A NEIGHBORHOOD THAT EMPOWERS WOMEN:
IN SEARCH OF HOUSING SUSTAINABILITY

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ABSTRAIT

Cette thèse concerne la relation entre le pouvoir donné aux femmes et la durabilité des habitations pour gens à bas revenu. Elle dispute que les projets d'habitation et leur politiques devraient être conçues pour permettre les femmes d'avoir le contrôle de leur environnement, qui non seulement profiterait aux femmes, mais aussi assurerait l'endurance économique et sociale du quartier, profitable à tous les autres résidents et ainsi qu'à la ville. Cette thèse discute comment les politiques d'habitations ont échoué à rendre ce pouvoir aux femmes et analyse les manières avec lesquelles l'environnement bâti peut donner du pouvoir à ces résidentes et ainsi être enrichi par elles, le tout exemplifié par trois décennies d'histoire dans un quartier isolé situé en banlieue de Montréal, nommé Mountain Sights.

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the relationship between women's empowerment and low-income housing sustainability. It argues that housing projects and policies should be designed to enable women take control of their environment, which would not only profit women but ensure economic and social sustainability of the neighborhood, benefiting all its other residents as well as the city. The thesis discusses how housing policies have failed to empower women and analyzes the manner in which a built environment can empower its female residents and consequently be enriched by them, as exemplified by three decades of history of an isolated neighborhood called Mountain Sights situated in the outskirts of Montreal.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis is concerned among other things, with the notion of empowerment. Empowerment begins in one's mind and is as much a process of self-discovery as one of observing people and learning from the extent of empowerment of their personalities. Perhaps the most valuable lessons I learned about myself resulted from my observations of some women with whom I was fortunate to have interacted during the course of my research. Among these are Annmarie Adams, my friend Claire Katma, and Maureen Anderson, whose strength of character will always remain a source of inspiration to me.

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PREFACE

I grew up in Bombay, which is known as the economic capital of India. Almost 200 people - migrants from rural areas, are added to the city each day. They come in search of jobs, and a better life for themselves and their families. Not having any immediate place to live, they double up with relatives or build temporary settlements with bags, boards, tins and other waste material, on left-over public land, along the railway lines and similar areas of low economic and commercial value.

There is vibrancy in these settlements that strike one immediately on entry. Apart from the fact that they appear dirty and blighted, they have people from different backgrounds living together, their lifestyles flowing out into the little streets naturally from within their hut. On the streets, on the roofs of the little ground storey homes, in the porches in front of the houses, at the corner place, people make use of the spaces in a manner that completely redefines public and private spheres. They grow essential vegetables on small patches of land adjacent to their huts, wash clothes and vessels in the front open space, rear a goat or cow for milk and dung (with which they plaster the walls and floors), have little workshops where they have home based industries and small retail shops. Evidently their lives are connected as much with the outside of their homes as with the insides.

The presence of women and children in these settlements is most conspicuous. Since it is very easy for women to find informal jobs as maid-servants or nannies, they are often more continuously employed than the men in the neighborhood, who work in restaurants and small establishments as peons or waiters. Women are generally more anxious about the education of their children and the stability of the environment that they live in, not only because of the inherent traditional ties with nurturing; but more importantly because the stability of the environment is often threatened by vices such as alcoholism and gambling that men quickly tend to cultivate in these areas. Women are often abused by their husbands or other male members of the family. Even though many women in these areas are paid workers, they are so not by choice but by necessity. The notion of an ideal family with the wife as the homemaker and the husband as the breadwinner, and the

stigma attached to a female single parent, is not only perpetuated by society- preventing a great number of women from leaving their husbands and pursuing independent lives- but also by institutions that do not recognize women as equal or more productive in maintaining the economic and social stability of these settlements.

Slum clearance has a very literal meaning in Bombay. The authorities frequently bulldoze all the squatters in an area overnight and replace them with high-rise apartment buildings in an attempt to better the living conditions of the poor. The 'new' homes not only show a complete disregard for the social aspects of their lifestyle but also ignore the importance of women in these households. Ownership is still a male privilege, and the new environment does not provide for any collective spaces for interaction between residents during work, leisure or commuting. It leaves women isolated when inside the dwellings and prevents them from building support networks among themselves, which are essential during emergencies like taking care of the children when they need to work, or getting help if they are being abused.

Having worked on similar projects in Bombay, I became increasingly conscious that something in the manner in which the housing was being designed and delivered to the people was wrong. These buildings were soon dilapidated, discretely sold off for commercial purposes or abandoned by their intended occupants, as being unsuitable for their lifestyles. Women and children were the least informed and empowered and yet they were the ones who were most affected. Hence one of the intentions of studying housing in Canada was to analyze its mechanisms of delivery of housing to the poor. The purpose of the research was to probe into the models of housing development that tried to absorb heterogeneity, so characteristic of a low-income neighborhood, and to see if any of them had evolved a sustainable environment, which had empowered women in policy and design.

ACRONYMS

1. R.O.M.E.L. - Regroupement des organismes du Montréal ethnique pour le logement.
2. O.S.B.L. - Organisme sans but lucratif.
3. L'O.E.I.L. - Le Organization d'education et d'information lodgement de Côte-des-Neiges
4. S.H.D.M. - Société d'habitation et de développement de Montréal.
5. C.L.S.C. - Centre Local De Services Communautaires
6. O.M.H.M. - Office Municipal d'Habitation de Montréal.
7. P.R.O.M.I.S. - Promotion, Multiculture, Intégration, Société nouvelle.
8. P.R.S. – Private Rent Supplement Program.
9. R.G.I. – Rent Geared towards Income.

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INTRODUCTION

In search of a sustainable solution to low-income housing, this thesis argues that feminist planning issues must be applied in the mainstream planning philosophy for housing. It shows that housing programs and environments that have empowered women have been socially and economically sustainable. This is because women are the primary users of low-income housing and it is in their best interests to maintain the housing environment. It suggests that modifications initiated by women enrich the entire neighborhood and confer a feeling of empowerment to their personal lives.

The following questions served as a base for the thesis: Due to the inter-relationship between users and the built environment, is it possible that the disadvantaged user can have adverse effects on the environment? Looking at it from another angle, is it possible that empowered women can have positive effects on the environment? Can housing be designed to enable women to take control of their dwellings, and to enrich them by their interventions? What would be the effect of such housing on the lives of women and all other users?

The thesis is formatted into two sections. The first section deals with issues oriented towards the policy and theory of Canadian housing. The first chapter discusses the methodology of the thesis. It also includes a rationale for the methodology and a description of the various sources used in the course of the research.

The second chapter explores the notion that cultural rather than economic reasons are the main cause of the impoverishment of women, which suggests that cultural issues must be addressed to provide sound housing to women. The second chapter suggests that patrimonial biases in housing philosophy have prevented the inclusion of neighborhood support centers for women in private low-income housing development. This has not only worsened economic conditions of poor women but also affected economic and social sustainability of these low-income neighborhoods. The chapter tries to explain the similarities between feminist planning and urban issues considered by some planners as

necessary elements for the social, environmental and economic sustainability of urban areas.

The second major section in this thesis arrives at an observed operative core that the theoretical nature of the first section departs from. It shows the potential of rehabilitation to empower women, through the study of one neighborhood in northwest Montreal called Mountain Sights. In addition to changes that have occurred between 1965 and the present in Mountain Sights, the discussion highlights the role of women in the process, suggesting that women have been key in initiating and maintaining citizen participation and thus the sustainability of the neighborhood. This study suggests that the empowerment of women and enduring rehabilitation are symbiotic in nature, and should be recognized as a sustainable political, social and architectural model of low-income housing. Chapter one is a description of Mountain Sights to orient the reader to different elements of the neighborhood. Chapter two locates Mountain Sights in a political context and the process by which women became involved in the decisions that affected the physical and social texture of the neighborhood. The third chapter of section II describes the social context of the neighborhood and its residents. Chapter four etches the architectural indications of the social, political and economic status of women. It contains an analysis of spaces and changes that took place as a result of renovations and rehabilitative effects on and of women.

The fifth chapter offers a conclusion to this thesis. It discusses the inferences that can be drawn from the previous chapters and suggests how feminist planning methods can further impact sustainable and affordable housing while leaving the door open for further research premised on the concept that women and the notion of housing sustainability are inseparable.

METHODOLOGY

SECTION I, CHAPTER I

The aim of this thesis is to study the relationship between sustainability of housing rehabilitation and women's empowerment in a low-income neighborhood like Mountain Sights. The methodology of the thesis is derived from the idea that the manner in which a built form is constructed and used implicitly signifies the nature of gender, race and class relations in society. It proposes that a social and physical change in the environment can be analyzed to judge the extent of the empowerment of women. Moreover, an analysis over time of such an environment can help to ascertain if women constituted the agencies of change, while also helping to identify the process of change. It leads to important conclusions about the spatial and social configurations that may empower women.

Planners Leonie Sandercock and Ann Forsyth[1] argue that the paradigms on which planning and theorizing about planning have been based are informed by characteristics traditionally associated with the masculine in our society, thus calling for a reinterpretation of the history of environments on a gender basis. They point out that even if women have been seen as part of the environment, they have seldom been perceived as part of the "action" and this has prevented the formulation of a practical mainstream theory of planning and design that incorporates feminist theory.

Analyzing the history of an environment with women not only as passive recipients or "affected" but as active participants and "affectors" of change may define clearly the role of women and feminist theory in the practice of planning. Mountain Sights is a modest low-income neighborhood with no comprehensive documentation of its history. However it has been brushed with hues of a number of social and political efforts in low-income housing dating from the 1960s onwards. Women have been active participants in demanding, formulating and implementing rehabilitative programs in Mountain Sights.

These programs have had a general relevance to the neighborhood in maintenance, reduction of crime, increased facilities and more sociability among the residents. Hence the history of Mountain Sights, the role of women in this neighborhood, and the effect of several programs within the community have been developed in this thesis.

Forsyth and Sandercock[2] challenge the assumption implicit in pluralistic political theory, that if given a chance, all interest groups will articulate their demands in a roughly equivalent manner. They suggest that given the multiple disadvantages due class, race, education, health and self-esteem women experience, women may not respond to conventional research like a multiple choice questionnaire with unbridled responses. They suggest that the reason for this is that traditionally most women are socialized to be passive in decision making and that they believe they do not have anything important to add to public discourse[3]. Keeping this in mind, the interviews referred to in this thesis and their subsequent analysis are primarily subjective. Research was done in an informal manner with interviews and without a strict questionnaire. This was done to understand the relationship of the woman with her environment on a daily basis. Mary Field Belenky[4] called this way of understanding behavior of women "connected knowing," which emphasizes relationship, rather than separation between the self and the object of research.

The value of doing the research by subjective interviews rather than arriving at statistics with questionnaires lies in the insights about the relationship of women and housing that women themselves offered during informal discussions. They used actions and gestures to explain where they worked or rested or waited, and why they preferred certain spaces to others for particular usage. The conversation was allowed to flow in a direction directly pertinent to the resident. This lead to unanticipated lessons and ideas about

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[1] Leonie Sandercock and Ann Forsyth, "A Gender Agenda: New Directions for Planning Theory" Ed. LeGates, Richard and Stout, Fredric, The City Reader. (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 407-420
[2] ibid.
[3] ibid.
[4] Clinchy Blythe, Jill Tarule, Mary Belenky, and Nancy Goldberger, Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice and Mind (New York: Basic Books, 1986), pp. 112-113.

women's relationship with their environments and the socio-economic conditions that surround them.

There are some limitations to this methodology: the minimal number of interviews the author was able to conduct. The reasons for this are the following: As the nature of interviews was intended to be informal and subjective, this called for lengthy interviews in the homes of the residents. Not many residents were receptive to the idea that it was important to interview the women in particular. It was difficult to gain entrance into many homes and talk to women. Where men were present during the interviews, women contributed very little and sometimes it was the disapproval of the husband that made the case study impossible. Another reason for the limited interviews derives from the fact that the research has considered several aspects of the housing on Mountain Sights which has consequently required the study of government archives and interviewing individuals in the SHDM and several community organizations. Given more time and resources, this thesis could have been enriched with more interviews.

Other Sources

The research for this thesis involved exploring government documents as primary sources of information on Mountain Sights. The history of early government interventions in the neighborhood was developed from project files and annual reports in the 'Municipal Office of Habitation of Montreal' (OMHM). The broader political context of the project was developed from a close study of Statistics Canada (1960 to 1998), review of the National Housing Act from 1964, few reports of the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and reports on housing policies in 1970s and 80s.

The 'Society of Habitation and Development of Montreal (SHDM) was a major source of information. The history of the buildings in Mountain Sights after acquisition and renovation was developed from project files, minutes of meetings and plans of the buildings before and after renovations. This threw light on the different groups

concerned with the social and physical rehabilitation of the buildings, the role of the tenants, as well as the chronology of events.

Other institutions like the Montreal Land Titles Office, and the Montreal City Archives, helped to identify the builders, owners, as well as the changes in land use and zoning that took place in the area over time. This helped the author to establish a connection between the general policy and the design of rental housing in Montreal with that in Mountain Sights.

Non-profit organizations that have been working in Mountain Sights were rich sources of information and helped place its history in a social context. Photographs and video tapes of some activities of Mountain Sights provide visual testimony to the interviews with Claude Dagneau from 'The Organization of Education and Information on Apartments' (L'OEIL), Monique Larose from CLSC, Denis Lublon from PROMIS, and Clair Katma, Linda Forest and Mr. Marcel Lebel from SHDM.

The architects[5] who worked on major renovations in Mountain Sights in 1989, could not be reached until this thesis was nearing its completion. However their opinions and design decisions were reflected in the plans for renovations and the minutes of meetings with community organizers, the SHDM and the tenants. Other architects were interviewed about their impressions of renovations carried out and the philosophy of sustainable design.

[5] Boulay, Deschamps, Paradis, Rayside. Architectes.

WOMEN AND HOUSING SUSTAINABILITY

SECTION I, CHAPTER 2

"To many it means that their inability to find the path to success is their own fault; for imbedded in the ideology of the American Dream, inherent in that "I think I can" mentality, is the presumption that if we do not succeed in this land of milk and honey, in this world of infinite opportunity, it must be our fault."

Ruth Sidel, On Her Own (1988)[1]

Neighborhood services like daycare centers, counseling and support groups that are deemed critical for women who are identified as destitute, delinquent, battered and utterly impoverished in public housing, is a gesture that comes too late. This paper argues that affordability of mainstream private housing, which forms the bulk of housing in the nation today, has never been designed to accommodate women's economic conditions. Further the paper argues that neighborhood services that support women's dual role as homemaker and as an individual in personal pursuit, have never been considered as a critical component in any private housing venture, so as to prevent, and not just cure, the conditions of state-dependence and impoverishment among women. The result, as sociologist Ruth Sidel observes, is a discrepancy between the dream of individuality and the reality of dependence in the lives of most women.[2] The percentage of women living in poverty-stricken situations is on the increase[3] (figure I.2.1 p.31) because women are constantly forced to choose between home and work. Consequently a large amount of children are affected. Statistics show that female-headed families contain a disproportionate share of poor children in Canada. In 1993, one in every seven children in Canada belonged to a low-income female lone-parent[4] (see figure I.2.2 p.31). Poor

[1] Ruth Sidel, On Her Own (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), p. 241.
[2] Ibid.
[3] In 1993 in Canada, 60% of all families headed by lone mothers had incomes that were less than the low-income cut off rates specified by the Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation (CMHC). In comparison just 13% of two parent families with children and 31% of male lone parent families had low incomes in 1993. Statistics Canada Catalogue No. 89-503, p 86. See appendix 1 (p.36) for table of low-income cut off rates.
[4] In 1993, almost one child of every two (42%) in low-income families came from a female lone-parent household. Statistics Canada Catalogue No. 89-503, p. 86.

households simply mean poor children and an impoverished, disadvantaged future generation.

A case for assistance to women is usually made on the basis that a large number of children is affected by impoverishment of their female guardian. However, the fact that permanent housing normally does not lend any assistance to share household responsibilities is a great injustice to women as individuals. In 1898, sociologist Charlotte Perkins Gilman coined the terms 'self-preservation' and 'race-preservation' and recognized them as natural but distinct tendencies of any species[5]. She noted that humans, as individuals and as a race, require a balance of both these tendencies. 'Self preservation' lies in the ability of the individual to assert her/his existence and is not related to the sex of the person, while race preservation involves reproduction and raising balanced children that promulgate the society, and hence 'race-preservation' concerns the sex of the individuals, which include both men and women. Gilman noted that 'self-preservation' is a responsibility of every individual, irrespective of their gender, while preservation of the race is a collective responsibility of the society. It is the responsibility of the society and its institutions to protect the right of every individual to strive for their individuality and to share the obligation of bringing up a sound future generation. Women, Gilman argued, have been traditionally socialized to be economically dependent on men because 'self-preservation' is not recognized as critical for them, the center of their upbringing having traditionally been 'race preservation'.

The concept of profit, evaluated in dollar terms, has been the basis of economic and social growth according to capitalism. However, women have never been factored into the process of profit making, only as consumers of profit. To explain the traditional 'passive recipient' status of women in society, consider the postulates of sociologist Max Weber. He identified a family with two parents and children as the basic building block of the economic society.[6] Weber declared, in what has been acclaimed as the greatest

[5] Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Women and Economics ed. Carl Degler. (Harper Torchbook, 1966), pp. 23-39.
[6] Max Weber, Economy And Society Vol. 1, ed. Guenther Roth and Clans Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978),1998, p. 356.

sociological treatise written in this century that, "...in terms of economic and personal relationships, the household in its 'pure', though not necessarily primitive form implies solidarity in dealing with the outside and communism of property and consumption of everyday goods within (household communism)."[7] The family, he claimed was the fundamental basis of loyalty and authority, loyalty of the women and children towards the man, and authority of the strength, experience and knowledge of the man over the women and children.[8] As far as income is concerned, a capitalist society believes that it is moral to strive and to be self sustaining; of all those among the able, who are poor and of sound mind, they are so either due to their own fault or because they are in a transitory phase of struggle.[9] As Weber's postulates laid down the nature of a basic building block of any society, a family is traditionally believed to be a collective, in which men earned money and women were the homemakers, each dependant on the other for support.[10] On

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Published posthumously in Germany in the early 1920s, the treatise has become a constitutive part of the modern sociological imagination.

[7] Guenther Roth and Clans Wittich, foreword, Economy Of Society Vol. 1 by Max Weber (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

[8] Max Weber, *"Household, Neighborhood and Kin Group, The Household: Familial, Capitalistic and Communist Solidarity"* Chapter III Economy Of Society Vol. 1, ed. Guenther Roth and Clans Wittich, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), p. 359.

"The size and inclusiveness of the household varies, but it is the most widespread economic group and involves continuous and intensive social action. It is the fundamental basis of many other groups. This authority is of two kinds: First the authority derived from practical knowledge and experience. It is , thus, the authority of men as against women and children; of the able bodied as against those of lesser capability; of the adult as against the child; of the old as against the young. The "loyalty" is one of subjects toward the holders of authority and toward one another. As reverence for ancestors, it finds its way into religion; as a loyalty of the patrimonial official, retainer, of vassal, it becomes a part of the relationships originally having a domestic character"

[9] 'Pauperism' and 'moral degeneracy' of the casual poor was commonly thought of as a chronic condition of poverty and unwillingness or inability to help self and family by working for a living. Poor relief and other forms of charity seemingly exacerbated it.

A.S Whol, "The history of the working-class in London, 1815-1914", The History of Working class Housing ed. S.D. Chapman. David and Charles, (Newton Abbot, 1971), p. 311.

Charitable organizations in Montr9al in the early twentieth century were also criticized for giving aid to the poor on grounds that direct aid fuelled dependency among the poor and reduced incentive to work.

T. Copp, The Anatomy of Poverty: The Condition of the Working-Class in Montr9al, 1897-1929 McClelland and Stewart, (Toronto, 1974), pp. 116-119.

Very similar arguments were voiced within the colonial administration of St. John's, Newfoundland, in the earlier part of the nineteenth century.

J Fingard, "The relief of the unemployed: The poor in St. John, Halifax and St. John's" The Canadian City: Essays in Urban History eds. G.A. Stelter and A.F.J. Artibise, (Toronto: McClennand and Stewart, 1977), pp. 345-346.

[10] Max Weber, "Household, Neighborhood and Kin Group, The Household: Familial, Capitalistic and Communist Solidarity" Chapter III Economy Of Society Vol. 1, ed. Guenther Roth and Clans Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), p.359.

the scale of the society, thus, women have been either care-givers or subordinate income earners.[11]

The vestige of the traditional image of women as dependents of other adult family members has affected their economic condition and hence their capacity to afford suitable housing as the head of a household. Even though there has been an explosion of women's participation in the paid labor force (see figure I.2.3, and figure I.2.4 p.32), there have been scarce efforts by the state to take up responsibility of 'race preservation' so as to lend equal opportunities for 'self preservation'. Family and divorce laws burden women with greater financial responsibility of children than they do men. This has serious repercussions on the economic situation of women, their standard of living, and women's capacity to afford decent housing (see figure I.2.5 p.32).[12] Pay inequities, temporary unemployment or the compulsion to take up only part-time labor due to pregnancy or family responsibilities reduce women's income as well as job-related benefits like employment insurance, retirement fund, job seniority and asset accumulation.[13]

The type of housing that is afforded by low-income female-headed households, has been unsuitable for them. To show the different aspects of unsuitability of housing it is necessary to identify the suitable aspects of housing, which support women. Aron Spector and Fran Klodawsky [14] drew up a list of eleven criteria for policies of suitable housing for female-headed households. These criteria incorporated the inter-relationships between housing and the dynamism of the family lifecycle of [female-headed households] who are predominantly resource poor and often in transition.

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[11] In 1994, 70% of all employed women were working in either teaching, nursing and health-related occupations, clerical positions, or sales and service occupations. In 1982 this percentage was 77%. Statistics Canada, Catalogue No. 89-503, p. 67.

[12] Diane Pask, "Family Law and Policy in Canada: Economic Implications for Single Custodial Mothers and Their Children" Single Parent Families:Perspectives on Research and Policy ed. Joe Hudson, and Burt Galaway, (Ontario: Thompson Educational Publication Inc., 1993), pp.185-205.

[13] McDaniel Susan, "Single Parenthood: Policy Apartheid in Canada" Single Parent Families: Perspectives on Research and Policy ed. Hudson, Joe and Galaway, Burt, (Ontario: Thompson Educational Publication Inc., 1993), pp. 206-211.

[14] Aron Spector, and Fran Klodowsky, " The Housing Needs of Single Parent Families In Canada: A Dilemma for the 1990s" Single Parent Families: Perspectives on Research and Policy ed. Joe Hudson, and Burt Galaway, (Ontario: Thomson Educational Publication Inc, 1993), pp. 244-251.

