – should meet at some point. Matching the CSR initiatives with the actual needs of the local communities would be the best scenario. However, based on my observations in Westhaven, the local community groups were not aware of the CSR practices and did not think through that prism when planning their proposals to the said businesses.

Returning to the Watts and Holme (1999) definition of CSR, two aspects are striking: that CSR is a *continuing commitment* and that CSR *improves the quality of life of the local community*. Long-lasting programs for the involvement of businesses in community are more likely to improve the image of the businesses and more likely to make a difference in local quality of life than sporadic cash contributions. Thus community organizations should strive to negotiate long-term engagement projects with the businesses and the main effort should be to relate these projects to the needs of the local communities that surround companies' facilities. Such projects would be more beneficial for companies and they would be more inclined to engage with them.

A major obstacle might be the size and profile of the company. In Westhaven, the neighbourhood committee is striving to establish partnership with companies that have national and even international profiles. Hence, a real question and probably a major challenge for the local community groups would be to find the reason why companies like Parmalat should choose to engage in the local community of Westhaven and not somewhere else. Due to their size and profile these companies are powerful and primarily concerned with a national image; the advantages of intervening locally would need to be considered. Examining CSR in its fourth dimension – the ethical responsibility to society – suggests that an ethical action for businesses would be to contribute to the society that is in its immediate vicinity. For example, in Westhaven, Parmalat generates a high volume traffic in a residential area, where it should not be allowed. The company claims that they do a number of charitable activities but they are done elsewhere throughout Canada. A good way for them to improve their image in the Westhaven community would be to engage with CSR activities that are visible to the local community and could be perceived as a direct compensation for the high volume of traffic that the company generates.

Another important aspect outlined in the literature review is that CSR initiatives depend on economic reasoning as well as on the management style of a given company. Some of the economic motivations mentioned in the literature are to reduce taxes, increase profits and improve financial performance, reduce operational costs, expand to new markets, gain competitive advantage over companies, improve the company's reputation, secure better positioning among target groups, and increase product demand. All these motivations affect the company positively and prompt it to engage in CSR, while desires for better productivity and return on investment prompt it to reduce its CSR initiatives. In the case of Westhaven, it is assumed that the businesses will assess the proposals on the basis of the perceived costs and benefits associated with the projects. The actual proposals, however, seem to incorporate these financial drivers sporadically. Some parts of the proposals include specific details about the resources the committee could provide and the resources the companies are asked to invest, but other

parts, particularly those related to potential realization of bigger projects, seem to lack precision. The intent of the committee is to put some ideas on the table for discussion, ideas which require further clarification with the companies. This strategy might be risky for the community groups as the lack of precision could result in the companies' refusal to collaborate altogether. Yet, at this point in the process in Westhaven, it is too early to judge which strategy would get better results – a broader proposal that provides less details or a very specific one that lists all the details, expenses and potential scenarios. For the companies, however, it is crucial to identify what they will gain from the proposed initiatives. They may find that there is too little to gain from potential CSR initiatives in Westhaven and refuse to collaborate, but they also may perceive a possible threat if they decide not to do it. For example, in the case of Parmalat, the company's activities generate traffic disruptions on St-Jacques street, which can be used by community groups against Parmalat. This would be a threatening negotiating strategy, which could force Parmalat to recognize how that traffic issue negatively impacts the company's reputation, and ultimately make Parmalat comply with the wishes of the local community. CSR is usually motivated by the *desire to gain something*, but it can also be motivated by the *desire not to lose something* (Richard Shearmur, personal communication, December 19, 2013) and in the case of Westhaven it would be important for the community to receive compensation for the traffic they are experiencing on a daily basis.

Organizational structure and management style are other factors that also influence CSR. As Galaskiewicz and Colman (2006) point out, firms that are run by tight management tend to give less to charity, while others with more decentralized ownership and managerial autonomy tend to give more. Some owners and managers perceive CSR as costs affecting their bottom-line. Hence, in order for community organizations to get the support of the CEOs, the business-community collaboration projects have to correspond with the business goals of the company. In the case of Westhaven, there are three large companies. Based on the literature review and the fact that Parmelat, Reno Dépôt, and The Gazette are large companies, it can be assumed

that the managers would assess whether the community requests for CSR initiatives correspond to their "strategic corporate citizenship and business goals" (Kotler and Lee 2005). In this regard, one practical question would be how the community groups can know the business goals of the companies? Answering this question would require further exploration of the topic.

Sen and Cowley (2012) found that participation in CSR is mainly philanthropic: supporting charities, sponsorships, and fund raising. However, participation in community programs initiated locally, within the surrounding community, seems not to be a common practice. My research about the three businesses in Westhaven confirms that finding. All three companies are open to providing sponsorships but so far they have not engaged in the local community. This may be a reflection of the fact that the community has not approached the businesses yet. Another possibility would be that all three companies are not just local businesses but companies with national profiles that just happened to be locally-situated. Therefore, CSR initiatives on a small local scale might not be interesting to them and the companies would much rather engage with initiatives of a larger scale. For such local scale collaborations to take place, sometimes the community should be the active partner and approach the business (as Westhaven decided to do); as stated by Kotler and Lee (2005), companies often develop CSR initiative as a result of (pro)activity from the community. Understanding of the CSR notion in that case is essential for establishing a dialogue. The dialogue will enhance a company's sensitivity to its immediate environment, increase the awareness of the issues that the community faces, and help the community organizations understand the strategic interests of the company (what the company would be willing to support and what not).

3.6. Lessons learned

In this section of Chapter 3, I draw several lessons from my research in Westhaven that I hope could be useful for both community groups and academic researchers interested in business-community collaborations.