1) **Affordability**: Affordability concerns the capacity to afford housing and its various services.

2) **Access**: Access to the facilities of the city like retail commercial areas, workplace, hospitals, schools, entertainment, friends and the community. Many women depend on public transit. In 1997, in Montreal for example, women made up the majority of users (over 60%) of the Soci9t9 de transport de la Communaut9 urbaine de Montr9al.[15] This was because many women still found private means of transportation to be unaffordable.[16]

3) **Availability**: Affordable housing should be available in central locations that are free from problems of dilapidation, crime and renter discrimination. The availability of such housing should be widespread so as to enable enough choice. However since the construction of affordable, centrally-located housing seems to be restricted only to the non-profit and public housing sectors, the choice in location and resources is often limited.

4) **Secure tenure**: Low-income neighborhoods are subjected to vagaries of tight housing markets. Conversion into commercial areas, condominiums or even demolition affect security of tenure for low-income women.

5) **Capacity for maintenance**: The minimal resources that low-income women do possess leave no time or money for maintenance of the home. As renters, their lifestyle is more transient than those of homeowners. In order to maintain the quality of rental housing in the face of vigorous use by its occupants, there should be established standards of permanence in techniques and materials used for rental construction.

6) **Opportunities for sharing and support:** Opportunities for sharing and support should be incorporated into neighborhood spaces and as neighborhood events. It helps reduce housing costs, is beneficial in spreading various household responsibilities such as maintenance and child-care, and provide emotional support from empathetic peers.

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[15] A City Tailored to Women: The role of municipal governments in achieving gender equality (Federation of Canadian Municipalities International Office, FCM publication Number: 1029E, October 1997), p.23.

[16] In 1994, 34% of female lone parent families did not have a car. Among unattached women, 56% above 65 years of age and 36% of women below 65 did not own cars. In comparison only 6% of all two-partner families did not have cars. Statistics Canada, Catalogue No. 89-503, p. 29.
Source: Statistics Canada Catalogue No. 89-503, p. 29.

7) Appropriate facilities for children: Facilities such as playgrounds and safe outdoor spaces are a necessity for female-headed households in low-income neighborhoods.

8) Privacy: While such families may wish and require enhanced supports from the community and from neighborhoods, the continuing presence of others, and the necessity for confining rules and restrictions that is often reported among residents in non profit and public housing can be stifling.

9) Safety

10) Cost effective use of public and private funds: Cost-effectiveness can be equated to the net benefit of creating an environment where the human capital can be developed. Community-based initiatives provide an effective and inexpensive way to tackle problems at the level of the city and the household.

11) Suitability for empowerment: Housing should accommodate interventions by the users so that they can develop a sense of ownership towards it. This is discussed in the next section.

Considering the above, it can be argued that government housing policies have neglected the effect that housing has on women's lives, and their living conditions. For example Home ownership was never targeted or intended for women. The private market is considered as the main mechanism for delivery of housing in Canada.[17] There have been various efforts by the government to boost the private market to produce affordable housing. Such efforts have been concentrated in home ownership and rental sectors. The Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation, established under the National Housing Act in 1945, was primarily a financial institution to boost home ownership by way of lending and later insuring mortgages for home buyers.[18]

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[17] In 1956 a CMHC Minister was quoted saying "It was the government's view, which I have stated publicly on a number of occasions, that we would be justified in using public funds for housing only where private enterprise fails to meet the need. "Letter", CMHC, June 8, 1956. Source:
Micheal Fish and Susan Dennis, Programs in Search of a Policy (Toronto: Hakkert, 1972), p. 3.

[18] Kamal S Sayegh, Housing: A Canadian Perspective (Ontario: ABCD Academy Books, 1987), pp. 87-89. George Fallis, "Social Policy Challenge and Social Housing" Home Remedies ed. John Richards, and William Watson, (Ontario: C.D. Howe Institute, 1995), pp. 7-21.

Mortgages for buying homes were geared towards the individual's income and assets, personal savings, retirement fund and life insurance.[19] That meant that there were few provisions for those without savings and job benefits. Women who were not employed, new immigrants with minimal resources, divorced women and single parents with low income and no job-related benefits were some of the households excluded from this equation (see figure I.2.6 p.32).[20] Until the early 1960s, women were primarily homemakers. Hence most women who lived in user-owned single-family homes did so, not because they could afford them, but because they were the daughter or wife of a man who could afford to buy a house or to secure a mortgage.[21]

Not only were the means of home-ownership scarce, but most dwellings were built in suburban locations. As seen in figure I.2.7 (p.33) for the 16 metropolitan centers, 62 percent of all new housing was built in the suburbs from 1961 and 1971.[22] Home ownership suitable for a family was analogous to buying a home in the suburbs, which served as a mark of fulfillment and individuality for homeowners.[23] Suburban housing and its zoning ordinances isolated women from public life, which affected their psychological and economical well being.[24] Dolores Hayden argued that the twentieth century American City has deliberately sanctioned the distinction between suburbs and cities so as to separate homes from workplaces on the basis that the member of the family

[19] Kamal S Sayegh, Housing: a Canadian Perspective (Ontario: ABCD Academy Books, 1987), pp. 87-89.
[20] Kamal. S. Sayegh, Housing: a Canadian Perspective (Ontario: ABCD Academy Books, 1987), p. 240.
[21] In 1967 only 33% of all husband-wife families participated in the labor force, while the wife's earnings represented 26.4% of dual-earner families.
Statistics Canada, Focus on Canada: Family income Cat. 98-128, (Ottawa: Ministry of Supply and Services, 1989), pp. 15-16.
[22] In the large cities the percentage of suburban building starts was even higher, 68% in Montréal and 84% in Toronto. By 1971 only 10% of Toronto, and 16% of Montr9al building starts were in center city.
Dennis Fish, Programs in Search of A Policy (Toronto: Hakkert, 1972), p. 333.
[23] Richard Walker, "A Theory of Suburbanization: Capitalism and the Construction of Urban Space in the United States" Urbanization and Urban Planning in Capitalist Society ed. Dear, Micheal and Scott, Allen, (London and New York : Metheun and Co., 1981), pp. 340-383.
[24] Angela Evans, Women's Housing Needs: A Re-Evaluation of Policy and Practise Working Paper No. 24. (School of Urban and Regional Planning, Faculty of Environmental Studies, University of Waterloo, Ontario, 1998), Chap. 4, pp. 15-18. Saegert, Susan. "Masculine Cities and Feminine Suburbs: Polarized Ideas, Contradictory Realities." Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society. Spring 1980, vol. 5 no.3. Supplement. S97

who worked at home was not the one who worked outside the home.[25] She said that it was essential to recognize environments that supported women's work inside and outside the home, and to begin both the rehabilitation of the existing housing stock and the construction of new housing accordingly.

Rental housing disregarded the fact that women have been its most ardent users. In 1981, there were two million households in Canada: 63 % were homeowners, the rest were renters. Only 38 % of female-headed households were homeowners; the remainder had to rely on the rental market for housing. On the other hand, only 30% of male-headed households were occupants of rental housing.[26] In a study done for the Canadian Advisory Council, Cassie Doyle showed that women, as opposed to men, were more prone to the effects of rent fluctuations, decreases in the number of low-income housing units, and trends in the real estate market favoring the conversion of housing units into co-operative housing.[27] The vacancy rate of residential buildings for all Canadian metropolitan areas was 1.4% in 1974.[28] This shortage, far more pronounced in central and eastern Canada, meant that women spent more time looking for a dwelling with suitable amenities than men.[29]

In the 1970s, in an effort to create inexpensive rental housing in Canada, through the private rental sector, tax exemptions and mortgages with generous terms were granted to builders. This was done so that small syndicates of professionals like doctors and engineers found it profitable to invest in the rental market.[30] For example, under the 'limited dividend plan', CMHC guaranteed generous mortgage terms on the condition that

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[25] Dolores Hayden, "What would a Non-sexist City Be Like? Speculations on Housing, Urban Design, and Human Work" City Reader ed. Richard T. LeGates and Fredric Stout, (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), p.143.
[26] Cassie Doyle, Home Sweet Home? Housing For Women (The Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, November 1984), p.5.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Apartment Vacancy Survey: Structures of Six Units and Over (Ottawa,1985), Table 1: "Vacancy Rates in Apartment Structures of Six Units and Over, Publicly and Privately Initiated, in Metropolitan Areas, 1977-1985".
[29] Ibid.
[30] Patterson and Watson, Rent Stabilization: A Review of Current Policies in Canada (The Canadian Council on Social Development, 1976), p. 35.

the owners kept the rent revenues to a maximum of 2%.[31] But the effort went only as far as increasing the number of cheap housing, with little concern to its quality or its system of management. The owners, who clearly entered into the rental market for investment purposes only, did not live in their buildings nor did they have any permanent representative there. Anonymity of the owner left little or no form of communication between the occupants and the owners of the building. Absence of supervision resulted in neglected maintenance and a lack of services in low-income neighborhoods, which soon were plagued by high crime rates, dilapidation and scarce public services.[32] Another factor that had a direct effect on the quality of these neighborhoods was that they tended to be situated on the outskirts of the city. This was an attempt to keep construction costs down, and low-income residential areas were zoned on the city's periphery, where land was cheaper than in the more developed and serviced areas of the city. A study in 1972, carried out by Dennis Fish on behalf of the CMHC, reported the effects of production subsidies that policies like that of the 'limited dividend program' offered, on the location of low-income housing:

> Production subsidies dictate fringe suburban locations, as most of the land for new production is located there. At least in the early years of the project's life, this means that, unless the project is a very large one, community services and facilities will be inadequate. Housing is frequently distant from both shopping and employment. Public transportation is poorest in fringe areas and wives are frequently trapped at home as husbands must drive to work.
> Production subsidy leads to pressures to hold costs down to restrain subsidy increases. In the public housing program those pressures have at various times led to the use of marginal sites (as well as fringe locations) abutting expressways and rail lines, poor quality construction, emphasis on higher densities and smaller unit sizes, and the omission of recreational facilities.[33]

Though these rental neighborhoods, which were a result of production subsidies granted to builders, were affordable, they were unsuitable environments for women who lived alone, and female-headed families. The reason for this was firstly that crime and dilapidation affects women more than it affects men.[34] Secondly, women are generally

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[31] Kamal S. Sayegh, Housing: A Canadian Perspective (Ontario: ABCD Academy Books, 1987), pp. 117,125.
[32] During interviews with the author community workers like, Claude Dagneau of L'OEIL, identified the visible absence of landlords in their buildings as one of the major reasons for these buildings' dilapidation.
[33] Dennis Fish, Programs in Search of A Policy (Toronto: Hakkert, 1972), p. 333.
[34] Gordon, Riger, LeBailly and Heath. "Crime, Women, and the Quality of Urban Life" Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society Vol.5, no.3 supplement (The University of Chicago, Spring 1980), p. S144.

accompanied by children[35] and neighborhoods, with their high concentration of poor and unemployed residents, are extremely detrimental, as they contain no safe area for play or interaction and no positive reinforcements for doing well in studies or in life.[36] Due to their minimal income, women in low-rent neighborhoods lacked their own private means of transportation, which meant that they were heavily dependent on public transportation and the local retail infrastructure. The isolated locations of the rental buildings made commuting into the city difficult and a simultaneous pursuit of career and childcare almost impossible for women.

'Rent Control' was an early effort by the federal government to make private rental housing affordable to low-income households. It was an emergency social measure implemented in Canada in 1941. During World War II, rents in the country were frozen until the period between 1947 and 1951, when the federal government abandoned rent control along with other price controls to return to the free market in order to boost the amount of housing starts. Landlords were granted several general rent increases.[37] Despite the decontrol of rents after 1951, there was a shortage of rental housing. Other economic concerns[38] subsequently caused private builders to lose interest in new rental construction and also led to a severe neglect of existing rental housing.

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[35] Women receive sole custody of the children in over 70% of child custody cases.
Diane Pask, "Family Law and Policy in Canada: Economic Implications for Single Custodial Mothers and Their Children" Single Parent Families:Perspectives on Research and Policy ed. Joe Hudson, and Burt Galaway, (Ontario: Thompson Educational Publication Inc., 1993), p. 185-205.

[36] Sandra Newman, "...And a Suitable Living Environment: The Failure of Housing Programs to Deliver on Neighborhood Quality" Housing Policy Debate Vol. 8, Issue 4. (Fannie Mae Foundation, 1997), pp. 703-715.

[37] Patterson and Watson. Rent Stabilization: A Review of Current Policies in Canada (The Canadian Council on Social Development, 1976), p. 3.
This resulted in a sharp increase in rents. From 1961 to 1971 the rent per room increased by 85.1% while the average total household income increased by 62.1%. From 1971 to 1973 the rent control was reinstated in several provinces in a one manner or the other. Rise in rents was restricted to a certain percentage per year or certain number of times per year. The initiative for change in rent lay with the renters in some provinces and with the owner in others.
Ibid., pp. 41-45.

[38] Patterson and Watson. Rent Stabilization: A Review of Current Policies in Canada (The Canadian Council on Social Development, 1976), p. 35.
"In 1972 the federal government passed the Income Tax Amendment Act. Following the amendments, excess depreciation, or capital cost allowances, on rental property could no longer be used to create a "paper loss" to offset against other or non-rental income. This drove the small syndicates of doctors, lawyers and other professionals out of the market. These syndicates, rather than large construction companies, had been dominant investors in the rental market. Their loss of interest in the rental market

Quebec was the only province that retained some form of rent control even after 1951. It was known as the 'Act to Promote Conciliation between Lessees and Property Owners.' It permitted the increase of rent by 5% per 12 months until 1973, when the act was amended so that renters were responsible for initiating rent control if they considered an increase in rent by their landlords to be unfair.[39] Unless the renter objected or filed a complaint against their landlord, rent control could not be enforced. However solitary women have been hesitant to exercise this right, and lodge complaints about their landlords for fear of creating bad relations, which may subsequently cause repercussions in their homes and affect support from their landlords for day-to-day needs and, in case of an emergency.[40] In December 1972, when rent control was repealed in Quebec, landlords reacted by increasing their rents sharply. Critics said that renters who contested increase in rents experienced severe delay in the court's decisions, which often tended to favor the landlord. Further, they said it did not offer enough protection against the potential of landlord harassment or the landlord's threats to cut services to tenants. To encourage construction of new rental housing, the Quebec board was not given jurisdiction over the first rents established for new dwellings units.[41] In private low-income neighborhoods the lack of any form of collective action initiated by their tenants isolated female-headed households whose head often did not have the time, support or resources to enter into legal dealings with their landlord.[42] Though 'renter initiated rent control' was an

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drastically reduced new construction. The 1960s also saw the emergence of the condominium legislation that attracted investors from the rental markets."

[39] "Faced with any rent increase, the tenant in Quebec may demand a hearing at the Rental Board, at which the landlord must justify the increase..... This lends an individualized approach to rent control."
Patterson and Watson, Rent Stabilization: A Review of Current Policies in Canada (The Canadian Council on Social Development, 1976), p. 52.
"....Tenant initiative often exacerbates landlord-tenant relationships"
Ibid., p. 11.

[40] Diane Morissette, Housing for Canadian Women: An Everyday Concern (Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, March 1987), pp. 9-10.

[41] Patterson and Watson, Rent Stabilization: A Review of Current Policies in Canada (The Canadian Council on Social Development, 1976), p. 54.
Kamal S Sayegh, Housing: a Canadian Perspective (Ontario: ABCD Academy Books, 1987), p. 186.

[42] Daine Pask talks about the reason why many women do not challenge family settlements and other legal procedures in court. "Few clients can afford long jurisdictional procedure, especially women because separation had major changes in their financial resources."
Diane Pask, "Family Law and Policy in Canada: Economic Implications for Single Custodial Mothers and Their Children" Single Parent Families:Perspectives on Research and Policy ed. Joe Hudson, and Burt Galaway, (Ontario: Thompson Educational Publication Inc., 1993), p. 185-205.

economic success, it can be said to have failed in its social mandates, which were to ensure fair rents and conciliation between renter and owner. Another prevalent problem in private low-rent housing is that legislation has been unable to eradicate discriminatory actions of landlords.[43] Families led by women are seen as bad investments as most low-income women do not have permanent jobs and often are employed discontinuously due to domestic responsibilities like caring for ill children or aged family members[44], due to which, they may not be able to pay their rent. Landlords passively discriminate against these women due to their insecure means of income.[45] Immigrants face discrimination from landlords of nationalities different than their own. Low-income ethnic women are most discriminated against, as they do not have confidence or support to object to a discriminating landlord or bad maintenance of their apartments.[46]

The only type of housing that was conceived with the considerations to its large proportion of female residents was government subsidized public housing although it came at the cost of the freedom and privacy of its households and targeted mostly destitute, battered women. After a major revision of the National Housing Act (NHA) in 1964, social housing became the main thrust of the housing policy. With 100% federal financing, the CMHC took up the construction of low income housing, in which rents payable by tenants were geared towards their income (known as RGI for Rent Geared towards Income). This meant that the renter paid 25% of her income towards rent and the rest was contributed by the CMHC. In 1967, the jurisdiction of public housing was divided and passed on to the provinces of Canada.

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[43] David Hulchanski, Barriers to Equal Access in the Housing Market: The Role of Discrimination on the Basis of Race and Gender Research Paper 187. Center for Urban and Community Studies, University of Toronto, November 1993, p. 15-16.

[44] Women in paid work force are considerably more likely than employed men to be absent from work because of personal or family responsibilities. During an average week in 1994, 4% of all women employed full-time lost some time from work for these reasons, compared with only 1% of their male counterparts. Statistics Canada Catalogue No. 89-503E, p. 69.

[45] Denis Lublon (community worker, PROMIS), personal interview, Mountain Sights, Montréal 1998. She related an incident when an Indian women was refused to be shown an apartment on the pretext that there was no vacancy; but when Denis went there pretending to be a potential renter she was shown the apartment and welcomed to rent it.

Since its establishment in 1969, social housing development of the Municipal Office of Habitation of Montreal (OMHM) evolved in three distinct phases. In the first phase of the early 1970s, public housing projects consisted of several high-rise buildings grouped in a density, which was very high and resulted in visibly large concentrations of poor people. Though it enabled a rapid creation of subsidized rent apartments, this phase not only stigmatized public-housing residents but also endangered many by their crime-ridden environment.[47] These ghettoes gradually led to the design of more numerous but smaller buildings in the second phase, in the 1980s, to avoid concentrations of low-rent dwellings in one area. Scattered small-scale projects were also due to the fact that land in urban neighborhoods was becoming scarce and expensive. In addition to building new housing, in an effort to curb the rise of high vacancy rates in private rental buildings, OMHM also acquired existing housing from the private market towards the end of the second phase. The Rent Supplement Program[48] and Purchase and Renovate Formula were designed to this aim.[49] Both these programs increased the amount of available low-rent housing,

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[46] David Hulchanski, Barriers to Equal Access in the Housing Market: The Role of Discrimination on the Basis of Race and Gender Research Paper 187, Center for Urban and Community Studies, University of Toronto, November 1993, pp. 15-16.

[47] Oscar Newman, Defensible Space: Crime Prevention Through Urban Design (New York: The Macmillam Company, 1972). The book records a study of the correlation between building height and occurrence of crimes in buildings.

[48] Along with building public housing, the Private Rent Supplement (PRS) program was introduced in 1987, so that the private market could take advantage of the subsidies allotted for rent which were geared towards income. Apartments in the private market were identified to house RGI tenants. The renter paid 25 % of her income towards the rent and the government paid the rest to her landlord. This enabled the government to create RGI units rapidly, while at the same time boosting the private market. However for the government it was a poor investment as it did not contribute to the growth of its assets and it was estimated that in the long run this program would actually cost the government more than the public housing program. Hence the PRS program remained restricted in scale and did not benefit the private market as it had initially promised.
Office Municipal d'habitation de Montréal, Comparison Des Couts: des Programmes d'Habitation a Loyer Modique et de Supplément au loyer Mai 1989.
Office Municipal d'habitation de Montréal, Charectistiques et Appreciation des Locataires: Programme de Supplement au Loyer sur le Marche Prive Avril 1990.

[49] The Rental House Acquisition Program (RHAP) was introduced in 1988 by the city of Montr9al.
Source: SHDM and the Rental Housing Acquisition Program Société d'habitation et de développement de Montréal, December, 1994.
A renovation program targeted towards low-income disabled people, was the Residential Adaptation Assistance Program (RRAP) in 1985.
Source: Government Action in Housing: Strategies and Plan of Action Société d'habitation du Québec. 1997. This report by the Provincial Government included a chart of the strategies for housing delivery to low-income people, included as Appendix 4. Notice that most of the programs are renovations of existing buildings and do not initiate the construction of new buildings for low-income earners.

without necessitating the purchase of land or new building construction.[50] The third phase in public housing, begun in 1985 and currently in existence, has gradually reverted back to allotting public funds primarily to low-income co-operative housing and to those with severe disadvantages. Designated as 'prioritized client groups', the people who are considered eligible for public housing, include the mentally ill, the physically handicapped, senior citizens, and battered women, Inuit and off-reserve Native people.[51] Except for creating a few units per year[52] in the 1990s the government removed all support for the creation of new low-income housing[53].

Low-rent housing provided by the government has been non-discriminatory, and unlike private rental construction, public housing provides its occupants with a permanent maintenance facility. Among the large number of poor, unemployed renters some can be potentially dangerous to others as well as abusive towards their apartments. The need for constant supervision and maintenance that results due to some antisocial renters imparts an institutional character to public housing. Critics[54] say that residents often lack a sense of ownership and live under constant supervision and control. Applicants are allotted

[50] Homeward Bound Office Municipal d'Habitation de Montréal, 1994.

[51] Government Action in Housing: Strategies and Plan of Action Société d'habitation du Québec. 1997, p. 3-5.
This was in reaction to what the Conservative government felt were poorly targeted subsidies granted in the second phase of public housing due to which there was growing concern for federal deficits. This concern eventually led to the elimination of the mixed-income third-sector housing projects from 1985 onwards.

[52] 'Accesslogi' is a program by which the creation of 430 new co-op units is given financial support per year. The occupants have to be from the 'core group' and have to show extreme financial need to be eligible. Community Organizations identify such neighborhoods, approach residents to form a co-op and if they agree, the proposal is put up to the Provincial Government. Government Action in Housing: Strategies and Plan of Action Société. d'habitation du Québec. 1997.

[53] Urban Planner Jeanne M. Wolfe argues that in the nineties, Canadian Housing Policy has shifted away from the provision of social housing and has moved strongly towards market approaches to housing problems. She points out that while the proportion of needy families is increasing, the deficit minded Federal government only maintains its financial commitments to existing projects with no new funds being made available. She cites examples of existing housing projects like 'The Benny Farm' in Montréal and 'Regent Park in Toronto' that have been slated for demolition and selling the land to private developers to build new dwellings instead of renovation which would be more cost effective. She states that advocates in favor of rehabilitation and co-operatives expressed surprise at the rush of the government to get out of the responsibility for managing existing projects and building new low-income housing. She concludes by calling the situation 'shocking' where a social housing policy that took 50 years to build-up has been dismantled so rapidly. Jeanne Wolfe, "Canadian Housing Policy in the Nineties" Housing Studies Vol. 13 No. 1 (UK: Carfax Publishing Ltd., 1998), p. 121-133.

[54] Kamal S Sayegh, Housing: a Canadian Perspective (Ontario: ABCD Academy Books, 1987), p. 343.

apartments, but not given much choice in type or location of their dwellings.[55] Mobility is reduced as renters cannot change locations easily: a factor that is disadvantageous to low-income women and especially young single mothers who are a transient population in constant search of the right balance between expenditure and facilities for themselves and their children. Moreover, waiting lists for government subsidized housing (public housing) are long. In 1997 there were 7000 households waiting for accommodation in Montreal (appendix 2 "criteria of selection" p.37). There are rules about density per household, forcing larger families to wait until large apartments become available because legally, these families cannot be housed in smaller apartments. The wait, for an apartment of permitted size, can be long because some renters become complacent, on receiving suitable apartments, and do not vacate their apartments for several years. If found in the right location, apartments in public housing projects are a very good bargain for renters. They are well-designed and suited to their tenant's specific needs. Each year about 2000 apartments in public housing projects all over Montreal become available (appendix 3 "criteria of selection" p.36), but since the frequency of small apartments, previously occupied by seniors and single residents, getting vacated is higher not many large apartments are vacated. Single mothers with children are the most affected among low-income women by this situation.

Mixed-income, non-profit housing co-ops were financially unsustainable.

"Home is a very private thing and anything to do with one's own private affairs is best kept independent and separate from the friendly contact with neighbors....I can't think of anything more likely to jeopardize this kind of stability of family life than becoming involved in a venture of cooperative housing".

Policy Advisor, CMHC, Memorandum, October 11, 1963[56]

The Fish report, in 1972[57] pointed at 'basic philosophical differences', which created opposition to cooperative housing. Clearly the idea of home as a private, secluded and

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George Fallis, "Social Policy Challenge and Social Housing" Home Remedies ed. John Richards, and William Watson, (Ontario: C.D. Howe Institute, 1995), pp. 7-21.

[55] Clair Katma (former assessment officer, OMHM), personal interview, Montréal, 1998.
In the initial application renters are asked to give a choice of locations. Due to nearby facilities and proximity to downtown, some locations are in more demand than others. It is very difficult to get an apartment in optimum location. Refusal of apartment, which is allotted means that the applicant is sent back to the end of the waiting list to be considered all over again.

[56] Dennis Fish, Programs in Search of a Policy: Low-income Housing in Canada (Toronto: Hakkert, 1972), p. 12.

[57] Ibid.

autonomous institution was biased with no regard to the fact that to women, the domestic environment was more than a private sphere, and contact with people in the neighborhood meant more than casual acquaintance.

As a reaction to the ghettos of low income people that were caused by the high concentration of public housing developments in the 1960s and the demolition of neighborhoods under slum clearance, the co-operative movement of the early 1970s was formed to create mixed-income co-operative housing in Canada. Their initiative generated the participation of many community organizations, community design workshops, and tenants' organizations. It provided affordable housing to middle- and lower-income people, while increasing the awareness of the built environment among the residents. However it also had certain disadvantages. The funding of mixed-income cooperatives did not focus intensely on low-income groups, which critics say resulted in a waste of funds and benefited middle-income people more than it did low-income people. The government still funds many mixed-income co-ops that it initiated in the 1960s. This is the greatest criticism of the policy. Dwellings that were converted into co-operatives entailed their gentrification and a reduction in the number of existing rental units.[58] This affected low-income people directly by creating a shortage of rental units, while not providing as many co-ops at equal pace. Co-ops were alleged to be selective in the renters they admitted and resulted in a majority of homogeneous middle-income co-ops. Heterogeneous membership faced many difficulties in operating a co-op because as Planner Joe Berridge succinctly said, "the trouble with co-ops [was] that everybody [had] to co-operate."[59]

Neighborhood rehabilitation provided some advantages. Government effort to boost the private housing market has increased concentration in renovation programs. A large portion of government funds has been directed towards renovation and rehabilitation (see appendix 4 "Brief Description of Housing Assistance Programs" p.39-41). These are

[58] George Fallis, "Social Policy Challenge and Social Housing" Home Remedies ed. John Richards, and William Watson, (Ontario: C.D. Howe Institute, 1995), pp. 7-21.
[59] Janice Dineen, The Trouble with Co-ops: The political history of a non-profit co-operative housing project (Toronto, Ontario: Green Tree Publishing Company Ltd., 1974), p. 7.

directed towards low-income homeowners and senior homeowners. Most of these programs for renovation lie as an initiative of the owner, which is a drawback as not many owners of low-income neighborhoods are interested in the maintenance of their buildings.[60]

Although in the nineties the creation of new social housing has come to a virtual halt due to budgetary concerns of the provincial government, the trend was in the direction of renovation and rehabilitation as a means to provide affordable housing. The non-profit sector of housing delivery has intensely contributed to renovation and rehabilitation of low-income neighborhoods. Rehabilitation projects and projects which had the involvement of the non-profit sector also provided fuel for citizen participation and an opportunity to involve residents in the design and planning stages of housing, which was absent in private and public rental housing

One institution that took advantage of a renovation program that was based on owner-initiative, and channeled it into the low-income rental housing sectors was 'The Society of Habitation and Development of Montreal' (SHDM). The Montreal real estate market experienced a deep recession in the 1980s. This was coupled with the fact that the market was awaiting the expected legislative changes allowing conversion of rental units to co-ownership, and the government programs encouraged home ownership.[61] Due to these reasons the rental stock was not cared for and deteriorating for the lack of buyers and incentive for maintenance. In Montreal, The Society of Habitation and Development of Montreal (SHDM) was introduced for renovation and revitalization of low-income neighborhoods in 1986. One of the mandates of SHDM was to boost the private market by catalyzing buying, selling and maintenance of buildings in neighborhoods and establishing competitive rents. Social mandates of the SHDM included giving the renters

[60] Claude Dagneau (L'OIEL), personal interview, Côte-des-Neiges, Montréal. 1998
[61] Claude Dagneau, (L'OIEL), personal interview, Côte-des-Neiges, Montréal, August 1998.
Monique Larose, (Community Organizer), CLSC, Côte-des-Neiges, personal interview, Montréal, August 1998.
Impact of rental housing acquisition program on neighborhood revitalization: executive summary Service du développement, Société d'habitation et de développement de Montréal. Montréal, 1994.

more control of their housing; and involving different private housing agencies in the improvement of the renters' social and living environments.[62]

Drug trafficking, prostitution and crime infested Montreal low-income rental neighborhoods in the early '80s. SHDM identified these buildings as post-war, walk-up, low-rise multi-family apartment buildings from the 1940s and '60s, situated primarily on the fringe of the city as seen in plan in figure I.2.8 (p.34) In 1986 there were approximately 460,000 households in Montreal of which 75% were renters. About 63000 households paid more than 50% of their income to rent. A study by the National Scientific Research Institute (urban studies) estimated that 16000 "walk up" units in the city required immediate repairs. It was within this stock that the SHDM concentrated its efforts.[63]

The SHDM was unique in Canada. It was conceived as a para-municipal housing corporation, which meant that though it was a public offspring it relied on private sources of funding and contested the private low-income rental market as a private builder. SHDM, which was introduced by the city of Montreal, took mortgages from the city's banks, bought deteriorated buildings in the city and applied as a private landlord for money from the new provincial subsidy program announced for home renovations called Rental House Acquisition Program (RHAP). [64] The SHDM then surveyed rents in the area and fixed its rents competitively. Rents in such neighborhoods were already low and according to provincial laws[65] rents of existing tenants could not be increased. The newly renovated buildings attracted many new households for whom the rent was increased only marginally by 5% of that of the old tenants. After the renovations, SHDM buildings were in the best conditions in the neighborhood and this enabled them to set and control rents in the area. Modest rents applied after the buildings were renovated also promoted security of tenure for households by reducing the negative effects of renovation on rent

[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Programme d'acquisition de logements locatifs: Rapport d'.tape 1990 (Service du développement, Société d'habitation et de développement de Montréal. Montréal, août 1991)
Marcel Lebel (SHDM), personal interview, Montréal, July 1998.
[65] Rent Control.

levels. Though it did not provide subsidized housing, the RHAP facilitated improvement of the housing stock in the private market hence making housing that was affordable to the low income families, habitable.

As mentioned before, among the other mandates of the SHDM was to promote renters' control of their housing conditions. The program built on strong community resources, and a non-profit housing resource sector which already existed in Montreal for over twenty years and, rather than duplicating their expertise in co-operative education and management, the SHDM integrated them into its own program. Community groups working with specific clientele were called upon to manage certain buildings or initiate projects to address specific needs and problems of the neighborhood. These community organizations subsisted on independent sources of finance. The contribution of SHDM was to formalize their presence in the neighborhood by giving them space in their buildings for reasonable rent to function. Organizations like PROMIS and CLSC that had until then been working closely with the residents were commissioned to make studies of the social and housing conditions of the residents and make several recommendations.
The SHDM also took the expertise of the community organizations in management of the property. The residents were invited to form a co-op and take up management of the buildings.[66] If the formation of a co-operative did not succeed, one or several community organizations were invited to form a corporation (known as OSBL) and approach the SHDM for transfer of management to them.[67]

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[66] Programme d'acquisition de logements locatifs: Rapport d'.tape 1990 (Service du développement, Société d'habitation et de développement de Montréal. Montréal, août 1991)

[67] A brief mention of the functioning of an OSBL and its comparison to a co-operative is important. The OSBL gets 5% of the real rent (this is the total rent gathered from apartments that are occupied not counting those that are vacant) and thus creating in them an incentive to rent more and more apartments. The OSBL is established only if the organizations do not recommend the formation of a co-operative of the residents. This happens frequently as low-income neighborhoods have very few volunteers for managing a co-op. Additionally, the fact that low-income neighborhoods are primarily composed of a very heterogeneous population, with a lot of new immigrants, make the formation of a co-op difficult. The co-op, though gets a lot more benefits from the SHDM. It receives 5% of the potential rent (total rent that would have been collected if all the apartments were rented) as well as allowances for the janitor and cleaner. If the residents decide to volunteer for these jobs the co-op saves on the expense and may use the excess money as it wishes. The OSBL shares the social mandate of the SHDM and helps the SHDM stay in knowledge of the concerns of the renters. The SHDM in return helps the OSBL deal with difficult renters who do not pay rent regularly o: are troublemakers. It advises them on how to market apartments and how to maintain the apartments in a habitable condition. OSBLs also act as private non-profit owners in some places.

These efforts showed positive social and economic benefits. By the end of 1993, the SHDM had acquired 2,828 units in all neighborhoods of the city.[68] As seen in figures I.2.9 (p.35), the results of the acquisition and rehabilitation program were reported to be positive by newspapers and renters who were interviewed, who mentioned reduction in crime, better condition of their dwellings, better neighborhoods, accessibility to management, security of tenure, and affordable rents, as some of the positive outcome of the SHDM's involvement.

Four years after the SHDM had implemented the RHAP it conducted a survey[69] to assess the impact of the program on the neighborhood. Its criteria for assessment were the condition of other buildings in the neighborhood, whether they had been renovated as well or not, and the level of renter satisfaction.[70] Extensive interviews were conducted with the residents of these areas. Couples with children constituted one third of all the households while couples without children constituted less than a fifth of the residents. A distinguishing feature of the SHDM buildings as compared to the other in the area was the proportion of single parent families, which was found to be 21% of the households. Over 76% of the residents had an optimistic perception of the neighborhood after the renovations and only 14% of the renters wanted to leave after the acquisition.

Marcel Lebel, (Société d'habitation et de développement de Montréal), personal interview, Montréal, July1998.

[68] Of these, 2184 had been renovated and the management of 1523 units had been transferred to community non-profit groups or housing co-operatives. The total capital cost of the program, at that point, was $166 million, of which $39 million came from provincial and municipal renovation subsidies. In 1994 the City of Montr9al would contribute, in the form of a 20 year non-interest bearing loan, a sum of $33.5 million dollars, equivalent to an annual contribution of 2.6 million dollars. This loan would allow for the sale of the properties to the co-ops and non-profit organizations through a land trust formula. Unfortunately however the SHDM changed its decision to sell the buildings and only transferred management to the Co-op or the OSBL.

Programme d'acquisition de logements locatifs: Rapport d',tape 1990 (Service du développement, Société d'habitation et de développement de Montréal. Montréal, août 1991), p.16.

[69] SHDM and the Rental Housing Acquisition Program (Société d'habitation et de développement de Montréal, Montréal, 1994).

[70] The study focused on neighborhoods in Carteivelle, Côte-des-neiges and St. Michel. The number of renovation permits in the areas of Côte-des-neige and Carteiville had increased, particularly in the sub-market of multiple family dwellings as the number of buildings acquired by the SHDM were more than in the other sectors. There was also a restructuring of property ownership in these zones towards companies and multiple purchasers suggesting that to the more astute actors in the real estate market these areas were becoming worthy of investment. The program envisaged this as a great strength as the buildings that it had bought so cheap would appreciate in value in the long run and ensure viability of the program.

The study also interviewed Tandem, a local community organization for the prevention of crime that confirmed the reduction of crime in areas where SHDM had bought and renovated a few buildings.[71] Tandem was reported to have said that the main reason crime had reduced in the area was the reparation of the buildings and improved image of the exterior open areas. In some instances the fact that the building had been bought by the SHDM had been enough to remove prostitutes and drug dealers. The appearance and quality of the living environment had a direct effect on the rate of crime. The fact that the owners no longer abandoned their building had not only increased the enthusiasm of the community organizations and police but also reticently removed trouble-makers from the area.

The SHDM has been an owner that allows the inclusion of community services in its building for a subsidized cost. It takes advantage of the expertise of community organizations in management and rehabilitation of a community. These services not only benefit renters in the buildings owned by the SHDM but of the entire low-income neighborhood. It also supports small private landlords and helps them with renters, sales and maintenance of their buildings. On the other hand, renters get an opportunity to form a co-op and manage their housing themselves. Where co-ops are not possible, some community organizations consolidate to form private corporations for modest profits. In either case the renters are able to maintain consistent relations with the owners, which has led to a partnership between renters, management and owners in taking decisions on the neighborhood. Each one contributes their expertise. While the owners bring professional expertise, the renters bring in critical personal insight. The stark roles of the public and private sectors have reduced. This has led to new housing tenures and diffusion in forms of privatization and socialization of the conventional rental tenure. This has a complex effect on the ability of women to secure housing and control their environment. Collective privatization such as co-operative housing, and an individualistic approach as

[71] In Cartieville, the number of criminal cases dropped from 140 in 1991 to less than 60 two years later, because of the increase in involvement by police and Tandem.
SHDM and the Rental Housing Acquisition Program (Société d'habitation et de développement de Montréal, Montréal, 1994). p.11.

well as the sense of choice that public housing can't offer, enable women to gain independence through support and cooperation.

If one sees the aspects of housing which have traditionally disadvantaged women, these factors seem to mirror the reasons that some urban planners put forth for the social, economic and environmental unsustainability of those housing types. For example, large distances between home and the workplace that were a result of the rapid development in suburban housing in the 1960s, were blamed for the extensive demand on of infrastructure like sewage, water supply, electricity and car fuel[72]. The homogeneity of land use and the monotony of built form were identified as another disadvantage of the suburbs[73]. In the case of low-income rental housing, fringe locations were identified as having poor infrastructure, dilapidation, crime and neighborhood deterioration and looked upon as black spots on the urban-scape[74]. Co-ops proved to be a financially unsustainable form of affordable housing[75]. Social housing created ghettos of poor people and stigmatized those who lived in them in addition to allowing very little space for self-expression.

Some planners believe that the only way to ensure the vitality and the socio-economic value of a city is to encourage people to live in it and to use its public spaces. If one compares the conditions that have been deemed necessary for a vibrant living city to the housing environment that feminists have defined as being ideal for women, they are mutual. Consider, for example, what architect Norbert Schoenauer says:

> To restore a social and economic balance between the two urban patterns [the city and the suburbs] it is imperative to attract people of all races and income groups to live in cities... as long as cities do not provide safety and security to their residential population, they cannot compete with suburbs in the housing markets... A policy promoting mixed-use development with a housing component is another essential planning tool to enhance the economic, social and environmental ambience of cities... Medium rise housing, from six-to eight-

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[72]Norbert Schoenauer, Cities, Suburbs, Dwellings in the Post War Era (Canada, Montrøal: McGill University, 1994), pp. 34-35.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Dennis Fish, Programs in Search of A Policy (Toronto: Hakkert, 1972), p. 333.
[75] George Fallis, "Social Policy Challenge and Social Housing" Home Remedies ed. John Richards, and William Watson, (Ontario: C.D. Howe Institute, 1995), pp. 7-21.

stories high, not only provides a high proportion of desirable dwelling units near the ground for families with children and for the elderly but also many penthouse dwellings attractive to others. Varied tenant mix, security through self-policing and greater affordability derived through lower construction costs are additional attributes of mid rise buildings.

In discussing the use of sidewalks and public spaces for the safety and vitality of a city, urban planner and writer Jane Jacobs argues:

Sidewalk public contact and sidewalk public safety, taken together, bears directly on our country's most serious social problem – segregation and racial discrimination.[76]

She suggests the retail commercial areas and street furniture that encourages natural public interaction make public spaces safe.

The basic requisite for such [informal public] surveillance is a substantial quantity of stores and other public places sprinkled along the sidewalks of a district; enterprises and public places that are used by evening and night must be among them especially. Stores, bars and restaurants, as the chief examples, work in several different and complex ways to abet sidewalk safety.[77]

Certain elements of Schoenauer's and Jacob's argument are interesting not only for what they reveal as important to a city, but also in the manner they bear upon housing conditions of women. Mixed development, housing close to essential services, safe public spaces where opportunities for interaction between people exist, neighborhoods desirable to families and children, clear boundaries as well as connections between the privacy of dwellings and public nature of the streets, medium density scale of multi-family dwellings with connections to the ground and outdoor spaces, and rich heterogeneous neighborhoods free of discrimination emerge as some common postulates. The similarity of women's housing needs and general housing sustainability is indicated by the following statement made by urban planner and feminist Gerda Wekerle:

The key policy question is not just how to maintain the quality of the housing stock, but also how to prevent deterioration of the neighborhood often associated with poorly maintained housing and lower property values.[78]

[76] Jane Jacobs, The Death and Life of Great American Cities (New York: Random House, 1961), p.71
[77] Ibid., p.36
[78] Gerda Wekerle, "From refuge to service center: Neighborhoods the support women" Women Housing and Community ed. Willem Van Vliet, (England: Avebury, 1988), p.11.

She elaborates:

Collective services are essential in replacing some of the functions traditionally met within the family. These might include household maintenance, shared outdoor space, childcare, and shopping.[79]

Public intervention is needed in all kinds of housing – to set up an institution that shares the responsibility of 'race-preservation'. The issues that concern housing sustainability and women's empowerment seem to be common. The thesis proceeds to suggest that perhaps empowering women is the key to attaining housing sustainability. Spending money and resources for creating neighborhood service centers in private rental housing ensures that the government and hence the society shares the dual responsibilities of home and work in the lives of most low-income women, which enables women take control of their life. The following chapters exemplify the significance of women's empowerment to the sustainability of rehabilitation in a low-income neighborhood in Montreal called Mountain Sights. These chapters explore the political, social and architectural context of the relationship between women and the neighborhood.

[79] Ibid., p. 14.

Table 7.6
Percentage of families with low income, by family type, 1980-1993

	Non-elderly families[1]						
	Two-parent families with children[2]	Married couples without children	Other couples[3]	Lone-parent families[2] Female head	Male head	Other families	Elderly families[4]
	%						
1980	9.6	6.8	4.1	56.7	24.7	25.0	18.8
1981	10.2	7.4	4.2	54.0	18.1	17.2	20.2
1982	11.9	8.9	4.8	59.8	26.5	18.8	14.8
1983	12.6	9.6	6.1	60.8	28.5	23.7	15.7
1984	13.2	10.0	6.2	62.4	27.2	20.0	16.5
1985	11.8	8.6	4.8	61.4	27.2	20.9	14.9
1986	11.0	9.1	4.4	57.7	22.7	17.1	14.2
1987	10.3	8.9	4.7	58.3	17.9	17.3	12.9
1988	9.2	7.8	3.3	55.1	23.1	18.3	12.7
1989	8.7	7.3	2.9	52.5	19.3	15.7	9.9
1990	9.9	8.2	3.3	59.6	25.3	18.2	7.5
1991	11.0	9.1	3.7	61.1	22.3	17.7	7.9
1992	10.7	8.6	5.6	57.2	20.9	20.4	8.5
1993	12.5	9.6	3.5	59.6	31.3	19.7	9.4

[1]Includes families with head under age 65.
[2]Includes families with children under age 18 living at home.
[3]Includes only families with children 18 years of age and over and/or other relatives.
[4]Includes families with head aged 65 and over.
Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 13-207.

figure I.2.1
Low income Women and Children
Children in lone-parent families headed by women as a percentage of all low-income children, 1993
Table 7.3 Statistics Canada- Cat. No. 89-503E p. 86

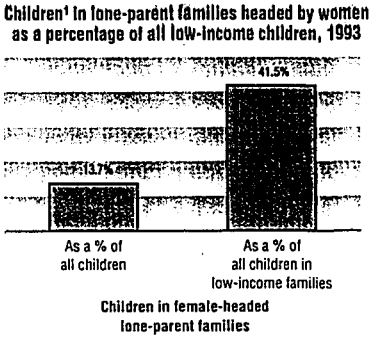


figure I.2.2

Percentage of families with low income, by family type, 1980-1993
Table 7.6 Statistics Canada- Cat. No. 89-503E p. 94

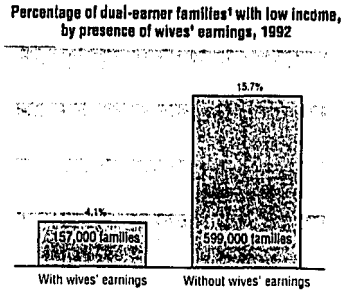


Figure I.2. 3

Table 7.6 Statistics Canada- Cat. No. 89-503E p. 94

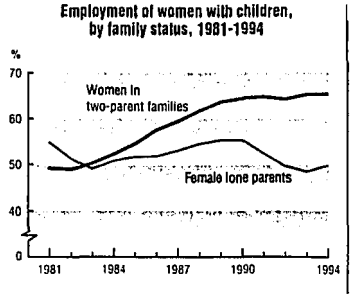


Figure I.2.4
Employment among women has increased. Though lone parent women are more poor than women in two parent families they are employment rate is less suggesting difficulty in maintaining childcare and employment alone.