Since the project in Westhaven is still underway, it is hard to come up with recommendations about improving the process of establishing business-community partnerships. Nevertheless, there are several aspects that already can be identified in planning for business-community partnerships. To start, important issues to be addressed are the local context and the size and profile of the companies. For example, the three companies in Westhaven operate on a larger scale as they have a national, and even international, profile. Hence, these companies may consider the projects offered by the community groups in Westhaven as not sufficiently capable of enhancing their city-scale, national and/or international image. When approaching companies, the visibility factor should always be taken into account. In this respect, approaching only larger companies and ignoring the smaller ones could lead to failure of establishing business-community partnerships as, in theory, it is the SMEs that have a more direct interest in improving their local image and thus participating in local CSR initiatives.

However, in the cases when local community groups aim towards larger companies, there are two conditions identified in the literature that could help push larger companies to invest in a neighbourhood: peer pressure and the desire "not to lose something". As discussed in the literature review, companies tend to invest more in a particular district if other companies invest in this district too. In the case of Westhaven, one may expect that if one of the three companies starts investing in the neighbourhood then it would be easier for the community groups to use this as an argument to persuade the other two. In other cases, the threat that the company could lose something essential to its operations or profitability can push it into partnership with local communities. In Westhaven, Parmalat wants to keep traffic volumes (especially of

trucks) unchanged, while community groups and local government could push for restrictions; a compromise could be to partner around local initiatives that offset the negative impact of trucks in the area. If the local community groups are to negotiate on the basis of compensation for loss or negative impacts, then the tone of the proposal should reflect such a stance – perhaps less dialogical and more straightforward than in the current versions, clearly stating concerns and remedial actions. However, such actions would entail a different approach, moving away from the area of collaboration and entering one of negotiation.

Another aspect of the proposals that needs to be considered is related to the level of details that they provide. Companies tend to assess possible CSR initiatives based on profitability. If the formulation is too broad, the companies may decide that there is not much to gain from the initiatives proposed. If the formulation is too detailed, then the companies may consider the projects infeasible either financially or time-wise. It is very important that community groups find a balance, and one appropriate to the company's own approach to social initiatives, when developing business proposals.

Last but not least is the question of what types of projects community groups propose to companies. In the case of Westhaven, the local community groups submitted the business proposals before finalizing an action plan for the future development of the neighbourhood. It would be more beneficial for the community groups to try establishing partnerships after reaching clarity on their plan; the current strategy entails a risk of establishing collaborations that at the end are not the ones most needed. Striking partnerships for the sake of partnerships alone should be avoided as it might close important windows for other opportunities.

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3.7. CSR tool for community groups

The proposed CSR tool is meant to guide community groups in incorporating the concept of CSR when reaching out to locally-situated businesses. The document can also be used to raise awareness and educate community groups about CSR.

Definition of CSR

In general terms, CSR represents a continuing commitment by a business organization to behave ethically and contribute to economic development, while also improving the quality of life of its employees (and their families), the local community, and society at large[8].

Place of CSR in establishing business-community partnerships

Community groups have an interest in getting businesses involved in their local community as it can improve the economic development and social cohesion of a neighbourhood and bring in resources for the realization of local initiatives. Establishing long-term relationships with businesses in a neighbourhood is a challenging task. When the initiative comes from community groups there is a possibility for businesses to deny cooperation. CSR can be used as a pathway for establishing such partnerships. Community groups can utilize CSR to negotiate projects with the businesses that could benefit both the community and the company. If communities know and understand the concept of CSR they can organize their ideas for community-business partnerships around it, and thus make their proposals for mutual projects appealing to business values and interests.

Tips for establishing dialogue with companies

Community groups may consider the following tactics and strategies when reaching out companies:

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[8] Watts and Holme 1999

- **Contact company's human-resources department, community affairs or public relations department** as larger firms delegate the decision-making to the managers of such departments.

- **Before developing a proposal, check whether there are particular types of requests that the companies do not support;** some companies, for example, list on their websites potential initiatives that they do not sponsor.

- **Make companies aware of issues that the local community faces** and probe which initiatives each of the companies would support and which not.

- **Base projects requests on companies' former CSR experience or on the nature of their business.** Having experience in particular areas would make projects implementation easier for all parties.

- **Propose projects that have a "natural" connection to the corporate values and goals of the company.** Projects that match the strategic interests of the companies and/or their resources and competencies are more likely to gain the executives' support.

- **Make the business-community collaboration visible to the public.** This will improve companies' reputation, which is considered a main driver for CSR, but will also put pressure on companies to respond to community demands.

- **Contact different sizes and types of companies.** Small businesses are different from large ones. SMEs have different business models and management structures than do larger companies. Negotiations with both SMEs and larger companies may widen the possibilities for establishing business-community partnerships and benefit communities in different ways.

Useful resources

A number of publications discuss CSR, yet there are limited resources on the specifics of establishing business-community collaborations. Some additional information on the topic can be found in:

- Galaskiewicz, J. and Colman, M.S. 2006. *Collaboration between Corporations and Nonprofit Organizations.* Chapter 8 in *The Non-Profit Sector: A Research Handbook.* Yale University Press.

- Gerriga, E. and Mele, D. (2004). Corporate Social Responsibility Theories: Mapping the Theory. *Journal of Business Ethics*.

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CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION

My SRP focused on the case of collaborative community planning in Westhaven, a neighbourhood in the NDG district, located in the CDN/NDG borough in Montreal. My work was guided by two main research questions. The first was to outline the advantages and the disadvantages of a community-driven planning process and the second, to establish how community organizations could approach locally-situated businesses to partner for local development.