Table 7.6 Statistics Canada- Cat. No. 89-503E p. 94

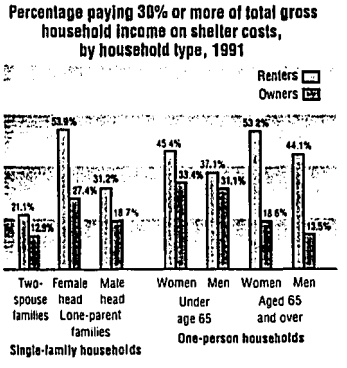


Figure I.2.5

Women have lower standard of living as a large proportion of their income goes in meeting basic necessities like housing

Table 7.6 Statistics Canada- Cat. No. 89-503E p 94

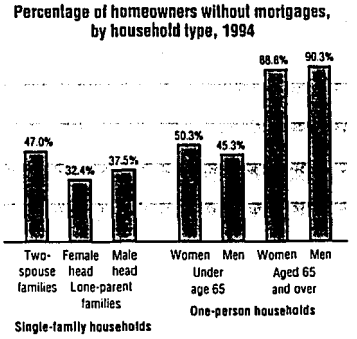


Figure I.2.6

Younger women heads of households are the least number of mortgage-free homeowners

Table 7.6 Statistics Canada- Cat. No. 89-503E p. 94

HOUSING STARTS, METROPOLITAN CENTRES, CENTRE CITIES VS. SUBURBS — 1961 - 1971

	Dwelling Starts				*Proportion of Starts*				*Total Starts***		*Proportion Total Starts 1961-1971*	
	1961		*1971*		*1961*		*1971*		*1961-1971*			
	Centre	*Suburbs*	*Centre*	*Suburbs*	*Centre* %	*Suburbs* %	*Centre* %	*Suburbs* %	*Centre*	*Suburbs*	*Centre* %	*Suburbs* %
Montreal	8,422	8,782	3,469	18,816	49.0	51.0	15.6	84.4	88,499	186,776	32.2	67.9
Quebec	674	2,573	2,195	6,079	20.0	79.2	26.5	73.5	11,388	40,741	21.9	78.1
Hamilton	1,381	886	3,229	2,179	60.9	39.1	59.7	40.3	27,630	21,274	56.5	43.5
Kitchener	814	584	2,173	1,732	58.2	41.8	55.7	44.4	16,357	14,997	52.2	47.8
Ottawa-Hull	3,611	2,689	6,556	4,585	57.3	42.7	58.9	41.4	45,288	28,911	61.0	39.0
Sudbury	624	*	2,567	1,194	—	—	68.3	31.7	7,974	3,844	67.5	32.5
Toronto	2,826	14,824	3,172	29,991	16.0	84.0	9.6	90.4	49,883	256,578	16.3	83.7
London	1,742	57	5,151	41	96.8	3.2	99.2	0.8	30,842	674	97.9	2.1
Windsor	311	215	1,911	303	59.1	40.9	86.3	13.7	11,702	3,495	77.0	23.0
Winnipeg	1,206	2,981	1,299	6,427	28.8	71.2	16.8	83.2	13,097	40,917	24.2	75.8
Edmonton	4,423	139	9,451	1,835	97.0	3.0	83.7	16.3	63,602	6,441	90.8	9.2
Victoria	307	972	1,340	1,762	24.0	76.0	43.2	56.8	10,117	13,893	42.1	57.9
Vancouver	2,368	3,220	3,311	12,242	42.4	57.6	21.3	78.7	46,586	85,209	35.3	46.7
Halifax	931	434	2,425	126	68.2	31.8	95.1	4.9	15,545	4,179	78.8	21.2
Saint John	274	287	771	277	48.8	51.2	73.6	26.4	3,957	2,401	62.2	37.8
St. John's	145	107	183	1,039	57.5	42.5	15.0	85.0	1,950	6,086	24.3	75.7
Total Metro	30,059	38,750	49,203	88,628	43.7	56.3	35.7	64.3	444,417	716,416	38.3	61.7

* No data available.
** Sudbury Total 1962-1971.
SOURCE: CMHC, Policy Planning Division.

POPULATION INCREASED BY PER CENT FOR METROPOLITAN AND URBAN AREAS — 1961 - 1971 BY CENTRE CITY VS. SUBURBS

		Per cent Change 1961-1971	
		Centre	*Suburbs*
1	Montreal	0	67
2	Quebec	6	58
3	Hamilton	12	55
4	Kitchener	47	43
5	Ottawa-Hull	2	14
6	Sudbury	12	109
7	Toronto	4	66
8	London	31	438
9	Windsor	13	223
10	Winnipeg	—9	38
11	Edmonton	35	270
12	Victoria	—89	34
13	Vancouver	10	60

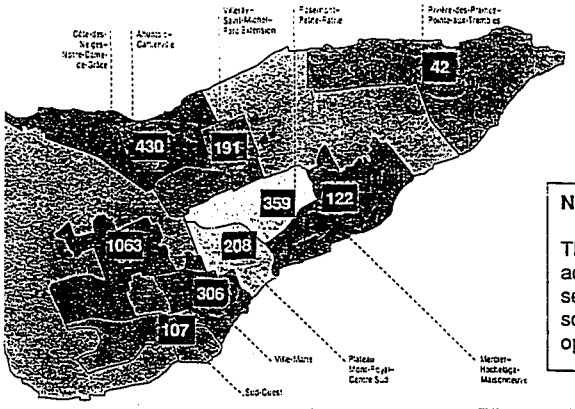
SOURCE: CMHC, Policy Planning Division.
(Not adjusted for intercensal changes in metropolitan boundaries.)

Figure1.2.7
Growth of Suburbs

Dennis Fish, Programs in Search of A Policy (Toronto: Hakkert, 1972), p. 333.

Rental Housing Acquisition Program — units per arrondissement

(as of December 31st, 1993)



Note:

The SHDM has a target of acquiring housing units in all sectors of the city based on social needs and market opportunities.

Clientele

According to an internal 1991 study, two-third of SHDM's units are occupied by families, with more than two thirds of all RHAP households having annual incomes of less than $20,000. The lowest income groups are single-parent families and single people.

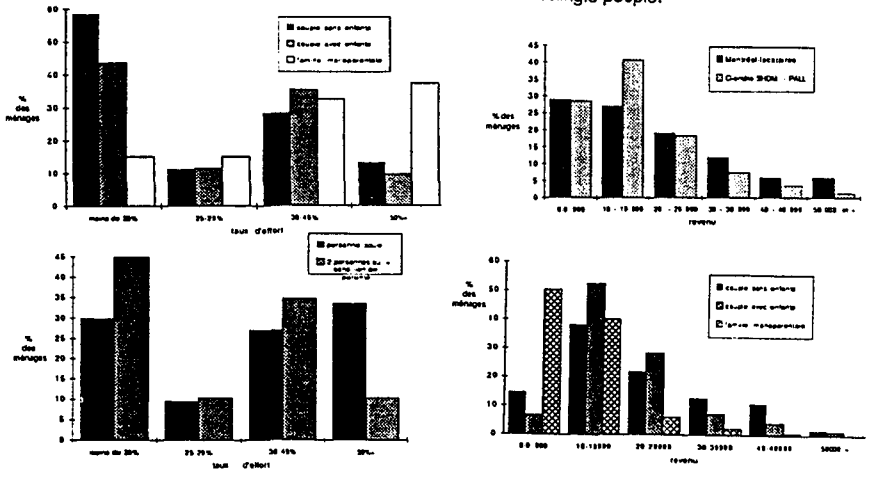


Figure I.2.8. Locations in Montreal where SHDM implemented and Rental House Aquisition Program, and type of clientle affected by the implementation.

SHDM and the Rental Housing Acquisition Program (Montreal: Sociĕtĕ d'habitation et de dĕveloppement de Montrĕal, December, 1994), p.3

Renovating rental units in the Côte-des-Neiges district

MONTREAL WEST-N.D.G.

SUBURBAN

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4th, 1992

City upgrades NDG housing, Leslie says

By Eamonn Casey
Suburban Special

The recent acquisition of residential units coupled with the re-opening of a rooming house acquired in 1990 shows that the city of Montreal is continuing to act on its commitment to improve the quality of housing in NDG, according to Loyola district councillor Sharon Leslie.

Acquired through the city's development corporation, SHDM, the new housing stock – 37 units at 2123-2135 Grand Boulevard – will have renovations carried out on the roof, exterior walls and common spaces during the winter months.

This is in line with the MCM's policy of purchasing low quality housing and refurbishing (rather than the more expensive option of building municipal housing) to improve the standard of housing stock available to the less well-off.

"As with all SHDM purchases, the ultimate goal will be to facilitate the creation of a cooperative or non-profit corporation to manage the housing," explained Leslie.

Thirteen of the new units are two-bedroom with the remaining 24 comprising one-bedroom and studio-type accommodation.

The city has also re-opened a rooming house at 3429 Prud'homme Avenue which it acquired two years ago and has since refurbished.

That work was carried out "in accordance with the priority the MCM administration has been carrying out since elected in 1986" to upgrade rooming houses across the city, Ms. Leslie said.

An agreement has been worked out by council whereby Miriam Home for the intellectually handicapped will take responsibility for the management of the Prud'homme Avenue facility, Ms. Leslie said.

With the units at Grand Boulevard and another six recently purchased on Fielding Avenue, "every effort possible will be made in order to carry out the renovations with a minimum of inconvenience for those living there," she concluded.

West End

City hopes housing project will save street

HOUSING *Rent increases kept to a minimum even after renovations*

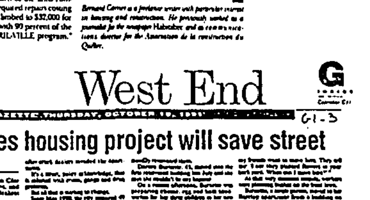


Figure 1.2.9. Examples of newspaper and Magazine coverage on the benefits of the SHDM's purchace and renovation program.

Eamonn Casey, "City Upgrades NDG housing, Leslie says" <u>The Montreal West-N.D.G. Suburban</u> (Montreal: 4th November 1992), n.p.
Aaron Berfel, "City hopes housing project will save street." <u>West End: The Gazette</u> (Montreal: 10th October, 1991), p. G1, G3

The Low Income Cut-offs

Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut-offs are used to classify families and unattached individuals into "low-income" and "other" groups. Families or individuals are classified as "low income" if they spend, on average, at least 20 percentage points more of their pre-tax income than the Canadian average on food, shelter, and clothing. Using 1992 as the base year, families and individuals with incomes below the Low Income Cut-offs usually spend more than 54.7% of their income on these items and are considered to be in straitened circumstances. The number of people in the family and the size of the urban or rural area where the family resides are also taken into consideration.

Note, however, that Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut-offs are not official poverty lines. They have no officially recognized status as such, nor does Statistics Canada promote their use as poverty lines.

Low Income Cut-offs (1992 base) of family units, 1993

	Size/type of area of residence				
	Urban areas by population				
	500,000 and over	100,000-499,999	30,000-99,999	Less than 30,000	Rural areas
			$		
Number of persons in family					
1	16,482	14,137	14,039	13,063	11,390
2	20,603	17,671	17,549	16,329	14,238
3	25,623	21,978	21,825	20,308	17,708
4	31,017	26,604	26,419	24,583	21,435
5	34,671	29,739	29,532	27,479	23,961
6	38,326	32,874	32,645	30,375	26,487
7 or more	41,981	36,009	35,758	33,271	29,014

Source: *Statistics Canada, Catalogue 13-207.*

Appendix 1 Statistics Canada, Low-Income Cut off Rates, Cat. No. 13-207, 1993

Appendix. 2 Criteria for selection in Low-rent Housing
Office Municipal d'Habitation de Montréal, "Low-rent housing in Montreal: Waiting Lists" (Montréal, June 1996)

Documents Required with Application

Each household member aged 18 or over must provide proof of income and residence, as stipulated in the bylaw:

- A copy of the current and previous leases, if applicable, as proof of residence for the last two years.
- A copy of last year's income tax return and completed schedules, as well as annual information slips (such as T4, T4A or T5) for each source of income.

Note: If you don't include these documents, your application will be refused and returned to you.

Eligibility

To be eligible, you must meet the following conditions:

APPLICATION
You must complete the OMHM housing application form and provide proof of income and residence, as described in the section to the left.

AGE
You must be at least 18 years old or an emancipated minor.

CITIZENSHIP
You must be a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant.

RESIDENCE
You must have lived within the city of Montreal for 12 consecutive months during the 24 months preceding the date you submit your application or renewal. And you must now reside in the province of Quebec.

INCOME
Your monthly gross income must not exceed:

Single person	$1,500
1 adult 1 child or more	$1,833
2 adults	$1,833
2 adults 1 child	$1,833
2 adults 2 children or more	$2,250
6 people or more	$2,708

The value of the assets held by the household must not surpass $50,000

SELF-SUFFICIENCY
You must be capable of providing for your own basic needs. Otherwise, you must guarantee you'll receive the necessary help from a recognized organization.

Note: The requirement to reside in Montreal doesn't apply to battered women referred by social workers. Nor does it apply to people in wheelchairs. In both cases, however, applicants must be living in Quebec.

Assessing Your Application

Within 30 days following receipt of your form and necessary documents, the OMHM will inform you of your eligibility.

If you're eligible, an OMHM representative conducts an at-home interview to assess the state of your dwelling and complete your file.

The Tenant Selection Committee reviews each file and determines the ranking of every application on the waiting list.

Sixty days after accepting an eligible application, the OMHM will confirm to you in writing that you've been placed on the waiting list.

Waiting Period

The waiting period for low-rent housing ranges from a few months to a few years. This difference depends on several factors, including the number of housing already waiting, category of applicants, ranking on the waiting list, and number of available apartments.

Note: Should you turn down an apartment, your application will be cancelled for one year.

Renewing Your Application

You must renew your application each year. If you do not, your application will be cancelled.

LOW-RENT HOUSING IN MONTREAL

WAITING LISTS

Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal

Several Waiting Lists

At present, 7,000 applicants are waiting for low-rent housing. Each year, some 2,000 apartments are available for renting.

The provincial Bylaw Respecting the Allocation of Dwellings in Low-Rental Housing stipulates criteria for classifying applications.

There are several waiting lists for housing in Montreal depending on the rental district and category or size of apartment required. The Selection Committee ranks applicants and places them on the appropriate waiting lists.

Office Municipal d'Habitation de Montréal, "Low-rent housing in Montreal: Waiting Lists" (Montréal, June 1996)

Appendix 3 Waiting Lists for Montreal

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

- LRH

LRH - MHO

The low-rental housing program is designed to provide housing for low-income households. The buildings belong to the SHQ or to municipal housing offices and are administered by the MHOs. On average, the federal government covers 58% of the financing, Québec carries 32% and the municipalities contribute 10%. The basic rent required of tenants (including heating and hot water) equals 25% of their income. Certain fixed costs are added to this.

LRH - Inuit

Low-rental housing for the Inuit is administered by the 14 northern villages. The deficit is shouldered by the federal government (58%) and Québec (42%). The rent that tenants pay is not based on income but on the number of people living in the unit.

LRH for off-reserve Indians

Low-rental housing for Native people living off reserve belongs to private organizations that operate and administer the units. The deficit is shared between the CMHC (75%) and the SHQ (25%). The rent is calculated in the same way as for the low-rental housing program.

LRH - Co-ops-NPOs

Low-rental housing belonging to rental housing cooperatives or private non-profit organizations is also eligible for subsidies to cover operating expenses, paid by the CMHC (75%) and the SHQ (25%). The rent is calculated in the same way as for LRH-MHOs.

- RENT SUPPLEMENT (RS)

The *Rent supplement* program subsidizes certain tenants living in private housing as though they occupied LRH units. The costs are shouldered jointly by the CMHC, the SHQ and the municipalities. The rent is calculated in the same way as for LRH units. Some units are available in cooperative or community housing subsidized by the federal government.

- ***LOGIRENTE***

This is a shelter allowance for people 57 years of age or older. The SHQ pays part of the rent of all the households in this program if rent exceeds 30% of income. The subsidy equals 75% of that part of the rent that exceeds 30% of the household's income. Maximum rents are set to determine the allowance. The program is entirely financed by Québec.

- DAP

The **Downpayment Assistance Program** was created to promote home ownership among Quebecers under certain conditions. This Québec program ended in March 1992. Assistance consisted in a guaranteed loan for which the SHQ paid the interest during five years.

- RAAP

The **Residential Adaptation Assistance Program** is designed to help disabled persons, no matter what their income, cover the cost of the work required to make their home accessible to them and adapt it to their needs. The Québec subsidy may go as high as $16 000 and depends on whether the disabled person is an owner or a tenant.

- RBRP

The purpose of the **Rental Building Renovation Program** was to contribute to the renovation of low-rental housing and rooming houses occupied by low-income households, to bring them up to minimum health and safety standards. (Maximum subsidy: $14 250/unit, $8 450/room or 75% of the cost of renovating a unit; the percentage varies with the rent). This Québec program ended two years ago.

- RÉPARACTION

A home repair program for low-income owner-occupants, RéparAction was created following the termination by the federal government of the Canada-Québec Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RAP) on December 31, 1993. It was designed to help the same client group, that is low-income owner-occupants, bring their homes into line with health and safety standards (up to 75% of the cost of the work, a percentage that decreased as income increased, with a maximum of $7 500/unit). This program terminated two years ago.

- ACCENT ON RENOVATION

The **Residential Renovation Stimulation Program** targeted owner-occupants of homes evaluated at less than $100 000 and eligible renovation work costing at least $5 000. The owner had to choose between two types of assistance, either a $1 000 subsidy per unit, paid at the end of the work, or a three-year interest-free loan guaranteed by the SHQ, accompanied by a $500 subsidy at the end of the loan. This was an ad hoc program that terminated in December 1994.

- PURCHASE-RENOVATION

The **Purchase-Renovation Program** enabled housing cooperatives and non-profit organizations to acquire and renovate close to 1 200 additional housing units. Of these, 40% are reserved for low-income households, to whom a rent supplement is granted. This Québec program was launched in 1995 with a budget of $35 million.

- RENOVATE

The **Renovate Program** offered owners who commissioned renovations worth at least $5 000 the possibility of contracting an interest-free loan of $4 500 over three years. This Québec program terminated on August 16, 1996.

- REVITALIZING OLDER NEIGHBOURHOODS

The **Revitalizing Older Neighbourhoods Program** is designed to help downtown areas give new life to old residential neighbourhoods. For each dollar spent by a municipality, the SHQ invests one dollar, as long as the owner shoulders at least one third of the cost of renovations. The municipalities set the parameters for applying the program. The program was created in 1995 and the funds allocated to it have been claimed in full by 31 municipalities.

- MSR SHELTER ALLOWANCE

This allowance is granted families receiving income security benefits that have at least one dependent child, whether under age or not, who is attending secondary school. The MSR reimburses 50% of the difference between the housing costs incurred, up to a given maximum, and the minimum cost set under the program.

- PROPERTY TAX REFUND (PTR)

This tax measure provides for the reimbursement of part of the property taxes paid by low or moderate-income households, whether they are owners or tenants. The amount of the PTR depends on the amount of property taxes paid and the income of the people who apply for the refund.

- UNILATERAL CMHC PROGRAMS

These programs concern cooperative or community housing units (37 000 in all) that are eligible for federal subsidies. The subsidies are in the form of interest rate rebates, among other things. The housing units are not intended primarily for low-income households, although some tenants (about 1 500) also receive a *Rent supplement*.

Appendix 4 Brief descriptions of Housing Assistance Programs.

La Société d'Habitation du Quebec, Rapport Annuel 1997: 30 Ans (Québec, 1997), p.21.

MOUNTAIN SIGHTS:
A DESCRIPTION
SECTION II, CHAPTER 1

The site map in figure II.1.1 (p.45) ascribes to a low-income neighborhood called Mountain Sights, which is located on the outskirts of Côte-des-Neiges, in the northwest sector of Montreal. Avenue Mountain Sights is a relatively isolated residential street, which was built in the midst of industries and warehouses, with the 6-lane Autoroute Decarie almost flanking its west border. Figure II.1.2 (p.46) captures the vehicles and distant lights, which are the only signs of life in the area. The desolate scale of this vehicular and industrial environment is a vast contrast to the rich density of Avenue Mountain Sights and the housing on it. As illustrated in the plan in figure II.1.1 (p.45), the neighborhood is linear with a total of twenty-six five-storey buildings planned back to back in thirteen pairs, on two sides of a vehicular road. Avenue Mountain Sights and it connects Rue Parc on the East edge and De la Savanne on the West edge, the streets that establish the boundaries of the neighborhood. Along the North border of the buildings is Parc De la Savanne. A pedestrian street separates the park and the buildings. The buildings along the southern edge of the vehicular road face a compound wall next to a stretch of commercial buildings. The distance between the residential buildings and the side face of the commercial buildings is approximately10 meters.

Public facilities in the neighborhood include the park and a community hall. The park has some furniture such as benches, slides, and swings, a community garden, and a chalet where activities are held for the residents. The community hall is accommodated in the basement of one of the buildings. There are few commercial facilities in and around the neighborhood. There is a row of shops including a restaurant and a small general store on the ground floor of some buildings facing Rue Parc. One bus route and metro stop provide public transportation to the rest of the city. There is one bus stop, 1/2 km away from the neighborhood, while the Namur Metro is about 2 km away. A bus trip to the nearest large shopping area like Avenue Victoria takes 30 minutes, and the metro takes forty five minutes to reach downtown Montreal.

In all, 600 apartments are accommodated in the neighborhood. As illustrated in the plans (figure II.1.3 p.46), and photographs (figure II.1.4 p.47), the principal entrance to each building is from the vehicular road. Wrought iron stairs in the rear provide a back-entrance from the pedestrian street along the park. Most buildings are entered through a lobby. The lobby displays steps leading upstairs as well as to apartments in the basement. Stairs usually lead to a narrow double-loaded corridor, which have doors to apartments on either side. Most apartments have one principal room and one bedroom, while a few are studios with only one principal room. Rooms are narrow rectangles. Each apartment looks out in only one direction the longer side of the rectangle being the internal walls. The principal room including the entrance corridor, kitchen space and living area is 30' x 10', with a narrow side as the external face. When a bedroom is included, it measures 16' x 11' or less. When included in the principal space, the kitchen occupies an area of 7'x 4' (The area of the apartments appears inadequate as most households that occupy them are large immigrant families, with joint households and two or more children). In less than half of the apartments, the kitchen has an external wall and natural ventilation and measures 12'x6'. Bathrooms measure 8'x6' and all of them are mechanically ventilated with no external walls. The small apartments are arranged in a compact manner to fit as many apartments as possible in the foot print area of the building.

All standard services prescribed for apartment buildings are provided in the buildings. Electrical mains and the primary heating system are accommodated in each basement. The basement also contains a laundry room, a garbage room, and a garage space with an automatic carbon monoxide sensor for vehicles belonging to the residents. An elaborate network of emergency services like fire alarms, sprinkler systems, smoke detector, back up electric lights and heating exists throughout the buildings. The buildings have balconies on the sides and the rear for emergency exit as well as fire escape stairs at the back of the buildings.

Functionally, the buildings seem to have all the amenities prescribed by the City's building codes. But there is a lot more happening in the neighborhood than meets the eye.

There are families with diverse backgrounds living in the small similar apartments with at least two things in common- the scale of their income and the aspiration to better living conditions. The following sections discuss Mountain Sights in detail. The sections place the neighborhood in a political, social and architectural context. The discussion analyzes the extent of participation of residents, especially its female residents who have inspired the changes that have occurred in the neighborhood since 1964.

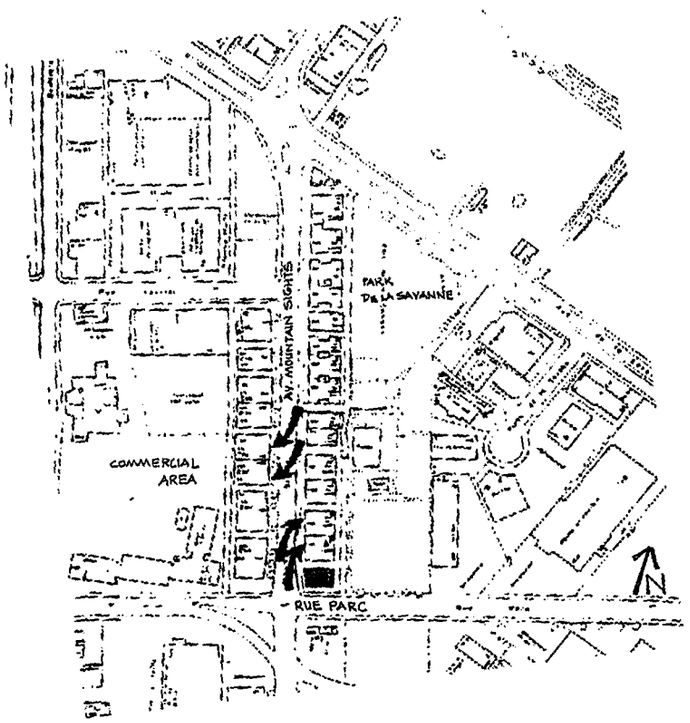
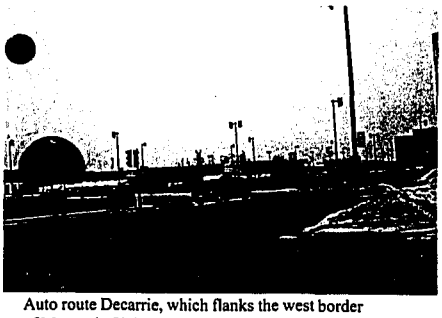


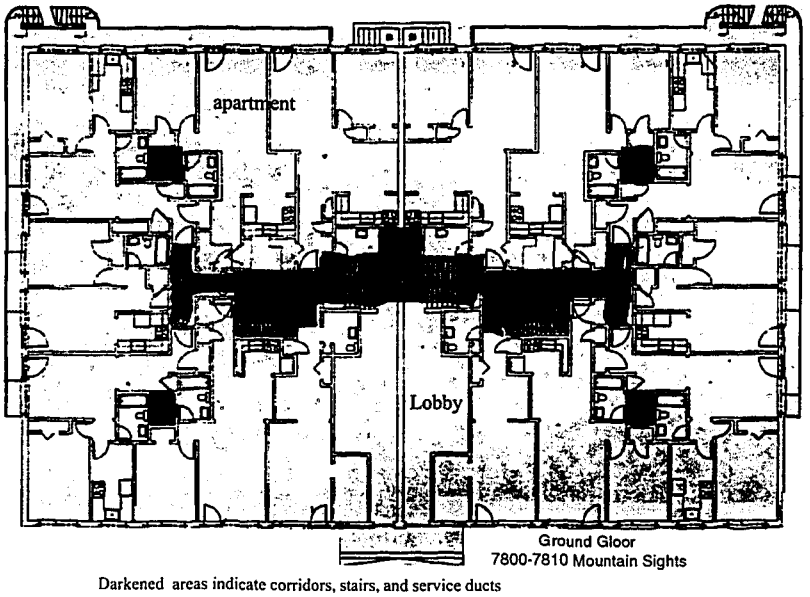
Figure II.1.1 . Linear Site Plan of Mountain Sights
Société d'habitation et de développement de Montréal



Auto route Decarrie, which flanks the west border of Mountain Sights

Rue Parc

Figure II.1.2 photographs of area surrounding Mountain Sights.
Photo by author, June 1998.

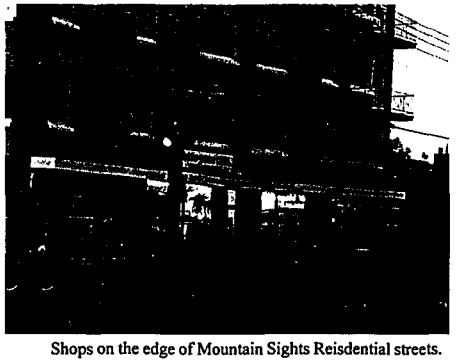


Darkened areas indicate corridors, stairs, and service ducts

Figure II.1.3 Typical plan of a building in Mountain Sights
Société d'habitation et de développement de Montréal

Avenue Mountain Sights

Buildings facing Avenue Mountain Sights



Shops on the edge of Mountain Sights Reisdential streets.

Street facing Park de La Savanne

Lobby

Figure II.1.4 Photos of Mountain Sights
Photos by Author, June 1998.

MOUNTAIN SIGHTS:
POLITICAL HISTORY
SECTION II, CHAPTER 2

"Part of the problem is the way these people live, but then the cockroaches were there before their arrival."

Jack Vineberg, General Manager of Gestion Immobilier CRV Inc.[1]

In 1986, 600 dilapidated, pest infested apartments in Mountain Sights were slated for building inspections.[2] The Gazette reported that Energy Minister John Ciaccia (see figure II.2.1 p.56) "wanted Quebec, Ottawa, and Montreal to band together to tackle the cockroach crisis that had reached epidemic proportions in the Côte-des-Neiges area".[3] The minister admitted not realizing "how the problem had got that bad". The problem suddenly came to light when a petition (see figure II.2.2 p.56) signed by the tenants of Mountain Sights, had demanded repairs, and extermination of pests in their buildings. Drawing attention to the blight in the neighborhood, the petition accused its owners and the city for poor construction of the buildings, and for its outdated service systems and neglect in their maintenance. The owners, on the other hand, pointed to the high concentration of immigrant families for abusing the buildings and keeping their surroundings unclean, which had caused the rat and cockroach infestation.[4] Some, however, admitted that the problem existed inherently with the way buildings were constructed and was only compounded by the lifestyles of the immigrant families. A community worker was quoted as saying, "If some of them live with cockroaches, its simply because they don't know how to get rid of them and who to call".[5] One aspect of the entire problem that became clear was that there was lack of dialogue between the owners and the renters, and that the residents were ignorant of their options and rights.

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[1] Daniel Maceluch, "Cockroach problem bugging St. Laurent" The Gazette (Montreal, January 3rd 1984), n.p.
[2] André-Jean Millot (responsible de l'opération) and Jacques Martineau (Coordonnateur-adjoint-Inspection), Compte Rendu: Operation Mountain Sights Phase I (City of Montreal, 26 June 1986), p.1.
[3] Jennifer Robinson, "Ciaccia wants three-government attack on cockroach plague" The Gazette (Gazette Quebec Bureau, February 28, 1986), p.B-13.
[4] Daniel Maceluch, "Cockroach problem bugging St. Laurent" The Gazette (Montreal, 3 January 1984), n.p.
[5] Quote by: Duong Minh-Lan, co-ordinator of the Translation Service for Indochinese Refugees.
Daniel Maceluch, "Cockroach problem bugging St. Laurent" The Gazette (Montreal, 3 January 1984) n.p.

Based on the extent of dialogue that existed between the owners and renters, three distinct political phases can be identified in the history of Mountain Sights. The first from 1964 to the early 1970s was the phase of construction in which the users had no input in the management and design of their neighborhood. The second phase from 1985 to 1991 attributed a vehement intervention by various community-, and tenant rights organizations in which women in the neighborhood acted as catalysts to get the rest of the occupants involved. The third phase, which is ongoing, can be identified as a consistent democratic rehabilitation of Mountain Sights in which residents, and women in particular, have played a significant role in maintaining a channel of dialogue between the owners, tenants and the city.

Records in the Land Title's Office, Montreal, suggest that the Mountain Sights residences were built by a private construction company called Elegant Constructions in 1964.[6] The company comprised of three partners Herman Zelikovic, Eddie Schreiber and Moses Steinberg. The buildings were constructed in phases from 1961 to 1965 with loans from the Montreal Trust Company and other small and large lending companies that were either corporations or multiple partner firms. In fact, like Elegant Constructions, the various companies from which the plots and buildings of Mountain Sights were sold, were multiple partner companies, merchants or business people who pooled their resources and invested in real estate.

There was no direct social objective for small syndicates investing money in the rental market. As far as the builders were concerned the investment was only for profit. The owners did not stay in the same neighborhood, nor did they maintain a janitor to represent them. Residents had no one to complain to about the apartments and there was no one to monitor building abuse by the renters.

As the zoning plan (figure II.2.3 p.57) shows, Mountain Sights residential street was zoned in the midst of industrial plots. The isolated location of the street physically removed its residents from other residential and retail areas in the sector. Due to the

absence of retail or commercial areas in the vicinity, no outsiders visited the area. The desolation of the location made Mountain Sights a suitable breeding ground for crime and the deteriorating image kept outsiders from coming there or passing through, which further worsened the isolation of the area. As their neighborhood was purely residential and its exterior environment was potentially dangerous, the residents too did not socialize in its public spaces and left the dwellings only to go out of the neighborhood. Area councilors were quoted saying, ".... The main problem is that most of the people there aren't educated to our way of living," this and other supercilious ideas of "teach[ing] the mostly immigrants about customs of this country" suggested that these areas were denounced as separate from the rest of the city.[7]

As Monique Larose of CLSC Côte-des-Neiges recounts, the severe problems of rodents, garbage accumulation and dilapidation and misuse of the buildings in Mountain Sights, came to public eye in 1984, when a woman complained that she could not keep cockroaches from crawling over her baby's face in its crib[8]. 'Centre local de services communautaires' (CLSC) and 'L'Organization d'education et d'information logement de Côte des Neiges' (L'OEIL), organizations that helped tenants identify their needs, organized residents to protest against the bad maintenance of the buildings. Interpreters were hired to draft information brochures in the residents' native languages (figure II.2.4 p.57). These brochures that were handed out door to door by community workers (figure II.2.5a and figure II.2.5b p.58) identified the correlation between the structure of the buildings and their maintenance, stressing the importance of a collective voice to demand eradication of pests and renovation of essential systems. The petition (figure. II.2.2 p.56) that resulted represented the residents' collective stand in the matter of neighborhood improvement in Mountain Sights. This was one of the first affirmative steps taken by the culturally heterogeneous, low-income, estranged residents of Mountain Sights in the direction of establishing a community identity.

[6] Land Titles Office, Cadastral No.98-450 to 98-476 City of Montreal.
[7] Daniel Maceluch, "Cockroach problem bugging St. Laurent" The Gazette (Montreal, 3 January 1984), n.p.
[8] Monique Larose, Director CLSC, Côte-des-Neiges,, Personal Interview with the author, Montreal, August 1998.

In 1986, efforts of the tenants and community organizations brought several governmental departments like the municipal office, the police, and the social welfare department came together for joint decisions on the matter of repairs in Mountain Sights, (figure II.2.6). Inspections on behalf of these departments brought the state of the rental stock in Montreal to the attention of City authorities. The fumigation drive that followed was hailed as the biggest in Canada and became the subject of controversy over the chemical used for the process. Political organizations like the Federal Agricultural Department, and the US Environment Protection Agency (EPA) criticized the chemicals as being poisonous and hazardous to the residents.[9] As a result, Mountain Sights gained a great deal of political and social attention. Newspapers (figure II.2.7 p.60) discussed the general state of rental stock in the city and suggested that the problem was not only limited to low rent neighborhoods but to warehouses and public spaces.[10] The survey and fumigation of Mountain Sights set precedents for other neighborhoods in Montreal. Depending on how successful the first fumigation in Mountain Sights would be, it was decided that 12000 apartments in Montreal would be treated.

The pest eradication of 1986 brought the relationship of the users with the environment into the limelight. It showed that in order to ensure the maintenance of the neighborhood, it was important to empower residents with information about their rights and responsibilities and to develop the neighborhood in such a way that residents would gain a sense a belonging to the place. The owners of Mountain Sights and the city realized that users were not anonymous entities and the effect of their lifestyles on buildings and the neighborhood could not be ignored. Initial efforts in informing people how to keep cockroaches from spreading led to the realization that issues like garbage disposal, maintaining walls and floors made of wood and, heating and plumbing systems were alien to most immigrants who made up a majority of Mountain Sights residents.[11] A report by the pesticides task force concluded that "To prevent further cockroach outbreaks, it will be necessary to educate landlords, homeowners and tenants about the

[9] Henry Aubin, "Montreal's roach war looks primed to misfire" The Gazette (Montreal, 5 June 1986), p.B-3.
[10] Mike Cohen, "Motion by Côte-des-Neiges Councillor to city hall withdrawn" The Gazette (Montreal, 8 June 1986), n.p.
[11] In a survey that was carried out in Mountain Sights in 1987, L'OEIL estimated that there was a density of two and half people per room. 53% of the residents had arrived less than 3 years back.

need to block cracks and crevices and about the importance of cleanliness, the removal of food wastes, and decaying matter. Without this the matter will surely recur again and again".[12] Each household was given a kit with necessary brochures, sealant and equipment to block cracks and crevices in the walls, doors and closets to prevent further spread of the rodents.[13] Users were made aware of their housing through information sessions and door to door correspondence (figure II.2.8 p.60).

But owners, community organizers and the city recognized that the process of dilapidation was a shared responsibility - between the renters and the owners. While it was the owner's responsibility to maintain the building in a state of repair and ensure services like garbage disposal, renters would have to be informed of their duty to keep the buildings and their surroundings clean. The dilapidation was a 'cause and effect' phenomenon that was directly related to people's attitudes towards these areas. If the area had been kept clean, there would have been a desire to maintain it. If the area was planned and maintained in a habitable condition, people would have used it, which would have prevented crime and abuse in the area due to public policing. This would also have kept pressure on the management to maintain the areas. However since the area was quickly becoming crime-infested, people did not use it and this perpetuated crime and disrepair, which further prevented people from using it.

It was recognized that this viscous cycle of neglect and abuse had to be broken and to that extent, an important contributing factor to the stability of an environment was some degree of permanence of owners and users. Part of the instability was due to the fact that the buildings in Mountain Sights had changed owners rapidly during late 1970s and early 1980s, which were years of extreme speculation in the real-estate market in Montreal. The present janitor, Mr. Paul A. Joseph, who has lived here for the past 30 years, remembers the day when the buildings were sold twice in the same day with a profit of about one hundred thousand dollars. Owners painted the exterior and resold the buildings

[12] Pesticides Task Force, Pesticides Task Force Commentary on the Montreal Cockroach Problem (Westmount, Quebec, 1986), p.3.
[13] Jacques Martineau (Coordonnateur-adjoint-Inspection), "Opération blattes: Commentaires" Letter to Serge Carreau (Assistant-director), (City of Montreal, 7April 1988), p.2.

having no knowledge of the deteriorating interiors.[14] Community organizations like L'OEIL and ROMEL considered it important to stop the rapid buying and selling of Mountain Sight's buildings. ROMEL, a technical resource group, helped the residents prepare a document of all the building sales-transactions in the neighborhood with dates, and amounts, which clearly proved the speculations. Photographs (figure II.2.9 p.61, 62) of the deteriorating structure from within showed the disastrous effects of the speculation. These documents were used to apply for funds to form a co-operative among few residents in Mountain Sights, under a program called 'logirent' announced by the Quebec government in 1982.[15]

The program required that tenants showed willingness to form and participate in the housing co-operative by applying for it themselves. Even though organizers from L'OEIL had managed to get the small group of tenants to agree to form a co-operative, the application was turned down as the applicants had mixed income levels, and did not meet the stipulated low-income of the province.[16] However the process had involved organizing tenants again and to that extent was another step towards rehabilitation of the neighborhood.

In October 1987, community organizations[17] approached the SHDM to buy four buildings in Mountain Sights under their 'Rental House Acquisition Program'. Two technical agents visited the buildings for inspections and estimated the costs of renovations to be $16,300 per apartment, for which the SHDM applied to the provincial government under a program called PARCQ (Le Programme d'aide à la restauration Canada-Quebec).[18] In July 1989, the SHDM bought four buildings from John Giannoulis

[14] Mr. Paul A. Joseph, Janitor, 7800, 7802, 7777 and 7745 Mountain Sights. Personal Interview with the author, Mountain Sights, Côte-des-Neiges, 1998.
[15] Claude Dagneau, Director L'OEIL, Mountain Sights: Un peu d'histoire (Côte-des-Neiges, 1986), p.1.
[16] Monique Larose, Director CLSC, Côte-des-Neiges, Personal Interview with the author, Montreal, August 1998.
[17] The organizations primarily involved with Mountain Sights were: ROMEL, L'OEIL of Côte-des-Neiges, Project Genèse, CLSC Côte-des-Neiges, and The Black Community Association.
Source: Project files on Mountain Sights in CLSC.
[18] The program was introduced in 1986 and ended on 31st December 1993. The program was meant to aid low-income owners to restore their apartments.
Source: La Société d'Habitation du Quebec, Rapport Annuel 1997: 30 Ans, Québec.

at the cost of about $1,166,000 in Mountain Sights[19] and asked ROMEL to make a feasibility study for a housing co-operative in Mountain Sights. In a report submitted to the SHDM, ROMEL concluded that the residents were not interested in forming a co-operative, as the population was heterogeneous and lacked the spirit of mutual co-operation and trust that would make the co-operative work. ROMEL informed the SHDM that the residents of the four buildings that it had bought, had expressed trust in the community organizations and an overwhelming majority of residents had voted for a corporation of community organizations called OSBL to assume the management of the buildings.[20]

In order to establish a visible presence of the management and itself, the SHDM introduced Mr. Joseph as the janitor, in a public meeting with its renters, and announced his duties and powers in the neighborhood (figure II.2.10 p.63). A fully equipped office and maintenance staff was provided to assist the janitor. A permanent resident for about 30 years in Mountain Sights, Mr. Joseph, is a trained technician and has since made maintaining the building and communicating with the tenants his full time occupation. As a result of the renovations, the streets and some spaces in the buildings increased in suitability to encourage activities within the community and with the city beyond. In the buildings that are owned by the SHDM for example, the janitor's apartment (figure II.2.11 p.64) opens directly onto the street facing the park. This made the janitor's office appear more pedestrian and accessible to residents. It also established a permanent vigil on the park De la Savanne which, being the largest public space in the neighborhood, amounted to a large proportion of open space that was rendered safe by the janitor's supervision.

After the SHDM renovated the buildings it had bought, in 1991, some other owners subsequently appointed permanent residents in their buildings as janitors and set up offices in the basements for them. These janitors, who are tenants as well as representatives of the management, have acted to bridge the hierarchy between owners

[19] Claude Dagneau, Director L'OEIL, Mountain Sights: Un peu d'histoire (Côte-des-Neiges, 1986), p.2. Project files on Mountain Sights in SHDM.
[20] Le ROMEL, L'OEIL, Project Genèse, Le CLSC, Black Community Association, Diagnostique Cooperatives / OSBL: Rue Mountain Sights, Rue Barclay (CLSC Côte-des-Neiges, Montreal, April 1991), p.12.

and users and have been a significant force in the dissolution of the autonomy in owners and in the growing impact of the residents in the sustaining of the neighborhood. This has become a suitable environment in which to establish dialogue between the users, the owners and the city.

In 1990, the area was rezoned to allow retail and light commercial facilities such as a restaurant, some shops and a community hall. Community organizations worked closely with residents. Information about residents was needed for analysis when a housing policy or project was proposed for the area. For example the extermination project of the cockroaches would have never come to light if the residents did not have community workers with whom they could share their concerns. A sensitive housing environment should be broad enough to work on a large scale over a considerable period of time. At the same time, housing should be custom-made and responsive to the individual needs of its users, as well as being flexible enough to accommodate the dynamic nature of user input, which requires a constant dialogue with the residents and knowledge of their needs from the neighborhood. In Mountain Sights, community organizations and the SHDM not only helped residents connect with the rest of the city but also with the different agencies, government and private, that provided and managed the buildings. They also helped public and private housing polices address the needs of these neighborhoods more effectively. After purchasing four buildings in the neighborhood, SHDM had bestowed a permanent position for organizations on the neighborhood in the form of a community hall. Zoning such usage into a residential area, promoting partnerships between public, private and the third sector, and efforts to involve the residents accomplished a start in neighborhood activity. The first step and perhaps the most important one, was that the SHDM recognized a service center as a part of their low-income housing package.

Ciaccia wants three-government attack on cockroach plague

By JENNIFER ROBINSON
Gazette Quebec Bureau

SHERBROOKE — Energy Minister John Ciaccia wants Quebec, Ottawa and Montreal to band together to tackle the cockroach crisis that has struck the Côte des Neiges area.

Ciaccia, MNA for Mount Royal, said he wants to set up a committee from the three levels of government to study how to exterminate the bugs that have invaded hundreds of houses and apartments in the area.

"It's very frightening," Ciaccia told reporters outside a Liberal two-day caucus meeting.

"I don't know how it got that bad, but steps have to be taken now."