The case of Westhaven represents a bottom-up community planning process led by the Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee that has both its advantages and disadvantages. In terms of the advantages, the planning process in Westhaven enabled the Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee to:

- incorporate meaningful inputs from the local community and consider the actual needs of the residents
- attract various actors and partners with expertise in different fields and make the joint efforts strong, creative and resourceful
- create an action plan for a small-scale neighbourhood without a pre-set agenda or buy-in from external entities

An advantage of the community-driven planning process in Westhaven is that the committee did not start its work with precise targets, but rather it had its own pace and values. The community groups were committed to incorporating the community's needs and concerns in the creation of the action plan and it was very important for them to define their specific goals only after getting the results of the survey with the local residents.

Furthermore, the case shows that the collaborative approach played a positive role in the community planning process. It facilitated the establishment of a constructive dialogue among the committee members and helped resolve conflicts. Furthermore, the case study shows how collaborative planning combined with advocacy and needs assessments benefited both the planning process and its likely outcomes. All committee members, representatives of different community organizations and other stakeholders were actively engaged in the exchange of ideas, knowledge, skills, and even resources, which resulted in implementing initiatives that would have been impossible without the assistance of external entities.

In terms of the disadvantages, the Westhaven Neighborhood Committee was restricted by:

- long and time-consuming planning process
- lack of power to "transform structures"; issues like the physical layout of the neighbourhood such as train tracks and traffic volumes are beyond the capacity of the committee
- shortage of knowledge on CSR when approaching the locally-situated businesses
- shortage of human resources when reaching out the residents

As demonstrated in Chapter 2, the community planning process involves multiple parties – residents, community organizations, businesses, and public institutions. All these parties have different points of view on given matters and different levels of expertise; reaching an agreement, establishing a common vision, and putting together an action plan are endeavours that take long time. Hence, when performing collaborative community planning, special attention should be given to the time frame of the initiative. Those who lead the planning process should be aware that the initial steps related to the establishment of a working committee might take numerous months up even a year. To complicate matters further, all actors come together on a voluntary basis, which makes the process very fragile. Factors such as frustration, fatigue,

turnover and lack of time become extremely important and should be managed very carefully and be given special attention, so that they do not impede a positive outcome.

Another important lesson I drew from my observation work in the neighborhood is that when planning for a long-term initiative, it is extremely important not only to look at and plan for the final product – the elaboration of an action plan in this case but also to consider all the other elements related to it (consulting residents, gathering community organizations, striking partnerships and etc.) as a series of sub-projects that lead to this result. Each of these projects should be thought as having its own planning process, its own time frame, its own set of activities and conclusions. For example, even though the Westhaven Neighborhood Committee made a special effort to get the residents involved, and their opinion was accounted for in the conception of the action plan, the committee's effort was not far-reaching and further opportunities to get the residents involved were overlooked, with the rationale being that the residents will be included at a later stage. Given that the hope of the committee is to eventually turn the project over to the residents, many more efforts, strategies and actions could have been elaborated to get the residents involved early on. When working on a bottom-up collaborative community planning project, the involvement of residents should not be considered as a minor detail, but rather a separate sub-project of the action plan.

Another disadvantage of the bottom-up approach is that the outcomes are not diverse enough to address all major issues in the neighnourhood. The main reason for that is the limited scope of solutions that the committee could propose on its own. The main selection criterion for actions to implement was feasibility of the projects, as the Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee did not have the support of the local authorities to attempt resolving larger problems such as the traffic in the area or the provision of new sport facilities in the neighborhood. In order to be able to realize larger scale projects the committee should seek partnerships with strategic alliances and with other influential actors.

The second part of my SRP focuses on business-community partnerships. In Chapter 3 I argue that community organizations could benefit from the model of Corporate Social Responsibility and use it when they reach out to businesses with partnership proposals. The literature review highlights several important aspects of CSR: a/ there is a growing interest among firms to engage with CSR, b/ there are different factors that shape companies' willingness to adopt CRS initiatives (e.g. size of firm, level of involvement of the executive management in the government of the company, geographical scope of activities, awareness and perception of local issues produced by the firm's activities), c/ openness to overture made by community as CSR initiatives bring comparative advantage over competitors and bring strategic gains to businesses. However, community groups are not necessarily aware of Corporate Social Responsibility and how it relates to their desire to establish relationships with locally-situated businesses. Based on my observations in Westhaven, community groups need further research and specialized training how to utilize CSR as a tool to engage businesses in a partnership.

Both the literature and the experience in Westhaven suggest that despite potential interest on the part of both community members and locally-situated businesses, there are barriers related to lack of information on CSR generally and especially what would constitute a good 'win-win' project for business-community partnership. Furthermore, even if the community organizations are introduced to this new concept that could be beneficial to their work, they do not necessarily have the capacity and resources to study the approach and find ways to apply it in their work. Establishing partnerships with academia, similar to that the NDG Community Council established with McGill University's CURA Making Megaprojects Work for Communities, are of key importance for supplying know-how and human resources to assist in the local community planning process. In addition, information and guidance, such as in the sample handout provided on pages 68-70 of this report, could help community groups to approach local businesses to explore partnership possibilities.

Areas of future research

The collaborative community process in Westhaven is still underway. The implementation of the action plan and the establishment of the business-community partnerships are still to take place. It will be interesting to follow up on their development and what results they will bring for the local community.

Another area of future research regarding this case will be to explore the perspectives on the process and its outcomes from the viewpoint of different stakeholders – community organizations, city officials, businesses, and local residents. Reflections on the process and its outcomes will provide useful information and outline areas of improvements. Potential research questions would be: to what extent different stakeholders involved in the process perceive it as bottom-up/ giving voice to local concerns/ useful/ having an impact on the local community? What down-sides do they see to the process? What could/should have been done differently?

Another future research topic relates to business-community collaborations. At present, the academic research is concentrated on CSR studies from the point of view of businesses. However, it would be beneficial to explore partnerships between businesses and local communities from the community's point of view. Finding other case studies, practical solutions and best practices will be important pieces of shared knowledge for community groups as the areas of their competency is very different from the business context and currently it is challenging for them to "sell" their partnership projects to businesses.

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      NDG Community Council, www.ndg.ca
      NDG Senior Citizens' Council, www.ndgscc.ca
      Parmalat, www.corporate.parmalat.ca
      Réno-Dépôt, www.renodepot.com
      Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, www12.statcan.gc.ca
      The Gazette, www.montrealgazette.com

APPENDIX

Appendix A. Key statistics for Westhaven[9]

Population (2011) Source: Census 2011	
Sector	**Number of people**
Westhaven Total (Coffee Park incl.)	2 490
Coffee Park only	828
St-Raymond	3195
Benny	2359
Walkley	11233

Median Age of the population (2011) Source: Census 2011	**Westhaven**	**St-Raymond**	**Benny**	**Walkley**
	Median	Median	Median	Median
Median age of the population	**32.5**	38.2	37.95	38.8

Population by Age Group (2011) Source: Census 2011	**Westhaven**	**St-Raymond**	**Benny**	**Walkley**
	%	%	%	%
0-4 y.o.	7.8	6.2	8.7	6.6
5-9 y.o.	5.0	5.0	7.6	5.9
10-17 y.o.	6.0	7.0	9.5	9.6
18-24 y.o.	**12.9**	10.6	7.8	8.7
25-29 y.o.	**12.0**	10.1	5.7	6.9
30-34 y.o.	**11.4**	8.9	6.8	7.9
35-49 y.o.	24.9	21.0	24.4	23.8
50-64 y.o.	13.1	17.0	12.9	16.7
65+ y.o.	**6.8**	14.2	16.5	14.0

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[9] Milusheva, Lora (2013). "A Socio-demographic Analysis of the Westhaven Neighbourhood - Notre-Dame de Grace". Research Report Series. RR13-02E. Montréal: CURA Making Megaprojects Work for Communities - Mégaprojets au service des communautés.

Children in Westhaven (2011)
Source: Census 2011

	Westhaven Total		Coffee Park only	
	number	% of the pop	Number	% of the pop
0-4 y.o.	195	7.8	60	7.2
5-9 y.o.	125	5.0	60	**7.2**
Total children 0-9 y.o.	**320**	**12.9**	**120**	**14.5**

Family Distribution in % (2011)
Source: Census 2011

	ISLAND OF MONTREAL	Westhaven	St-Raymond	Benny	Walkley
	%	%	%	%	%
Married/ Common law without children	37.2	28.1	33.1	22.6	24.2
Married/ Common law with children	42.2	43.0	36.3	45.2	46.5
Single parent	20.6	**28.9**	**30.6**	**32.3**	**29.4**
Female single parent	16.9	**24.6**	**26.1**	**28.2**	**25.0**
Male single parent	3.8	4.4	4.5	4.0	4.4

Low-income group by Sectors, 2006
Source: Census 2006

	ISLAND OF MONTREAL	Westhaven	St-Raymond	Benny	Walkley
Prevalence of low income **before tax** in 2005 %	22.6	54.9	23.7	42.4	37.1
Prevalence of low income **after tax** in 2005 %	16.6	43.0	19.7	30.2	28.5

Low-income group in Westhaven, 2006
Source: Census 2006

	Westhaven Total	Coffee Park Only
Prevalence of low income **before tax** in 2005 %	54.9	52.5
Prevalence of low income **after tax** in 2005 %	43.0	**46.2**

Population in the labour force (15+ y.o.): Occupation, 2006
Source: Census 2006

	ISLAND OF MONTREAL	Westhaven	St-Raymond	Benny	Walkley
	%	%	%	%	%
Employed	91.2	83.9	91.1	84.0	88.6
Unemployed	8.8	**16.1**	8.9	16.0	11.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Housing Tenure in Westhaven, 2006
Source: Census 2006

	Westhaven Total		Coffee Park Only	
	number	%	Number	%
Owned	45	3.5	0	-
Rented	1255	96.5	400	100.0
Total number of occupied private dwellings	**1300**		**400**	

Primary Mode of Transportation (2008)
Source: Origin-Destination Survey, Results for 2008

	ISLAND OF MONTREAL	NDG	Westhaven	St-Raymond	Benny	Walkley
	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %	Col %
Car driver	37.9	35.3	18.1	39.1	26.3	30.9
Walking	14.2	13.6	8.4	11.9	16.2	16.4
Bus STM	12.4	15.0	**25.3**	12.6	24.2	21.8
Car passenger	11.0	11.3	6.6	14.6	9.1	11.9
Metro	9.2	10.9	**9.6**	4.7	8.1	6.9
Biking	1.7	1.8	1.2	0.8	-	1.2
School bus	1.7	1.1	4.8	3.2	2.0	0.9
Taxi	0.6	0.9	2.4	-	1.0	0.2
Train	0.6	0.3	**4.8**	-	-	0.2
Adapted transportation	0.2	0.2	**1.8**	-	-	0.4
Other bus	0.2	0.4	3.6	-	-	-
Scooter	0.1	0.1	-	-	-	-
Interurban mode	0.1	0.1	1.2	-	-	-
NA	10.1	8.9	12.0	13.0	13.1	9.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Appendix B. Survey results

Westhaven Report[10]

Conducted by   Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee

Fieldwork   July 4-26, 2013

Size of the sample   114 people

Methodology   Face-to-Face interviews

         ✓ Standardized Questionnaire

         ✓ 14 open-ended questions

Overview

Initiated by the Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee, the survey was conducted in the month of July, 2013. During that time different parties had the opportunity to get involved in the research: the Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee, volunteers, and summer interns. The main goal of the survey was to gather information from the residents about their needs and expectations for the future development of the neighbourhood. There was a questionnaire, developed both in English and French, which contained 31 questions in total, as 14 of them were open-ended questions (meaning that the answers were not pre-determined and the respondents needed to answer spontaneously). This questionnaire was used for conducting door-to-door interviews as well as interviews at the Westhaven Neighbourhood Committee kiosk.