He said extermination can't be done in a house-by-house attack because the pests will merely move on to safety when they hear the exterminators.

Some broader strategy must be used to trap and destroy the bugs.

Ciaccia said he learned of the cockroach invasion last summer but the problem has mushroomed since.

He did not know how much it would cost to kill the bugs.

The hardest-hit area appears to be west of Côte des Neiges Rd. at Cedar Barclay and Plamondon Aves.

Montreal Citizens' Movement (MCM) councillor Arnold Bennett said the problem is not limited to Côte des Neiges.

"It is reaching epidemic proportions," he said.

"The cockroach problem exists all over Montreal. You hear about Côte des Neiges because they're well-organized."

Bennett said efforts to stamp out cockroaches must be organized in conjunction with social service agencies, because elderly people need help moving belongings while their homes are sprayed.

"You've got to have concerted action," he said. "Right now, the problem is being attacked with a fly swatter."

But Bennett added he couldn't see why the federal government should get involved in the issue.

Bennett attacked Mayor Jean Drapeau's administration for cutting back on the number of city inspectors, and giving the problem low priority.

"When it's a cockroach problem, the city tends to put it on the back burner."

Figure II.2.1 One of the newspaper clips on the cockroach problem in 1986
Jennifer Robinson, "Ciaccia wants three-government attack on cockroach plague" The Gazette (Gazette Quebec Bureau, February 28, 1986), p.B-13.

PETITION

Nous, soussignés, sommes des locataires résidant sur l'ave. Mountain Sights
Côte des Neiges. Les immeubles que nous habitons sont impropres à l'habitation.

1) La vermine (cocuerelles, souris, rats) infeste les immeubles, rendant les conditions de vie intolérables;
2) le nettoyage urgent et inméciat, ainsi que l'entretien approprié des espaces communs (entrées, corridors, salles de lavage, etc...) sont absolurent nécessaires;
3) le nettoyage urgent et inméciat, ainsi que l'entretien approprié de l'extérieur des immeubles sont absolument nécessaires;
4) de nombreuses réparations de toutes sortes doivent être faites dans les logements, dans les espaces communs et sur les immeubles;
5) les installations pour la prévention des incendies (détecteurs de chaleur et de fumée, extincteurs,etc...) doivent être mises en place et gardées en état de fonctionner;
6) les exigences en prévention des incendies telles que mentionnées dans le code du logement (escaliers de secours, sorties d'urgence, etc...) doivent être respectées.

Nous, soussignés, demandons à la Ville de Montréal d'appliquer son code du logement de façon urgente et stricte pour les immeubles que nous habitons.

We the undersigned, all tenants residing on Mountain Sights Ave. Côte des Neiges, agree that the buildings in which we live are unfit for housing.

1) Vermin (cockroaches, mice, rats) have infested and nested in these buildings making living conditions intolerable;
2) urgent and immediat cleaning up, as well as proper maintenance of common spaces (hallways, corridors, laundry rooms, etc...) are required;
3) urgent and immediat cleaning up, as well as proper maintenance of the exterior buildings are required;
4) numerous repairs of all kinds have to be done in the apartments, in the common spaces and on the buildings;
5) fire prevention installations (heat and smoke detectors, extinguishers, etc...) must be installed and kept in good working condition;
6) all fire prevention requirements as stated in the housing code (fire escapes, fire exits, etc...) must be respected.

We, the undersigned, demand the City of Montreal apply its Housing Code in an urgent and strict manner for the buildings in which we live.

NOM/NAME	ADRESSE/ADDRESS	TELEPHONE

Figure II.2.2. Petition requesting inspections
CLSC, "Petition", (Montréal, Côte-des-Neiges, 1987).

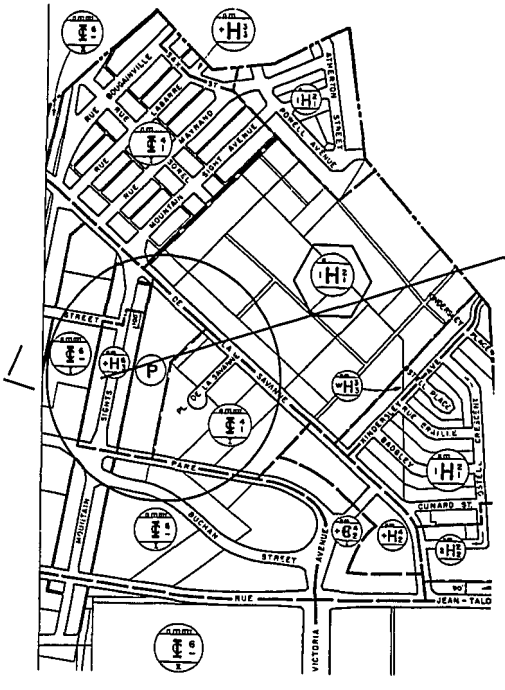


Figure II.2.3.Zoning plan: 1978
Planning department, Ville de Montréal.

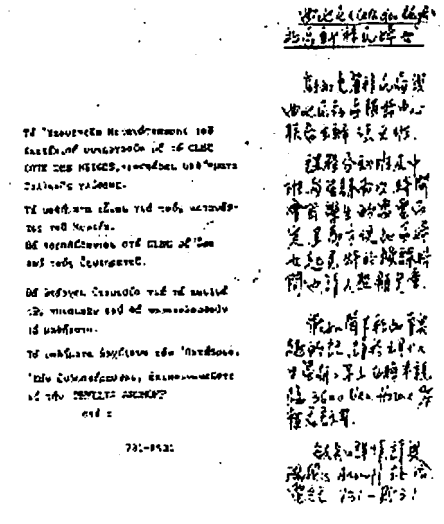


Figure II.2.4 Information brochures in several languages were distributed to the tenants
CLSC, memo to residents,
(Montréal, Côte-des-Neiges, 1986).

TENANTS OF MOUNTAIN SIGHTS

Your apartments are infested with cockroaches, mice and rats in certain cases. The maintenance of the majority of the buildings of the street is badly neglected. Garbage lies around in the basements and outside certain buildings all year round. A large number of repairs need to be done. Installations against fire are for the most part deficient. The entrance doors of the buildings do not lock.

This situation has been going on for too long.

If residents of this street all get together, things can change.

We invite you all to a meeting to decide on what means to take.

THE MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE:

AT 2.00 P.M. THURSDAY THE 30TH OF JAN. 86
AT THE LOCAL OF
THE CÔTE DES NEIGES
FOR EDUCATION AND I

TENANTS

ARE YOU HAVING PROBLEMS WITH YOUR APARTMENT:

- COCKROACHES
- PLUMBING
- HEATING, ETC.

HAVE YOU ALREADY APPROACHED YOUR LANDLORD ?
AND NOTHING YET HAS BEEN DONE ?

ARE YOU AWARE OF THE ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE TO RESOLVE THESE PROBLEMS ?

Figure II.2.5a

TENANTS OF MOUNTAIN SIGHTS

At a meeting held at the beginning of this month, some residents of Mountain Sights street discussed the state of unhealthiness and of deterioration of buildings (cockroaches, mice, rats, garbage, repairs to be done...).

We want to ask the City of Montreal to intervene.

But the condition for this procedure to work is that many tenants of Mountain Sights participate in it.

THERE WILL THUS BE A SECOND MEETING TO DISCUSS ALL OF THIS.

DATE: TUESDAY THE 25TH OF FEBRUARY 86
AT 7.30 P.M.
PLACE: 3600 VAN HORNE ROOM 200 / CORNER C.D.N.

THE CÔTE DES NEIGES ORGANIZATION
FOR EDUCATION AND INFORMATION ON
HOUSING
AND SOME RESIDENTS OF MOUNTAIN SIGHTS

IF YOU WANT THE PRESENT SITUATION TO CHANGE, COME OVER.

Figure II.2.5b

Correlation between building and structure demanding collective action

CLSC, "Tenants of Mountain Sights", (Montréal, Côte-des-Neiges, 1987).

Ville de Montréal

Convocation

Vous êtes convoqué à la réunion suivante:

Date	Heure	Lieu	Durée anticipée de la réunion
27 06 86	9:30	Salle 203, 330, rue St-Paul est (Marché Bonsecours)	

Demandée par (nom, titre, service,...)
Restauration des logements

Préparée par (nom, titre, service,...)
Guy R. Legault

Motif (contexte, historique, problème à régler, urgence,...)

Faire le point sur l'intervention sur la rue Mountain Sight.

Cette réunion est suggérée par le Ministère de l'environnement pour assurer une bonne coordination entre les intervenants Ville de Montréal, CUM et Gouvernement du Québec.

Personne(s) convoquée(s) (nom, titre, service,...)

MM. Pierre A. Cameron	Cameron Extermination	
Raymond Carignan	Ministère de la santé et services sociaux	Québec
Claude Dagneau	OEIL	
Pierre Duplessis	Santé communautaire	Hôpital Ste-Justin
Roméo Hébert	Service de la restauration des logements	Ville de Montréal
Claude Joly	Service des permis et inspections	Ville de Montréal
Yvon Lavallée	Service des permis et inspections	Ville de Montréal
Guy R. Legault	Service de la restauration des logements	Ville de Montréal
Jacques Martineau	Service de la restauration des logements	Ville de Montréal
André J. Millot	Service de la restauration des logements	Ville de Montréal
Michel Morin	Membre du Comité exécutif	Ville de Montréal
Michel Y. Pelletier	Ministère de la santé et services sociaux	Québec
Maurice Roy	Service des travaux publics	Ville de Montréal
Rolland St-Jean	Ministère de l'environnement du Québec	Québec
Jules Trudeau	Service de l'inspection des aliments	CUM

Pièce(s) jointe(s) (ordre du jour, documents, etc...)

Ordre du jour

Réunion convoquée par		Poste téléphonique	Date
Nom: Guy R. Legault	Signature:	3882	18 06 86

N.B.: Veuillez contacter le signataire si vous avez des commentaires ou si vous ne pouvez assister à cette réunion.

08.03.451-3 (04-84)

Figure II.2.6. Figure shows document of a meeting between different officials in the city, community organizations and tenants.
Martineau, Jacques. (Ville de Montréal). "Groupe de travail sur le contrôle de la vermine Intervention dans les quartiers". Minutes of Meeting. Project Files, Mountain Sights, CLSC, Côte-des-Neiges. Montréal. 27 June1986.

COMMENT

Montreal's roach war looks primed to misfire

Chemicals likely to be used in the campaign could put local apartment dwellers at risk

Get right boric acid

Motion by Cote des Neiges Councillor to city hall withdrawn

By MIKE COREN

A motion tabled by Montreal Citizens' Movement (MCM) Councillor Hubert Simard asking the City of Montreal to join a task force set up to deal with the problem of cockroaches was withdrawn at last week's city council meeting.

But Simard, who represents the Darlington district of Cote des Neiges, told The Suburban such action was taken so that a formal request could be made to the city.

"We feel we'll be able to get together with the city on this issue," says Simard, who has helped bring attention to the cockroach problem in Cote des Neiges.

The Organisation d'education et d'information

meeting some time in February.

The task force's main objective will be seeing changes made to the rental law classifying cockroaches and other vermin, which are particularly

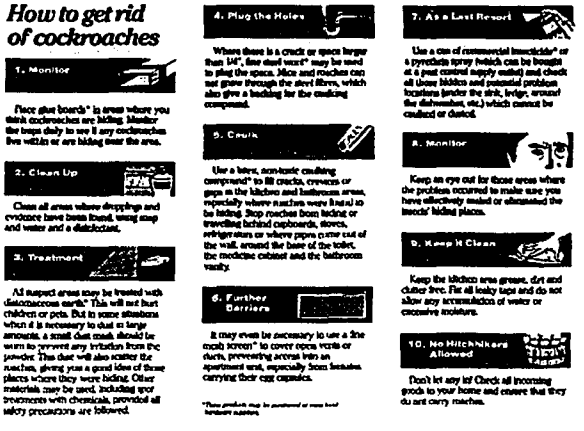
"We want to try an open cooperate," Be "rather than w us."

According to certain streets

Change the roach program

Ciaccia wants three-government attack on cockroach plague

Figure II.2.7
Newspaper coverage of the fumigation in 1987.



How to get rid of cockroaches

1. Monitor

Place glue boards* in areas where you think cockroaches are hiding. Monitor the traps daily to see if any cockroaches live within or are hiding near the area.

2. Clean Up

Clean all areas where droppings and evidence have been found, using soap and water and a disinfectant.

3. Treatment

All suspect areas may be treated with diatomaceous earth.* This will not hurt children or pets. But in some situations when it is necessary to dust in large amounts, a small dust mask should be worn to prevent any irritation from the powder. This dust will also scatter the roaches, giving you a good idea of those places where they were hiding. Other materials may be used, including spot treatments with chemicals, provided all safety precautions are followed.

4. Plug the Holes

Where there is a crack or space larger than 1/4", fine steel wool* may be used to plug the space. Mice and roaches can not gnaw through the steel fibers, which also give a backing for the caulking compound.

5. Caulk

Use a latex, non-toxic caulking compound* to fill cracks, crevices or gaps in the kitchen and bathroom areas, especially where roaches were found to be hiding. Stop roaches from hiding or travelling behind cupboards, stoves, refrigerators or where pipes come out of the wall, around the base of the toilet, the medicine cabinet and the bathroom vanity.

6. Further Barriers

It may even be necessary to use a fine mesh screen* to cover open vents or ducts, preventing access into an apartment unit, especially from females carrying their egg capsules.

7. As a Last Resort

Use a can of commercial insecticide* or a pyrethrin spray (which can be bought at a pest control supply outlet) and check all those hidden and potential problem locations (under the sink, fridge, around the dishwasher, etc.) which cannot be caulked or dusted.

8. Monitor

Keep an eye out for those areas where the problem occurred to make sure you have effectively sealed or eliminated the insects' hiding places.

9. Keep it Clean

Keep the kitchen area grease, dirt and clutter free. Fix all leaky taps and do not allow any accumulation of water or excessive moisture.

10. No Hitchhikers Allowed

Don't let any in! Check all incoming goods to your home and ensure that they do not carry roaches.

Figure II.2.8. One of the imformation brochures given to residents about maintenance and prevention of pests in their apartments.
City of Toronto, Department of Public Health. "When a Pest becomes a Problem: Control it Safely and Effectively".
Memo to residents of Mountain Sights. Project Files, Mountain Sights, CLSC, Côte-des-Neiges. Montréal. 1986.

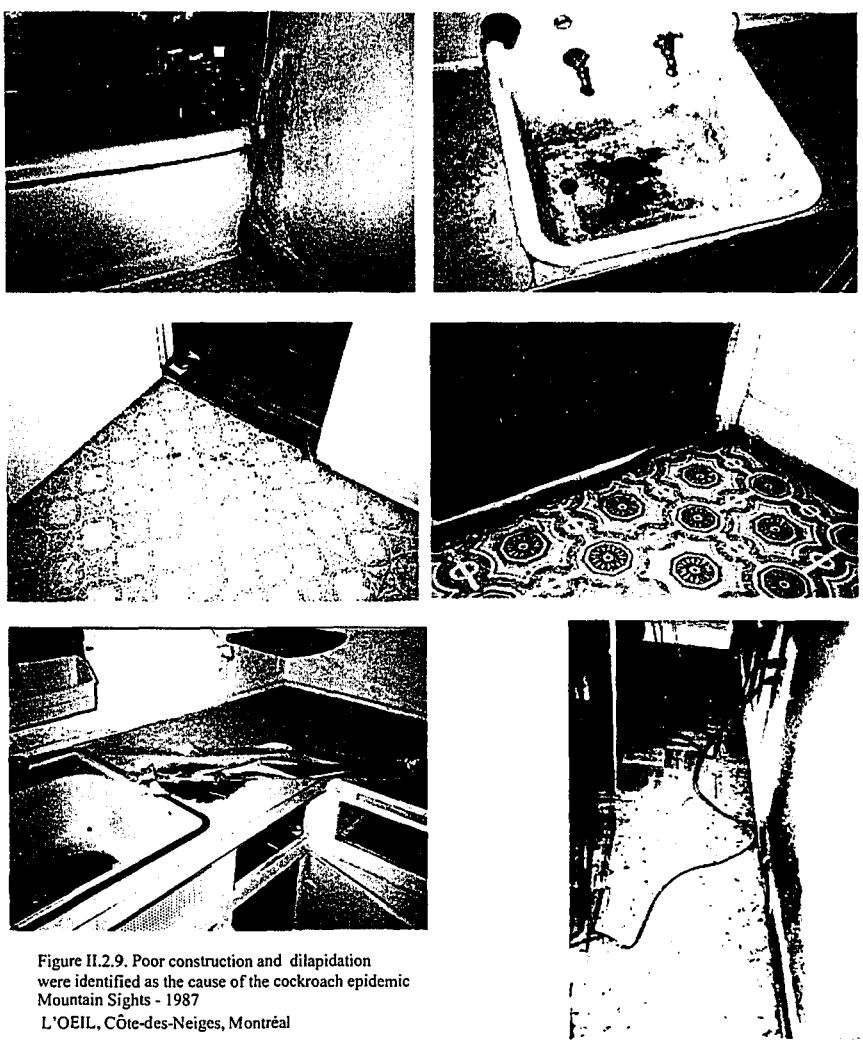


Figure II.2.9. Poor construction and dilapidation were identified as the cause of the cockroach epidemic Mountain Sights - 1987
L'OEIL, Côte-des-Neiges, Montréal

Figure II.2.9. Extermination of Cockroaches involved large scale garbage removal.
Mountain Sights - 1987
Source L'OEIL, Côte-des-Neiges, Montréal.

SHDM

SOCIÉTÉ D'HABITATION ET DE DÉVELOPPEMENT DE MONTRÉAL

June 15th, 1992

Dear Tenants:

The S.H.D.M. has recently made changes to the janitor's duties, to provide its residents with better service. In the future, the janitor will answer request for service concerning your dwelling. He has received proper technical training and has the necessary tools to make various repairs.

From now on, if you have a request for service (R.S.) you should contact your janitor directly. Upon receiving a simple call or notice from you, the janitor will answer your request without the need of any intermediary. Depending on the complexity of the task in question, he may do the work himself or forward your request to the sector office for execution.

It will now be easier to contact the janitor, even when he is away, thanks to his new telephone answering system which will take your messages. For those who prefer to leave a written note, there is always the possibility of completing a tenant service request form available in the message box recently installed in your building complex.

In case of emergency, if you cannot reach the janitor, do not hesitate to contact your sector office, at the usual phone numbers (see attached sheet).

We hope that this new approach will ensure better service for all residents.

We take this opportunity to thank you for your cooperation and wish you a nice summer of 1992.

Yours truly,

Building Management

Michel Deslauriers
Projects Manager
New acquisitions department

Figure II.2.10. Memo distributed to tenants about accessibility and rights of the janitor by The Society of Habitation and Development in Montreal.

Société d'habitation et de développement de Montréal, Memo to residents of Mountain Sights, (Montreal, June 1992).

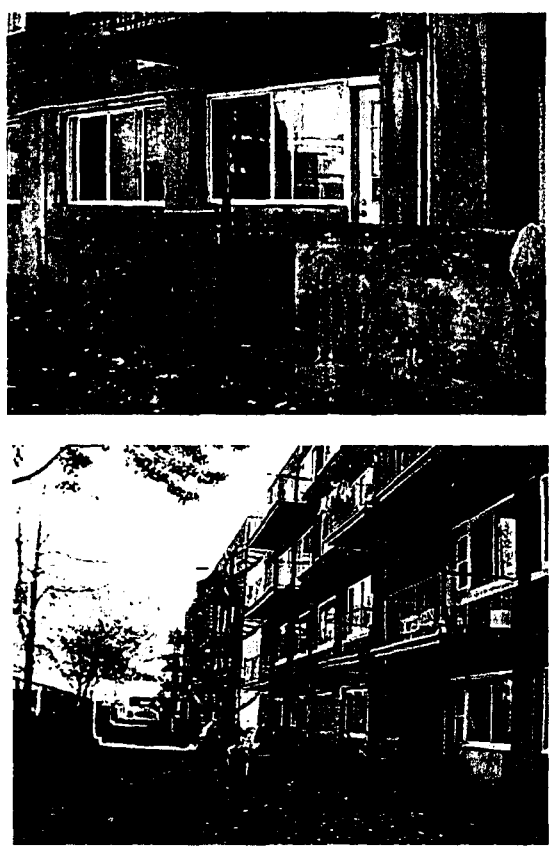


figure: II.2.11. Janitor's apartment opens out on the street that faces the park.
Photos by author, June 1998.

MOUNTAIN SIGHTS:
SOCIAL HISTORY
SECTION II, CHAPTER 3

"When women realize how important it is, the community hall will be run independently, and we will not be required. "

These words were spoken by Denise Lublon of PROMIS a community organization working in Mountain Sights for almost a decade, during an interview in 1998. Sub-consciously Ms. Denise paralleled the improvement of the neighborhood with the improvement of the status of women there.

An early study of Mountain Sights, in 1976, had identified the residents to be overridingly colored and recent immigrants.[1] "The various nationalities include, West Indians who formed 60% of the population, East Indians who formed 30%, with the rest being East Europeans, Philippines, Vietnamese, Japanese and South American, with a very small amount of French and English Canadians," said another study conducted in 1978.[2] These surveys reported that families in Mountain Sights had minimal incomes and that a large number of them lived on transferred payments, like social welfare, unemployment, and child support.[3] Most women living in Mountain Sights were married and lived with their husband and children, and some were single parents. The majority of the women had paying jobs and were significant earners of the household, while some were unemployed due to age, health and familial problems. Those who had not entered the paid labor market were mostly recent immigrants. Women were employed within the service industry, as salespersons or cashiers, or in industries like sewing factories, ironing, and packaging.[4] Education levels among the women were low with the result that women had to depend on their children and other adults to communicate with the outside world.

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[1] Claire Vaillancourt. Project des Indiens de Mountain Sights Report to CLSC Côte-des-neiges, 16 September 1976.
[2] Anita Herlekar, Mountain Sights Report to CLSC Côte-des-neiges, March 1978.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.

Some activities initiated among the residents in the late 1970s were focussed on connecting the residents with institutions and people in the rest of the city. The CLSC and the Université des Montréal encouraged students and researchers to identify the social needs of the various communities living in Mountain Sights. For example it was recognized that a large number of families were from Western India, and the CLSC invited a social worker of the same ethnic background to act as a liaison between women and itself. She reported that the recently immigrated members in Mountain Sights felt severely isolated from the rest of the Indian community in Montreal, and suggested that frequent interaction with people of similar cultural background would help them adjust better to the new country.[5] She also reported that residents feared their children would never learn what it was like to be among people of their own culture and religion. These residents were given information about other Indian communities and subscriptions to community newspapers in an effort to integrate them into the local fabric of Montreal.