A. PROFILE & KEY STATISTICS

The total number of people who were interviewed is 114. The majority of the respondents were residents in the area, yet there were few people, who were not

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[10] Westhaven Report, prepared by the committee on October 10th, 2013. This document is a summary of the survey results and has played a key role in the planning process as it was a reference point at any stage of the creation of the action plan.

residents, but they were employed in the area or their children were attending the summer camp program at Westhaven Community Centre.

The main characteristics of the sample are as follows:

Gender: 75 females (66% of the sample) and 33 males (29% of the sample). There were 6 people whose gender was not indicated.

Age distribution:

- Up to 25 y.o.: 23 people (10% of the sample)
- 26-35 y.o.: 27 people (24% of the sample)
- 36-50 y.o.: 27 people (24% of the sample)
- 51-65 y.o.: 24 people (21% of the sample)
- 65+ y.o.: 12 people (11% of the sample)

Occupation: 39 people were employed (34% of the sample), 19 people were unemployed (17% of the sample), 31 people were students (27% of the sample), 19 people were retired (17% of the sample), and another 6 people defined themselves as Other.

Term of residence: The average length of residence in the area is 10.7 years.

Seniors:

- 32% of the sample are seniors
- 53% are retired and 23% are unemployed
- Services in NDG most used by seniors are the CLSC (36%), followed by public transportation (30%)
- The service most used in Westhaven is the bakery (55%), followed by the depanneur (39%)
- 25% do not know what services the center offers
- 89% get their food from the supermarket
- 83% said their primary mode of transportation is the bus, followed by the metro and walking (42%)
- 72% said public transportation was convenient
- 20% said they would like to see more services for elderly people
- 67% hope to live in the neighborhood for the next 5 years

- 67% said they hope to have a community garden and 64% would like a collective kitchen.

Based mainly on the results from the open-ended questions we can make the following conclusions:

B. SERVICES

1. The main services that the residents use in NDG are:
   - CLSC and medical services in general
   - Commercial and retail (Super C, McDonalds, Reno Dépôt)
   - public transportation
   - swimming pools
   - parks
   - The Community Center
   - Services on Westminster (ice cream, bank, Italian store, church, pharmacy, and restaurants)

Please, list the services that you use in NDG:	
CLSC	29
Grocery stores/ Commerces	27
Public Transportation/ STM/ AMT	27
Pharmaprix	20
Swimming Pool	16
Parks	15
Pharmacy	15
Loblaws	13
Clinique/ Doctors/ Hospital	12
Provigo	12

2. The main services that the residents use in Westhaven are:

- ➢ The Bakery
- ➢ The Westhaven Community Centre
- ➢ public transportation
- ➢ The Coffee Park
- ➢ Laundromat

Please, list the services that you use in NDG:	
Bakery	56
Depanneur	48
Super C	36
Westhaven Community Centre	23
Public Transportation/ STM/ AMT	21
Coffee Park	19
Grocery stores	17
Corner Fruiterie	16
Laundromat	10

3. The main services that the residents wish were closer are:

- ➢ The Malls (Cote-Saint-Luc and Cavendish)
- ➢ CLSC
- ➢ Dog Park
- ➢ Pool
- ➢ Sports Centre
- ➢ An indoor play area for children
- ➢ Elizabeth Ballantyne School is very hard to reach
- ➢ 162 Bus is very hard to use
- ➢ St. Jacques

- ➢ Akhavan
- ➢ Salvation Army
- ➢ Services for children
- ➢ Restaurants

What kind of services do you need in Westhaven?	
Walk-in clinic/ Medical services/ CLSC	12
Swimming Pool	9
Supermarket/ Grocery store	7
Services for elderly people	6

4. The main services or places that the residents avoid are:
   - ➢ The corner of Patricia avenue and Sherbrooke Street
   - ➢ The 105 bus stop and crossing Sherbrooke Street
   - ➢ Coffee Park (toilets, safety, services, proximity to train, dogs drinking from the same water fountain and use the same toilet as residents)
   - ➢ Bars and the motel on St. Jacques
   - ➢ Alleys

5. When asked if they are aware of the services that Westhaven Community Centre offers, one-fourth of the residents declare they are not familiar at all with the services offered by the centre. Among the group of people which is aware, the most popular mentions are related to day camp/ summer camp/ day care, i.e. services for small children in general and only few people mention sports, yoga, and others. The main concerns stated by the respondents are related to that the centre does not offer enough programs for adults and that the centre is exclusively catering to the black community and English speaking people.

   The main conclusions for the Westhaven Community Centre are:
   - ➢ The centre needs to boost more awareness among the residents about its purpose and activities

> The centre needs to develop programs for adults and offer them both in English and French

Which of the Westhaven Community Center services are you aware of?	
I do not know the services they offer	25
Daycamp/ Summer Camp	22
Services for kids/ Activities for small children	9
Sports/ Play groups/ Excercices	7
Daycare	6
After school program	6
Yoga class	5

6. The unique characteristics of Westhaven stated by the respondents are as follow:
    > Multi-ethnicity and diversity
    > Calmness and quietness (in comparison with downtown)
    > Affordable to live in
    > Friendly people and good sense of community
    > Family oriented
    > Good location as it benefits from the proximity to downtown

All these features should be addressed in any stage of our community planning.

In your opinion what makes Westhaven unique?	
Multi-ethnicity/ Diversity/ Mixure of people/ Multicultural	18
It is calm/ quiet	12
Affordable to live	9
People are friendly/ speak to each other	8
Sense of community	6
More families with children/Family oriented/Family atmospher	5
Location/ Close to downtown	5

C. POSSIBLE PROJECTS & THEMES TO PURSUE IN THE FUTURE

1. COMMUNITY GARDEN

- Many residents think that it would be popular
- It would be a necessary resource for the residents as it could be a means to feed the community
- It is an effective way to foster the community
- It could be a good venue for adolescents to learn about cooking and healthy lifestyles
- Many residents appreciate the idea of a collective garden and sharing food.
- There used to be an unofficial community garden in the form of guerilla gardening with approximately 15-20 plots behind Parmalat and people were extremely unhappy when it closed.
- It was mentioned that in order for the garden to be successful it would need to be intergenerational and involve the many seniors in the neighborhood.

2. CIRCULATION (mainly the area around the train station)

- The corners of Elmhurst and Harley, Patricia and Sherbrooke and Elmhurst and Sherbrooke are especially problematic
- There should be crosswalks at Elmhurst and Harley as this intersection was expressed as being very problematic.
- The corner of St. Jacques and Elmhurst are also very problematic.
- St. Jacques is quit dangerous as it is hard for pedestrians to see oncoming traffic and for cars to see pedestrians who are trying to cross the street.
- Many residents expressed their concerns about the volume of traffic on Harley Street.
- The speed needs to be reduced: It is too high for an area with so many children and elderly.
- There should be 3–way stop at Elmhurst and Harley
- Could there be a stop sign on Coffee when turning left from Elmhurst?

- Could there be crossing guards?

- Could Harley become a one-way street?

- There should not be a left turn from Elmhurst onto Harley

- The train light and crossing should be improved and should be on for a longer period of time…could there be a timer?

- Could there be speed bumps, speed poles or signs indicating that there are children playing in the neighborhood?

- Many residents feel that Harley is not safe at all as cars are racing towards the train crossing before the train arrives.

- The presence of the police is also lacking as it is thought that they are only there during busy times.

- A green alley could potentially make things safer while beautifying the neighborhood

- Getting on and off the bus can be quite dangerous in several areas of the neighborhood.

- The crosswalk in front of Deli Pat on Sherbrooke and Westmore is fading, which is quite dangerous as well.

3. WESTHAVEN COMMUNITY CENTER

- A men's empowerment group could be quite useful

- Skills support and how one should be present in the family without losing one's identity

- Cooking, art, music, computer, dance, home ec, knitting, sewing, quilting and language classes were all provided as ideas of activities that may improve the center.

- Skills share list should be provided within the center and there should be some form of volunteer exchange program.

- A parenting or leadership session was also suggested.

- Several residents expressed interest in creating an information session for newcomers (information such as what kinds of snow suits to buy or how to read report cards) could be provided.

- A professional skills workshop in which GIS, AutoCAD and perhaps project management would be extremely useful.

- Good Food Box drop point

- The center needs to advertise as many people do not know what they do!

- It would be useful if there were tutors for children

- Tutoring sessions would also be valued if they were offered on the weekend as well as weekdays

- It was expressed by several residents that sports activities for adults such as basketball, soccer or badminton would be useful.

- Could there be a CULTURAL EXCHANGE NIGHT?

- There is no basketball court and swimming pool

- The gym is too small

- Need of more private space in the centre (everyone goes in and out of the room all the time which is annoying for them)

- The centre should be cleaner – no trash

- The salon next to the centre is vacant and there is a sigh "For rent" , the kids said the centre should rent this space and it will become bigger

- In addition, another kid proposed to build another floor above the existing building and all kids liked the idea

- When asked what they want in the centre the kids responded: better gym, bigger room, more computers/ laptops, more game rooms, video games and play stations, soccer space, basketball , netball

- There should be more programs at the community center that serve a larger portion of the population (i.e. a community kitchen which instructs parents on how to feed their children and families in a healthy way)

- A community phone list should be generated in which people who like the same types of activities could contact each other (i.e. swimming and dog walking)

4. HOUSING

- Some residents feel as though their housing situations are neglected as a result of their gender.

- Residents are concerned about rents going up as a result of the super hospital.

- A workshop on tenant rights would be appreciated as residents feel as though this could be an educational experience.

- Several residents complained about garbage and recycling problems.

- Composting is also an activity that residents are extremely interested in learning about through workshops and by applying it.

- Residents expressed the need for housing workshops in order to be aware of their rights.

5. DESIGN AT HUMAN SCALE

- Some residents believe that changing the attitude towards cleaning and planting flowers would beautify the area…the example of businesses on Sherbrooke Street was used as a precedent.

- Suggestions were made that it might be useful to provide covered parking spaces for bicycles.

- Benches are needed along Harley Street as they may provide places for residents to interact and socialize.

- The neighborhood is lacking in garbage cans

6. OTHER

- The neighborhood desperately needs an affordable gym as Énérgie Cardio is quite expensive and the staff are unfriendly

- Some residents feel that the Concordia students have more privileges than those who live in the neighborhood.