The next step after establishing contact with individual tenants and encouraging their connection with communities in the city was to encourage residents of the same neighborhood to meet and establish a collective identity for themselves and the neighborhood, and to cultivate a culture of participation.[6] In the grand scale of successful planning, dilapidated, degenerate neighborhoods cause severe losses to the society and its resources. However the ones who are most directly and immediately affected by it are the users. Hence the only way to perpetuate maintenance and make it most efficient is if the initiative comes from the users themselves.

The process of fumigation in 1986 in Mountain Sights made the relationship between the building, its maintenance, and the tenants obvious. Through the surveys, it became clear that many aspects of the families' lifestyle affected their immediate surroundings, for example, the way in which they cooked and dried clothes caused increased humidity within the apartments and resulted in a rapid deterioration of the buildings. Chopping

[5] Ibid.

[6] The advantages of collective action were stressed in brochures that were distributed door-to-door to the residents in Mountain Sights in 1987. (figure II.2.5a and figure II.2.5b p.56.). Several women who were interviewed during the research, narrated how community organizers visited their homes from the late 1970s onwards, and persuaded them to get involved in neighborhood activities for collective benefits to all the residents.

and cleaning food damaged surfaces. Storing large quantities of foodstuffs caused refrigerators to break down.[7] A memo drawn by Monique Larose on the 20th of February 1985, in the planning stages of the 'fumigation operation' covered two points: the 'Project Action Vermine' and the 'Project Atelier d'Initiation au Marche du Travail pour Femmes Immigrantes'. (figure II.3.1 p.74) The CLSC and other community organizations realized that the necessity for maintenance of dwellings and the education of women in the neighborhood were inseparable. Women would have to be introduced to concepts of maintenance of the apartment with information on how to prevent cockroaches, humidity and other measures that affected the state of the apartment (figure II.3.2 p.75). Women, thus were the first among all tenants to be sensitized about their housing.

There were some difficulties due to which residents of low-income heterogeneous neighborhoods such as Mountain Sights needed the external stimuli of community organizations to facilitate interaction: Most residents in Mountain Sights came with a preconceived fear of people of different nationality and color. As a result, residents formed exclusive groups resulting in ghettos in the same neighborhood each having misconceptions about the other groups. Among other things, these ghettoes suffered from a lack of communication outside their own group, which led to sweeping generalizations about outsiders, so that if one individual from another community was spotted doing something wrong, misconceptions about the entire community were further confirmed.[8]

Matters were further complicated by the fact that many families especially the women worked "under the table" in factories and other small industries.[9] Since their mode of employment was essentially illegal, families had no legal recourse to matters and were exploited to work long hours and for low pay. This form of unofficial employment formed the initial meager source of income of any poor household, which was a

[7] Denise Lublon, personal interview, Mountain Sights Community Hall, Côte-des-neiges. January 1999.
[8] Denise Lublon, personal interview, Mountain Sights Community Hall, Côte-des-neiges. January 1999.
[9] The Société de Habitation du Québec SHQ declared Mountain Sights area to be the most impoverished in Montreal from 1971 to 1984.
Monique Larose (community organizer, C.L.S.C.), "Information sur les besoins des familles de la rue Mountain Sights nord," Preliminary document prepared for the SHDM, Mountain Sights project files, C.L.S.C., Côte-des-neiges, Montréal, October 1989.
Statistics Canada, "Montreal: Part 2, Profiles, Recensemant 1986," p.1-108.

significant reason for accepting and not complaining about their living conditions. In order to remain anonymous, they did not contact city officials to lodge complains. Other than members of their own community, who perhaps had similar means of income, they were cautious of others tenants and voluntary interaction in the neighborhood was scarce. In Mountain Sights it took considerable time and persistence of community workers to gain the residents' confidence and make tenants believe that irrespective of their legal status, their services were open to everybody.[10]

SHDM and community organizations realized that it was important to first create an environment conducive to the establishment of trust and friendship before political activities could be initiated among the residents. Interaction was initiated by generating passive and nonpolitical activities for residents, and once again women were the first to become involved. For example, in 1991, a service that provided breakfast for pregnant women and young mothers, milk for babies, and general health check-ups, was offered free of charge to the impoverished residents and welfare recipients in Mountain Sights (figure II.3.3 p.76).[11] When the CLSC became aware that the main hurdle to regular medical and social assistance to its residents was the isolated location of Mountain Sights, the CLSC and other organizations established themselves in a one-bedroom apartment located on the southern edge of Avenue Mountain Sights. In an effort to help women, Mountain Sights gained a collective space for its residents because even though it was only the women who came together for food, advice, support and friends, as Denise Lublon noted, "if you can reach one member in a family, you have reached the whole family".[12]

Among the other efforts to bring the families together were activities for children (figure II.3.4 p.76), and tenant meetings. In August 1991 the L'OIEL, with the help of CLSC and School of Social Work, McGill University, organized a summer day camp consisting of an art competition, and sports activities. The purpose for this was twofold, firstly it encouraged the use of public and outdoor spaces in the neighborhood which were barely used at that time. Secondly there was also a realization that there was very little

[10] Denise Lublon, personal interview, Mountain Sights Community Hall, Côte-des-neiges, January 1999.
[11] Aaron Derfel, "A Nurturing Place: Center gives pregnant women food, counseling." The Gazette (Montreal, n.d.,1991), n.p.

educational activity or meaningful pastime near the neighborhood, and children could not go outside the neighborhood by themselves. In addition to out-of-the neighborhood picnics to parks and theatres in the city, the chalet in Parc de la Savanne, which adjoined Mountain Sights, was used as a place to show films every Friday. There was a good response towards these activities from the children as well as from their parents.[13] Once the residents realized the potential of these spaces, they began asserting their needs with petitions for better maintenance and services in the neighborhood. As seen in (figure II.3.5 p.77) the residents signed a petition for better furniture in the park, and improved facilities for garbage disposal on the streets.

A 1987 survey of the Cambodian families in Mountain Sights, revealed through door-to-door interviews, that women faced isolation due to varied ethnic backgrounds, financial difficulties and language problems. They said that the neighborhood required services like a day-care center, language classes, and a platform to meet other people.[14] A feasibility study for a community hall in 1991 showed that an overwhelming 83% of the residents supported its establishment.[15] Residents enthusiastically recommended activities like day care, health clinic, language classes, pre- and post-natal classes as well as play-rooms for babies and teenagers. In 1993 a community space was formally established in the basement of one building, its services free of charge to every resident. Several men considered participating in community events frivolous, and hence it was women who represented most families. Many activities were geared towards the women in Mountain Sights, but women dominated even those that were open to all the residents. Denise Lublon says that this is because women are more sensitive to issues in the house and the neighborhood, their problems being urgent and immediately visible. "They come because they realize the critical role that the home and its environment play in the lives of their families. A lot of women begin to come out of sheer need, as they are the first in their house to realize that there is nothing to keep food on the table that day. "[16] Furthermore, gathering in a group and doing things like sewing and cooking were

[12] Denise Lublon, personal interview, Mountain Sights Community Hall, Côte-des-neiges, January 1999.
[13] Suzanne Desbiens, "L'ete au Parc de la Savanne" Journal Côte-des-Neiges (Montreal, 30th August 1991), n.p.
[14] Monique Larose, L'intervention communautaire auprès des communautès ethniques dans une perspective structurelle (Ecole de Service social Universitè de Montréal, December 1987), pp. 10-20.
[15] Rajesh Khanna, Thoughts Regarding the Proposed Community: Room in 7800 Mountain Sights (Submitted to Monique Larose, CLSC. Sept 4, 1991), n.p.

collective activities that women were traditionally used to doing, and hence they embraced collective activities with much more enthusiasm.

Another reason for the eager participation of women in community events concerned the dramatic change that immigrating to a new country caused in their lives, which was particularly radical in the case of these women because the circumstances that they came from were impoverished and traditional. They came from community oriented societies, like India, Sri Lanka, Jamaica, and Bangladesh. Traditionally their neighborhoods were close-knit and homogenous, their dwelling being intrinsically connected with its surroundings. Their traditional community acted as an extended household where women found friends and gained support from each other, families helping each other if needed. Hence, in the new neighborhoods, when they walked through the streets not recognizing faces or languages, the feeling was one of isolation and helplessness, particularly in an emergency, and any community event served as an occasion to establish a local network of support for these women.

In 1994 a meeting was held in the community hall to introduce women in the neighborhood to each other. Even though there were no compulsions to attend, about 10 women attended the meeting; they included Asians, Europeans, and Africans. The initial atmosphere was restrained and cautious. But the very reason that they were there meant that they had something to share and that their needs and concerns were common to all. By the second and third meeting the atmosphere became congenial and women began speaking freely. Denise Lublon remembers when a small Chinese woman and a large African woman hugged to say goodbye after a meeting one day, and they would not let go of each other. "They hugged and laughed and cried in each others arms, and that was touching to see. The Chinese was scared of the African woman in the beginning and seeing them like that meant that we had achieved something that day", said Denise Lublon.

Women who had joined the community activities personally contacted other residents, especially women, who were hesitant to interact with others and motivated them to

[16] Denise Lublon, personal interview, Mountain Sights Community Hall, Côte-des-Neiges. January 1999.

participate in neighborhood events. Women helped to increase familiarity between households in the neighborhood. Often due to their interaction in the neighborhood the rest of the family was introduced to different residents and participated in collective events. One of the residents related how her husband, who was initially cautious around the neighbors, was introduced to them by his wife and since then relations became congenial.[17] Women also helped their families establish a link with the city due to the fact that they frequently interacted with the community workers who brought in several experts from the city to hold activities in the neighborhood.

Denise pointed out that there were a number of issues that women learned from each other. A simple case in point was the notion of contraception. In a meeting to discuss birth control methods, reactions to the word 'contraception' were varied. For cultural reasons, Muslim women thought it was blasphemous to even mention the word, the Chinese women thought of it as a normal part of their lives and did not attach much significance to it. Women from conservative backgrounds are socialized to live a certain way. For example, their marriages are arranged and their role within their family is traditional. Any notion to the contrary is deemed wrong and unacceptable by the family. This is another crucial issue that is addressed during their meetings. Women, who attended the meetings gradually, realized that it was all right to accept this different point of view. That was a big step in achieving self-reliance and individuality. Sometimes they find that they are not alone in their thinking, and they find strength in a collective recognition of a problem, and offer mutual advice and support in confronting their problems.

In Mountain Sights, women acquired for themselves the resources needed to help them enter the Canadian paid labor force. Since their arrival in Mountain Sights, some women have become principal earners of their family due to several reasons; because of single parenthood, because of their husband being laid off, to help the family make ends meet, or simply because they desire it. Resources like sewing machines, and French courses provided at the community hall, and the experience that women gain while volunteering for the day-care center, peer counseling, and organization of events helps some women to

[17] Ragini (resident), personal interview, Mountain Sights, Côte-des-Neiges, January 1999.

plan careers and learn valuable job skills. These resources have made many residents gain a sense of responsibility towards their neighborhood. Since women are more aware of the local situation, they regularly attend the tenants' meetings held in the community room and suggest improvements for their buildings and its surroundings. Frequent interaction with each other and with the organizers has given them confidence to voice their concerns and motivate other renters, to demand suitable living conditions from the owners and the city.

In finding a solution to their own needs, women have become involved at the decision-making level of the neighborhood. In fact they almost dominate neighborhood politics since, the four-member tenants' board of representatives consists of three women. In meetings with the city or state authorities, women represent the neighborhood, carry out correspondence and deal with administrative issues. The new skating rink (figure II.3.6 p.77) being constructed by the city and the community garden where all the residents rejoice in a little urban farming, was their initiative. They oversee the surveillance of the area, its maintenance, and garbage collection, and ensure that the residents, janitors and owners meet their responsibilities. The most important lesson that Ragini, one of the women of the tenants committee has learned, is the power of working in a group. She recognizes the importance of knowing one's rights and realizes that things can be accomplished if concerns are voiced firmly and with conviction. In organizations and technical resource groups that offer assistance to low income neighborhoods, women are the most frequent visitors.[18] They complain about discrimination by owners and janitors, about the secondary treatment they get from government services, and feel the immediate need for things to be done. This has brought attention of the city to the neighborhood on several occasions and has encouraged the city to implement various programs in the neighborhood. Women, as primary users of neighborhood services have come to be the agents of change. The efforts they have made to increase social ties within the community and improve their own lives have enriched the entire neighborhood and brought about a change in its social and physical texture.

[18] This is an observation by Claude Dagneau, director of L'OEIL, a community organization dealing with tenants' rights in Côte des Neiges since 1976.

Marianne Hood and Roberta Woods propose that the desire to participate and the ability to do so are strongly linked together.[19] Pat Devine[20] explains this as participation 'feeding on itself':

> As people increasingly take control of their lives, so their ability to do so also increases. The challenge of having to take responsibility for decisions that make a difference is at the same time an opportunity for personal development. It is part of the process of becoming fully human. The feminist concept of empowering has a general relevance. To begin to feel powerful, having previously felt powerless, to win access to the resources required for effective participation and learn how to use them, is a liberating experience. Once people become active subjects, making things happen, in one aspect of their lives, they are less likely to remain passive objects, allowing things to happen to them, in other aspects.[21]

From a situation of complete indifference towards their housing, the tenants now take responsibility and initiate change in the environment. Everything is not perfect however. Like other low-income, rental neighborhoods, Mountain Sights has a transient population, which makes it difficult for residents who live there for a short period to become oriented to and get involved in the neighborhood. There is discrimination and tension between different communities and between renters and owners. Residents still complain of disrepair and the janitor complains about people throwing garbage all over the street. What's notable is that a few residents have gained the space and confidence to voice their concerns and that more and more residents are getting involved. Perhaps what is most important is that change is coming from the lowest rung of the ladder- the residents, and among the residents- women. Denise Lublon seems on her way to making women realize how important community organization is for their independence and for that of their families.

[19] Marianne Hood and Roberta Woods, "Women and Participation" Housing Women ed. Rose Gilroy and Roberta Woods, (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 63
[20] Pat Devine, Democracy and Economic Planning (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), pp. 158-59
[21] Ibid.

MÉMO : A tous les intervenants du CLSC

DE : Monique Larose

DATE : Le 20 février 1985

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1. PROJET ACTION-VERMINE

Il existe maintenant un projet Canada au travail qui s'appelle "Action-Vermine" d'une durée de 9 semaines, parrainé par l'organisation d'Éducation et Information Logement. Le but du projet est d'améliorer les conditions de logement, spécialement au niveau de la vermine (coquerelles) dans Côte-des-Neiges. Trois (3) animateurs (trices travaillent présentement à informer les locataires sur le service d'inspection à la ville, et sur les recours existants à la Régie du Logement. Ils offrent aussi leur support aux locataires qui désirent faire des démarches tous ensemble pour améliorer la situation.

Si vous désirez plus d'information sur le projet ou si vous voulez les mettre en contact avec certains de vos clients, vous pouvez communiquer avec l'un ou l'autre des animateurs (trices) du projet: Suzan, Daren, Joseph: ou Hélène au CLSC Côte-des-Neiges: Projet Vermine, 3,600 Van Horne, suite 200, téléphone:731-8665.

P.S.: Le projet se termine à la fin mars.

2. PROJET ATELIER D'INITIATION AU MARCHÉ DU TRAVAIL POUR FEMMES IMMIGRANTES

Ce projet Canada au travail parrainé par le CLSC s'adresse aux femmes latino-américaines. L'objectif poursuivi est double: donner une formation sur le fonctionnement des machines à coudre industrielles et informer les participantes sur les démarches à faire en vue de la recherche d'un emploi et sur les lois concernant le monde du travail (normes minimales, santé sécurité, assurance chômage, etc...)

Le projet se déroulera du 25 février 1985 au 12 juillet 1985. Si vous connaissez des femmes susceptibles de vouloir participer à ce projet pourriez-vous les mettre en contact avec moi (Monique Larose) ou Sylvia Bellfort, au CLSC.

Merci.

Figure II.3.1. Memo of CLSC with two main concerns: condition of apartments and education of women CLSC, "A tous les intervenants du CLSC", (Montréal,Côte-des-Neiges, February 1985).

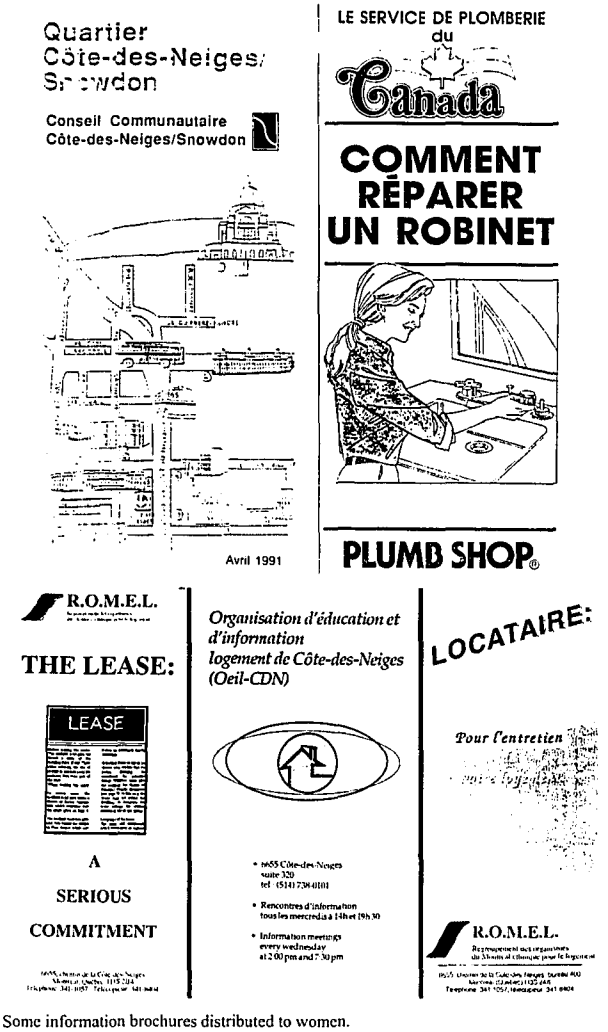


Figure II.3.2. Some information brochures distributed to women.
Hugo Geneviéve, (CLSC, Ville de Montréal, Ministére de l'Emploi et de L'Immigration Canada). "Le Service De Plomberie du Canada: Comment Réparer un Robinet", (Montréal, CLSC, Côte-des-Neiges, April 1991).
R.O.M.E.L., "The Lease: A Serious Commitment", (Montréal, 1992).
L'O.E.I.L., Memo of information about L'O.E.I.L, (Montréal, Côte-des-neiges, 1992).
R.O.M.E.L., "Pour l'entretient de votre logement", (Montréal, 1992).

A nuturing place

Centre gives pregnant women food, counselling

[illegible]
[illegible]

COTE DES NEIGES — Several young mothers and pregnant women are having a snack and talking about breastfeeding in an apartment on Mountain Sights Ave. on a snowy Friday morning.

Children's drawings adorn the walls, and toy boxes and exercise mats are piled in a corner of the room, [illegible] from an Indian restaurant.

The women come from different parts of the world - Tanzania, Nigeria and Jamaica — but they all feel at home.

"I like coming here because the atmosphere is friendly," said Yasmin, a 34-year-old single mother who is 14 weeks pregnant with her second child. "I like to get to meet other single mothers and to know their different problems."

For most of the women, however, the apartment is more than just a meeting place.

The CLSC Côte des Neiges health clinic rented it [illegible] weeks ago as a drop-in centre for undernourished pregnant women and young mothers in the neighbor- [illegible] covers her rent, utilities and food.

"Since I came here I had the great fortune of being taken care of by Sister Marguerite," said Omoregie, smiling at CLSC nurse Marguerite Zaka, who is affectionately called "Sister" by the women.

"She provides me with the necessities such as milk and keeps me in good shape. She never makes me feel lonely."

Zaka, who often makes house calls to women's homes, said for some women the only milk they drink is a spoonful in their coffee. She noted that pregnant women should drink at least four cups of milk each day.

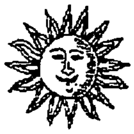
"The biggest problem I've seen is calcium deficiency," said Zaka in the kitchen, where the women sometimes bake muffins. "They get enough protein, but most don't get enough calcium."

The centre at 7715 Mountain Sights is open three days a week. On Wednesday mornings, the women drop by for a breakfast of cereal with milk, fried eggs and juice.

The CLSC opened the drop-in centre because the main clinic on Van Horne Ave. near Côte des Neiges Rd. was too far for many pregnant women in the [illegible]

Figure II.3.3
Derfel Aaron, "A Nurturing Place: Center gives pregnant women food, counseling." The Gazette, Montreal, n.d.,1991

CAMP de JOUR



à MOUNTAIN SIGHTS !!!!!

QUOI? Activités supervisées de loisir, pour les enfants agés entre 6 et 12 ans.

QUAND? 2 JUILLET - 16 AOUT
9 h - 15 h 30: LUNDI à JEUDI
9 h - 13 h: le VENDREDI

OU? PARC DE LA SAVANE
(Juste à côté de chez vous!!!)

FRAIS? Montant pour chaque enfant: à préciser.

REUNION d'INFORMATION:
MARDI 25 JUIN à 19 h.
PARC de la SAVANE
dans le chalet à côté de la piscine.

INSCRIPTION:
MERCREDI 26 JUIN, 18 h à 20 h
JEUDI 27 JUIN, 18 h à 20 h
PARC de la SAVANE, au chalet.
Les places sont limitées; premier arrivé, premier servi!

Pour information, appelez Monique à 731-8531, ext.244.
Projet parrainé par L'OEIL & le CLSC Côte-des-Neiges.

Figure II.3.4
C.L.S.C., "Camp du Jour", memo to residents of Mountain Sights. (CLSC, Côte-des-Neiges, 1991).

Residents on Mountain Sight sign petition

Susan Silver

At the beginning of August, forty-six residents living on Mountain Sight Avenue between Ferrier and Pare streets signed a petition which was sent to MCM city councillor Saulie Zajdel (Victoria district).

The petition outlines the lack of attention being given to the problems of garbage strewn on the front lawns of apartment buildings, the nauseous odours as a result and the noise and danger from cars speeding down the road as well as the lack of facilities and high crime rate in de la Savane park.

Residents have made mention of possible solutions. They have requested janitors advise tenants of the procedures which must be followed concerning the collecting and placement of garbage, the hours and days this must be done, that

Figure II.3.5, Susan Silver, "Residents on Mountain Sights Sign Petition", The Gazette (Montreal, November 1991), n.p.