- There are many services on Westminster, however many residents are not aware of them

- The idea of a WELCOMING sub-committee should be encouraged as part of the Westhaven Neighborhood Committee
- The idea of a monthly newsletter outlining the activities within the community could be of value to the residents

D. VISIONS & DREAMS OF RESIDENTS...
- A dog park
- Community Garden, Greenhouse and composting
- Outdoor spaces and more places to play
- A safe space for children
- A cleaner Coffee Park
- A club for community groups
- Dinners and community events
- A community in which everyone knows everyone else
- A CO-OP with a dog park, restaurant and park
- Diversity in the community
- Different nights with differently themed activities (similar to the soirées on Westminster street)
- The storefronts on Harley could be much better as there is a high vacancy rate
- More small stores in the neighborhood
- More daycares for the underserved population
- That there will be enough resources for the amount of people who need to be served
- A movie theater
- A big park
- More restaurants!
- A sign in front of the community centre.
- Clean-up day. Donations during the clean-up day – for garbage bags or something else, etc.

- Basketball & Swimming pool. Best court nearby. Preferably outdoors because they want a sun, but they want to use it anytime even when it is raining
- Music instruments & Baking. Place to bake. Music classes with instruments available, right now there is no equipment available
- Bigger centre. Football field, swimming pool. It should be indoor because they want to use it even when it is raining

Westhaven Survey Results (split by 7 issues)[11]

1. SOCIAL COHESION

- When asked if they are aware of the services that Westhaven Community Centre offers, <u>one-fourth of the residents declare they are not familiar at all with the services offered by the centre</u>. Among the group of people which is aware, the most popular mentions are <u>related to day camp/ summer camp/ day care, i.e. services for small children in general</u> and only few people mention sports, yoga, and others. The main concerns stated by the respondents are related to that the centre does not offer enough programs for adults and that the centre is exclusively catering to the black community and English speaking people.
- The idea of a WELCOMING sub-committee should be encouraged as part of the Westhaven Neighborhood Committee
- The idea of a monthly newsletter outlining the activities within the community could be of value to the residents.
- Some residents feel that the Concordia students have more privileges than those who live in the neighborhood.
- There are many services on Westminster, however many residents are not aware of them
- A men's empowerment group could be quite useful
- Skills support and how one should be present in the family without losing one's identity
- Cooking, art, music, computer, dance, home ec, knitting, sewing, quilting and language classes were all provided as ideas of activities that may improve the center.
- Skills share list should be provided within the center and there should be some form of volunteer exchange program.

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[11] This document was prepared by the committee and summaries the survey results according to the 7 issues that were identified and included in the action plan. The document played a key role in the planning process as it was a reference point at any stage of the creation of the action plan.

- A parenting or leadership session was also suggested.
- Several residents expressed interest in creating an information session for newcomers (information such as what kinds of snow suits to buy or how to read report cards) could be provided.
- A professional skills workshop in which GIS, AutoCAD and perhaps project management would be extremely useful.
- There should be more programs at the community center that serve a larger portion of the population (i.e. a community kitchen which instructs parents on how to feed their children and families in a healthy way)
- A community phone list should be generated in which people who like the same types of activities could contact each other (i.e. swimming and dog walking)
- The center needs to advertise as many people do not know what they do!
- Could there be a CULTURAL EXCHANGE NIGHT?

2. HOUSING

- Some residents feel as though their housing situations are neglected as a result of their gender.
- Residents are concerned about rents going up as a result of the super hospital.
- A workshop on tenant rights would be appreciated as residents feel as though this could be an educational experience.
- Several residents complained about garbage and recycling problems.
- Composting is also an activity that residents are extremely interested in learning about through workshops and by applying it.
- Residents expressed the need for housing workshops in order to be aware of their rights.

3. RECREATION

- The neighborhood desperately needs an affordable gym as Énérgie Cardio is quite expensive and the staff are unfriendly
- It was expressed by several residents that sports activities for adults such as basketball, soccer or badminton would be useful.

4. FOOD SECURITY

- In regards to the community garden, many residents think that it would be popular
- It would be a necessary resource for the residents as it could be a means to feed the community
- It is an effective way to foster the community
- It could be a good venue for adolescents to learn about cooking and healthy lifestyles
- Many residents appreciate the idea of a collective garden and sharing food.
- There used to be an unofficial community garden in the form of guerilla gardening with approximately 15-20 plots behind Parmalat and people were extremely unhappy when it closed.
- It was mentioned that in order for the garden to be successful it would need to be intergenerational and involve the many seniors in the neighborhood.
- Good Food Box drop point

5. SAFETY AND CIRCULATION

- The corners of Elmhurst and Harley, Patricia and Sherbrooke and Elmhurst and Sherbrooke are especially problematic
- There should be crosswalks at Elmhurst and Harley as this intersection was expressed as being very problematic.
- The corner of St. Jacques and Elmhurst are also very problematic.

- St. Jacques is quit dangerous as it is hard for pedestrians to see oncoming traffic and for cars to see pedestrians who are trying to cross the street.
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- Getting on and off the bus can be quite dangerous in several areas of the neighborhood.
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6. ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
- Some residents believe that changing the attitude towards cleaning and planting flowers would beautify the area…the example of businesses on Sherbrooke Street was used as a precedent.

- Suggestions were made that it might be useful to provide covered parking spaces for bicycles.
- Benches are needed along Harley Street as they may provide places for residents to interact and socialize.
- The neighborhood is lacking in garbage cans
- There is no basketball court and swimming pool
- The gym is too small
- When asked what they want in the centre the kids responded: better gym, bigger room, more computers/ laptops, more game rooms, video games and play stations, soccer space, basketball , netball
- The centre should be cleaner – no trash

7. EMPLOYMENT

- It would be useful if there were tutors for children
- Tutoring sessions would also be valued if they were offered on the weekend as well as weekdays

VISIONS & DREAMS OF RESIDENTS...

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Appendix C. Action plan (unofficial preliminary draft)[12]

Identified Issues	Definitions	Goals	Action Items	Time Frame and Priority *(Short – 1 year, Medium- 2 years or Long term- 3+ years)*	Responsible *(Sub-committee or specific organization)*	Targeted Population	Funding	Indicator
1. Recreation	Recreation involves the activities that are undertaken by residents during their leisure time. The neighborhood of Westhaven already possesses existing opportunities for recreation and they should be built upon. Therefore, this issue encompasses accessibility for people of all ages to recreation, enhancing awareness of the importance of healthy lifestyles, the creation of opportunities for staying active and an allowance for interaction to occur between those who live in and around the neighborhood.	1. Accessibility for all ages (facilities) 2. Promote healthy lifestyles 3. Encourage community interaction through physical and leisurely activities	- Create an adult/senior social club (movie nights, cards and games night) - Ensure gym accessibility for adults and seniors - Create a walking club - Create a Collective Kitchen - Bocce Ball club - Organize a mini winter and summer Olympics for families - Book club - Create a knitting club - Ca bouge dans les parcs - Contact residents with a newsletter - Encourage other organizations and partners to animate other activities.					

[12] By the time I was writing my SRP (March 2014) the action plan was not completed yet. This document is unofficial preliminary draft.

			-Create spaces for volunteers. - Skills sharing club - Community Calendar on Global TV - Create an affordable gym					
2. Housing	The issue of housing involves the sense of security and safety that residents feel within their respective homes, and their accessibility to available resources. These available resources include improving relationships with landlords and providing various workshops while creating opportunities for neighbors to interact. This issue also involves the support for social, affordable and public housing.	1. Encourage the creation of a tenants' association 2. Create a space for awareness of and possible provision of social and affordable housing.	- Organize a social activity for residents - Plan workshops on tenants rights and safety - Plan information workshop on recycling (Eco-Quartier) - Participate in the housing table and transfer knowledge - Create a tenants' association - Create the possibility for a social enterprise for cleaning in the neighborhood. - Evaluate safety in and around the buildings. - Motion for rent control - Workshops on collective housing - Work with TRANSITION NDG					

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3. Social Cohesion	A cohesive community is one that is vital to the improved quality of life of its residents. This issue touches upon encouraging the creation of bonds, developing and fostering partnerships, and the sense of isolation that residents feel within the neighborhood. Focusing on the above will result in the building of positive relationships between neighbors of all ages, community groups, prominent actors and local organizations.	1. Create a sequential pathway to social interaction for residents 2. Create programs for adults at the Westhaven Community Center that provide repeated opportunities for social interaction. 3. Increase awareness of the community center. 4. Promote interaction between neighbors	-Organize a community resource fair -Ongoing community kitchen nights not one time gala events. -Language classes -Women's circle -Create a sign in front of the community center with pictures -Create a community coffee night -Create a welcoming sub-committee -Create a newsletter with a computer workshop tied in -Have a 'marche exploratoire' and Jane's walk -Open House Night and Community Resource Fair -All other languages -Men's empowerment group. -Cultural Exchange Night -A community phone list -A professional skills workshop (GIS, AutoCAD and					

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			project management) - Parenting or leadership program. - Have an information session for newcomers - Cooking, art, music, computer, dance, home ec., knitting, sewing, quilting and language classes - Make links with Montreal West - Welcoming sub-committee					
4. Safety and Circulation	Improving safety and circulation are important to enhance the comfort and sense of safety that residents of all ages feel while in their community and the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists while traveling in and around the neighborhood. As there are a few dangerous intersections in Westhaven this would involve modifying the traffic flow in certain areas by implementing traffic calming techniques. Enhancing the sense of safety involves improving relations between safety	1. To form a more comprehensive understanding of current issues around circulation and needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists who live in the neighborhood. 2. To form a more comprehensive understanding of concerns regarding personal and residential safety and raise awareness of existing resources	- Organize a design charette for all the residents of Westhaven - Understand the problem intersections and create a comprehensive portrait of all of the above - Suggest traffic calming techniques for problematic areas of the neighborhood. - Find alternative solutions to the current train crossing. - Create safer spaces					

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	actors and residents.	regarding safety.	for children to play in.					
5. Employment	Employment is an important factor that contributes to livelihood in many ways. This issue involves the promotion of existing employment services within and around the neighborhood in order to increase awareness of resources. This also involves the provision of tools and a conducive space in which skills can be built upon and enhanced.	1. To promote private entrepreneurship and also encourage social economy entrepreneurship 2. Promote existing employment services 3. Make tutors available for primary school children	- Invite CJE to hold workshops on writing a CV and preparing for an interview - Distribute info about 'Placement assisté' offered by the CDEC					
6. Improving Environmental Quality	The issue of environmental quality involves the enhancement of existing public spaces. Ensuring that these public spaces are clean, safe, attractive, accessible, welcoming and comfortable will result in an increasingly environmentally friendly neighborhood.		- Compost, garbage and recycling problems. - -Activities aimed at beautifying the neighborhood - Provide suggestions for benches in key areas - Provide garbage cans					
7. Food Security	Food security is important in the neighborhood as it involves both accessibility to affordable and fresh	1. To improve access to healthier food while ensuring	- Do an assessment/produce a report that builds on existing					

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	food and the opportunity to prepare food within the community.	that it is affordable. 2. We aim to understand food security in/of Westhaven in order to develop a more comprehensive picture of existing food facilities, affordability, quality of food and origin. 3. Mobilize stakeholders from within/outside Westhaven on the issue of food security in a way that ensures ongoing support/resources for the neighborhood.	consultation processes. - List of people (actors and experts) - Review literature/resources - Convene event/info session or networking action group - Good Food Box drop off point - Create a community garden - Local market					

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