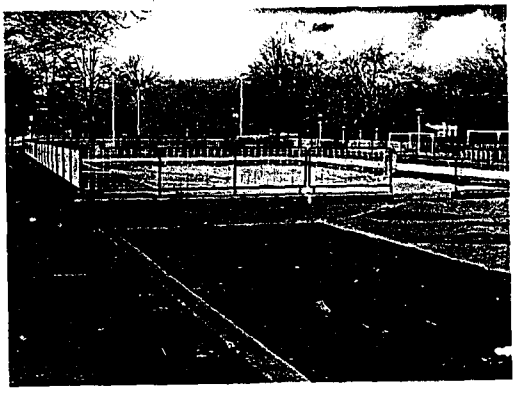


Figure II.3.6, New skating rink in Park de la Savanne.
Photo by author. March 1999.

MOUNTAIN SIGHTS:
ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT
SECTION II, CHAPTER 4

Buildings rule us [. . .] at least as much as we rule them, and in a surprising way.

Stewart Brand, How Buildings Change (1994)[1]

To further the thesis on the relation between women's empowerment and housing sustainability, this chapter explores human perceptions about space and power and the notion that one is dependent on the other. In this regard the chapter starts with describing the renovations carried out in Mountain Sights in 1991 and its capacity to empower its residents and then continues to study the impact of empowered women on the neighborhood.

The renovations in 1991 : Empowerment through several layers of the built form :

Ann Holmes (1993) defines empowerment as people being "enabled to act".[2] The rehabilitation of Mountain Sights in 1991 involved social intervention by community workers and building renovations by the owners (SHDM). The building renovations influenced women's ability to act and thus control their environment as much as it influenced the social rehabilitation. The case of Mountain Sights is particularly interesting because of the fact that it is a low-income rental neighborhood. Such neighborhoods are home to a transient population, which traditionally has had little or no say in the quality of its housing, even though the built environment has an impact on residents' perception of control of their environment. While the maintenance and administration of these buildings is crucial to buffer residents' high degree of use, it is equally important that these buildings offer the residents the space and opportunity to personalize their environment.

To analyze the effect of renovations on perceptions of control of the residents, Stewart Brand's[3] idea of a building being made up of six layers, each of which has a different rate of change, is interesting for the manner in which it looks at the impact of buildings on users.[4]

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[1] Stewart Brand, How Buildings Learn: What Happens After They Are Built (Penguin Books, 1994), p. 13
[2] Ann Holmes,. "Middlesbrough: Radical Improvements for Peripheral Estates" Limbering Up: Community Empowerment on Peripheral Estates (n.p. 1993), n.pg.
[3] Stewart Brand, How Buildings Learn: What Happens After They Are Built (Penguin Books, 1994), p. 13
[4] Ibid, Pg. 13.

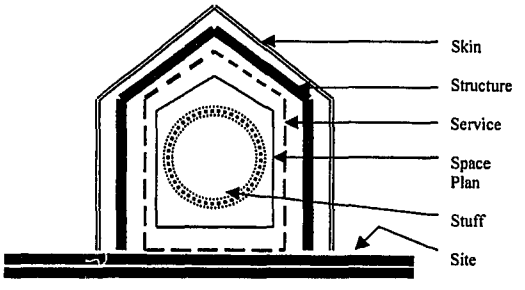


Figure II.4.1. Layers of a building.
Stewart Brand, How Buildings Learn: What Happens After They Are Built (Penguin Books, 1994), p. 13

1. **SITE** – 'Site' implies the geographical setting, the location of a building. The topography of the site is almost eternal, though its urban context may change.
2. **STRUCTURE** – 'Structure' implies the foundation and load bearing elements of a building. Stewart mentions that 'structure' is expensive to change and without proper expertise the process may be perilous. Life of the 'structure' ranges from 30 to 600 years.
3. **SKIN** – 'Skin' implies the exterior surfaces of a building. The 'skin' changes every 20 years or so to keep up with fashion or technology, or because of the need for wholesale repair.
4. **SERVICES** – 'Services', Stewart says, are the working guts of the building: communications, wiring, electrical wiring, plumbing, sprinkler system, HVAC (heating, ventilating, and air conditioning), and moving parts like elevators and escalators. They wear out or become obsolete every 7 to 15 years. Many buildings are demolished early if their outdated systems are too deeply embedded in the other layers to replace easily.
5. **SPACE PLAN** – 'Space Plan' implies the interior [elements] like walls, ceilings, floors and doors. These may change from every 3 years to 30 years.
6. **STUFF**- 'Stuff' implies chairs, desks, phones, pictures; kitchen appliances, lamps etc; all the things that Stewart says, "twitch around daily to monthly".

Brand argues that thinking of a building in layers defines how a building relates to people and that organizational levels of responsibility for the building match the pace of change in the

different layers[5]. Stewart's argument suggests that as the rate of the occupants' transience increases, their interaction with the building becomes increasingly shallow, which explains why renters are concerned only at the level of 'stuff', while homeowners are involved with the building at the level of the 'structure', 'space plan', and the portion of the 'site' that they may own. It is important to understand this, because, the extent of an individual's ownership over a layer determines her/his degree of control on, and concern for that layer. Renters who do not feel a sense of ownership on any other aspect of their environment except their 'stuff' tend to disregard the maintenance of its other layers, which may lead to dilapidation of the building or the need to spend too many resources on its maintenance.

Photographs (figure II.2.9, p.61, 62) of buildings in Mountain Sights from 1987 are testimony to the extent of their dilapidation. While residents' concern was only their 'stuff', the owners' profit, fuelled by the rampant speculation, lay only in the appearance and hence the 'skin' of the buildings. Rehabilitation of the neighborhood which involved the purchase of some buildings by the SHDM, in 1990, and increased involvement of the residents in their housing, has helped to extend the concern of both renters and owners to include the deeper layers of the building. The stark distinction between renters and owners was dissolved by the owners so that resident developed a sense of ownership towards the different layers of their environment, and the management accommodates the 'stuff' that belongs to the residents in the various layers of their building.

In 1987, when the SHDM bought four buildings on Mountain Sights, several inspections by the community organizations, the SHDM and their architects, confirmed the need for major renovations, which were executed in 1991. As building codes had been revised since the construction of the buildings in 1968, and the technology of service systems had radically changed, the inspections concluded that the buildings would require 'gut' renovations with a exhaustive repairs to service distribution systems like heating, electricity and ventilation systems[6]. New boilers that worked on a combination of gas and electricity replaced the old gas boilers in the basements. Additional water supply pipes were laid for an elaborate

[5] "The Community does not tell you where to put your desk or your bed; you do not tell the community where the building will go on the Site (unless you are way out in the country)."

[6] Architecte: Boulay Deschamps Paradis Rayside. Reunion de Chantier #11: Procës-verbal. Project no. 90131, 17th December 1991

sprinkler and fire alarm system throughout the building. New fuse boxes and main electrical mains were installed in basements to tolerate higher voltages needed for the new mechanical ventilation systems in the kitchens and bathrooms of the apartments as also for the new smoke detectors, and emergency electrical and exhaust systems in the buildings. As seen in figure II.4.2 (p.110), this profusion of new pipes was accommodated in what were previously light wells in the building, around which the toilets were clustered for natural light and ventilation. These light wells, uninterrupted vertical shafts, were ideal for all the new mechanical, ventilation and plumbing systems introduced in the buildings.

The newly revived 'service' layer in the buildings was renovated in a manner that made the various systems more accessible, meaning that they could now be repaired or changed without technicians having to intervene with the structure or the walls and floors of the buildings. For example, the former windows in the bathrooms now form regular accesses, opening into the new mechanical ducts on each floor, which ensures its easy and regular maintenance; a new access trap installed behind the bathtub facilitates the inspection of local pipe connections in every bathroom (see figure II.4.3a and figure II.4.3b p.111.) Another example is that of the mechanical ducts themselves, in which the pipes could be updated at any time, without any demolitions since they were isolated from the rest of the structure. The ventilation conduits that ran horizontally from individual kitchens and bathrooms, to the ducts were as seen in figure II.4.4 (p.112) not embedded in the walls, but enclosed in false beams to be unobtrusive yet accessible at any time. The floor-slab in the basement of the buildings were installed in a way that several small sections in it were removable to serve as service points as seen in figure II.4.5 (p.112.) for easy access to electrical and drainage pipes below it.

This efficient manner of integrating the service layer with the rest of the layers spoke of the owner's intention to maintain and keep its systems updated, so that now all the vital services of a building are provided and regularly maintained. However some details of the manner in which the new systems were introduced suggest an impersonal efficiency of the building, in places where installation of a system did not respect residents' need for privacy. See figure II.4.6 and figure II.4.7 (p.113), where ventilation conduits and water-supply pipes from one apartment were connected to the mechanical duct through another apartment, which meant that if one family's system needed servicing, residents in the other apartment would have to

be disturbed. Still other examples of details that did not show consideration for the need to avoid disturbing families for maintenance of the service system are the access windows in each bathroom which are used to reach the mechanical ducts instead of from accesses in common spaces like the stair landing or the corridor (figure II.4.3a p.111). The same oversight can be seen in the placement of the new access traps introduced behind the bathtubs, which open into a bedroom rather than a corridor, where a discrete opening would have facilitated servicing from outside the apartment. (figure II.4.3b p.111).

Compared to the dilapidation before 1987, the renovations indicate significant progress, because an elaborate exhaust system through the kitchens and bathrooms of the apartments enables better mechanical ventilation of these buildings. However it was unfortunate that the light wells had to be terminated to contain the mechanical ducts, because artificial lighting can never replace the 'human' quality of natural light that the light wells provided before in the bathrooms. Though the systems help to remove excess humidity and preserve the hygienic state of the structure, it seems to have further isolated the building from its environment, making it dependant on artificial energy, constant maintenance and unless subsidized (as they indeed are), unaffordable by the users. This dependency of a built environment is interesting to note because it seems that while the social rehabilitation in this neighborhood, strives towards attaining sustainability and independence for its residents, the architectural approach remains completely indifferent to the necessity of making the building systems sustainable by its users. Provision of expensive, maintenance-free systems are considered to be the only solution, instead of the installation of environments designed to be sensitive to climate and humans. Perhaps it is overspecialization in the different building trades that causes incongruity between the design of a building and the services it requires to function.

Though the maintenance of the 'service layer' in the buildings is primarily the responsibility of the owners, the services dissipate at the user-end in the form of switches, faucets, heaters and other fixtures, which concern the residents as well. In addition to the precautions taken to make the apartments resistant to deterioration, residents whose use would affect maintenance of the repairs undergone were made aware of the 'service' layer. Female residents, in particular, were identified to be primary users of all the basic fixtures such as cooking range, kitchen storage, cabinet surfaces and other fixtures provided by the owners, hence their

education about the user-end of the 'service' layer was considered vital. Community workers formally taught women about services, and the residents' rights and responsibilities towards them, in women's meetings. This process made them more aware and thus extended their control over the quality of layers beyond the one in which they added their 'stuff'.

These distribution points of the 'service' layer are not only affected in the way they are used and the manner in which residents' 'stuff' intervenes with them, but also by the details in construction of the joints between layers of 'stuff', 'service' and 'structure'. Photographs of the apartments in 1987 show that poor construction details were indicative of dilapidation, and as a result, during the renovations in 1991, not only essential fixtures such as taps, sink, and showerhead were reinstalled, but also junctions between the walls, the floor, and storage units were detailed in a better manner. For example, in the kitchen, edges between the cabinets and floors were sealed with moldings, and the base of the cabinets were raised above the floor in order to prevent contact between the floors and walls with the items stored in the cabinets. Additional moldings between the cabinets and the floor, and the cabinets and the wall were used to seal the joints to prevent bugs from penetrating in the walls or spreading into the cabinets. New hoods were installed on every cooking range for better ventilation and to decrease humidity caused by cooking, which not only affected the finishes on the walls and floors but was also conducive to the dissemination of rodents and cockroaches. (figure II.4.8 p.114)

However in this respect it also seems as though the concern was primarily for the building and not for its residents. Floors, walls and ceilings were repaired only so far as to conserve the structure. Perhaps it was due to a budgetary constraint that not much was done to make the sound insulation in the walls better, or to dampen impact and sound through the floor and ceilings. The profound social effects of this detail, which did not complement the renovations in Mountain Sights, is discussed below, but it is not trivial to reiterate that the oversight of this aspect destroys renters' privacy of speech and action in their homes. Perhaps the very method of construction and the materials used for apartments buildings needs to be reconsidered, incorporating materials like concrete, brick or insulated wooden cavity walls. (figure II.4.9 p.115)

In addition to making the apartments habitable, a primary purpose of the renovations of 1990 was to improve the image of the buildings, and ultimately the neighborhood, in the hope that it would attract renters and catalyze renovations in other buildings of the neighborhood. Improving the image of the building involved renovations at the 'site' and 'skin' level, which not only had functional purposes such as sealing the large cracks on the elevation (figure: II.4.10 p.116) and preventing water-leakage to the foundations, but also aesthetic considerations. This is interesting because all the other repairs in the buildings were purely of a functional nature. Lighting on the external face and entrance porch of the buildings was provided, for functional and aesthetic reasons, as it increased the safety and improved the image, of the building and its surrounding area. The external spaces in front of apartments on the ground floor were paved to create little porches (figure II.4.11 p.117) and new retaining walls with added waterproofing were installed to support earth that was added in front of the buildings for landscaping (figure II.4.12 p.118, 119). Lastly, the entrance steps and awning were repaired and embellished with floral wrought-iron supports (figure II.4.13 p.120).

The renovations of the 'skin' of the buildings is also important to analyze because fire exits, emergency stairs and escape balconies, which were a part of the 'service' layer were integrated on the exterior surface of the building and hence formed a part of the 'skin'. Prior to the renovations in 1987, the cantilevered balconies, and the rear stairs formed the main impression of dilapidation and crime.[7] This and the fact that they were installed only for temporary use during emergencies kept residents from using them daily, perpetuating incidents of crime and neglect. Among the residents, women and seniors who were at home all day were the worst affected by the fact that the windows of their apartments that overlooked these spaces had to be locked for fear of drug traffickers who plagued them. When the apartments were renovated by the SHDM in 1991, the ground floor apartments facing the park were given direct access to the outside as seen in figure II.4.14 (p.120). The external circular stairs that had rusted and deteriorated were replaced, as seen in figure II.4.15 (p.121), with stairs that were visually and structurally more sturdy, and had straight flights with wider treads so that they were used by residents for day to day activities. Similarly the front balconies were repaired to increase their structural and visual stability (figure II.4.16 p.121).

[7] Le Groupe Conseil GIE INC. "Expertise pre-purchase: survey and recommendations before purchase". Dossier No: 225-665 Submitted to Service du développement, Société d'habitation et de développement de Montréal, 26 Jan 1990.

Renovating the rear balconies and escape stairs not only improved the image of the 'skin' layer and but also resulted in their increased use by the residents. Renovating the 'skin' of the building had a great social impact on the neighborhood. The porches, back stairs and balconies make charming individual access routes to each dwelling and residents use them for this purpose. They have personalized these spaces with plants, chairs and tables, and bicycles. They have demarcated these spaces as their own, gaining a sense of control, and in doing so they have assumed responsibility for their maintenance. There are no garbage bags in the area where ownership is defined.[8] In summer residents plant flowers in front of the buildings and in winter they clear the snow away.

Since the new administration of the SHDM was established, the residents act at the layer of 'space plan' as they have been enabled to reconfigure the original plan of their apartments to suit their various functional and cultural needs. In the process of making their own spatial changes the residents have been able to personalize their environment so that the apartments reflect the rich cultural heterogeneity of its different occupants. The Ranga household, a family with its roots in Sri-Lanka is a case in point (figure II.4.17 p.122, 123). On observing that a one-bedroom apartment next to theirs had been empty for a long time, Mrs. and Mr. Ranga proposed to the owners that their own one-bedroom apartment be joined to it. In addition to gaining more bedrooms and an extra bathroom, they have also found space for their gods. The extra entrance space, that became redundant after removing a dividing closet, now serves as a '*pooja-sthal*' a space for collective prayer for the family, and a niche in one of its walls, is used to house idols of their dieties. Their living room is enhanced by the false ceiling of plant-creepers that extends through it, and by the little greenhouse adjacent to the windows, that filters the sunlight into the room. Beautiful beads of colored glass strung together in curtains, partition the room from the rest of the apartment. The janitor, who introduced the author to the Ranga family, said that before they joined the apartments, the Rangas' lifestyle was unsanitary to the extent of becoming dangerous to the apartment.

[8] There are some areas though, that are not used or owned by any specific group, as a result of which they tend to be neglected. The drop in ground level between the road and the park between the first six buildings from the north is a case in point. The slope is close to 45 degrees which allows for a basement and partial sub-basement facing the park. The space between the two buildings being very steep is not particularly used especially in the winter. It is steep and hence is not used as a thoroughfare a collective space. It is used as a storage area and a dumping lane for garbage and unwanted domestic goods.

Because of this he was considering reporting the family to the owners. However since they have acquired the additional space, their pulchritudinous apartment had made them the talk of the neighborhood. Similarly other residents have also taken the initiative of joining apartments, an initiative which directly addresses their need for a bigger space for their family, a process which the owners (the SHDM) have been encouraging. If an adjacent apartment is observed to be vacant for a considerable amount of time, residents judge whether removing a shared wall or closet would connect the two, and through the janitor, relay their proposal to the management. If the owners agree that the process does not involve any major structural changes the request is approved. The outstanding aspect of this process is that residents are encouraged to initiate change in the built environment themselves. If the residents feel that their housing problem can be solved in a certain way, the means of interaction are uncomplicated enough that their request is able to be processed promptly. In the process, the owners have gained the benefit of having a constant source of building inspections through the tenants, which keeps them aware of the condition of the deeper layers of the building like the service lines and structural elements. The availability of larger apartments and potential for accommodating specific needs has encouraged families to stay in Mountain Sights, which in turn has enhanced the liveability of the neighborhood.

Some of the renovations that were done in Mountain Sights in 1991, were beneficial its residents, as it increased the livability of their neighborhood. Women, in particular benefited from the process of rehabilitation. Since 1991 neighborhood revitalization has been ongoing, so that, women who were empowered as a result of it, can and do affect the environment. The following discussion analyzes that effect to constitute 'sustainability' of not only the rehabilitated environment, but also, the spatial control that other residents had gained during the rehabilitation of Mountain Sights

Perceptions of control on zones of housing: its effect on the neighborhood.

Multifamily residential neighborhoods are usually dense, have limited open spaces and are in close proximity to commercial and public buildings. Though such dense and often mixed developments have their advantages, for some people, housing in urban areas is attained at the cost of privacy and minimal space. Residents ascertain their individuality and personal

freedom in the collective nature of these dense developments by exercising choice – the choice to live in the environment, and the choice to escape it when they desire.

Schoenauer argues that dense built environments are perceived differently by households in different economic situations.[9] The dense fabric of a built environment is more tolerable if the dwellings within are large and if each individual has ample personal space. An individual who is able to find occasional relief from a crowded environment, by retreating into a personal room or by periodically escaping the environment, lives in that dense environment with a heightened feeling of choice.

For residents in low-income neighborhoods who cannot escape their dense environment due to economic reasons, and whose individual spaces seem as small and crowded as the open spaces outside – a dense environment may be perceived with an inescapable sense of claustrophobia and anonymity.[10] Their inability to find spaces for individual expression or control intrusion into their personal space and may lead to a feeling of frustration and loss of control over their life.

Schoenauer's concept of spatial empowerment, in low-income neighborhoods, through the ability to have, and thus exercise, choice between spaces with different levels of privacy and contact with others, finds elaboration in a thesis proposed by architect Joan Forrester Sprague, who argues that every individual exists in a number of "spatial bubbles" that can be differentiated into four basic zones: personal, household, community and neighborhood.

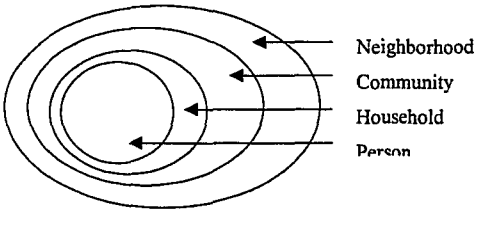


Figure: II.4.18. Basic Zones of Housing.
Joan Forrester Sprague, More Than Housing: Lifeboats for Women and Children (Butterworth Architecture, 1991), pp. 46.

[9] Norbert Schoenauer, " Housing Theory," School of Architecture, McGill University, Montreal, February 1998.
[10] Consider the following sentence: "Low rental projects have become havens for crime and tenants become dependent and resentful because their mobility is restricted."

These zones sequentially increase in scale and embody a need for varying degrees of privacy and territoriality, irrespective of the social, economical or gender status of the individual. The ability of a person to exist in any of these bubbles by choice and to exercise a preference in doing so, empowers the individual and enables her/him an opportunity for relief and self-expression.

Sprague specifically mentions these zones in the context of emergency housing built for battered women. She expands her model by identifying two additional, intermediate zones that she insists should exist, in the temporary communal housing designed for abused women.[11]

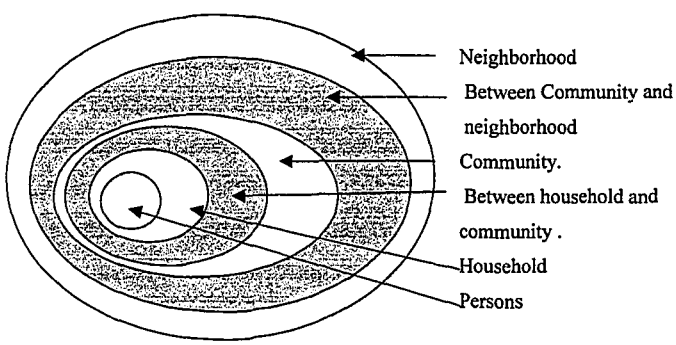


Figure II.4.19. Additional zones for women's emergency housing.
Joan Forrester Sprague, More Than Housing: Lifeboats for Women and Children (Butterworth Architecture, 1991).

According to Sprague, the zone between household and community is designed to accommodate share-work zones between a cluster of dwellings. This acts as a collective territory in which groups of women can build relationships first, on a smaller, more intimate scale. The second intermediate zone between the community and the neighborhood offers

Kamal S Sayegh, Housing: a Canadian Perspective (Ontario: ABCD Academy Books, 1987), p. 345.
[11] Emergency housing is a temporary shelter provided for battered, homeless or destitute women. Sprague calls them "lifeboats" mentioning that "these zones can also be identified in other dwellings that respond to specialized housing market today"

childcare, counseling or commercial spaces necessary for the rehabilitation of disadvantaged women.

Sprague legitimizes the inclusion of the second intermediate zone between the community and the neighborhood, in women's emergency shelters, as beneficial to the entire neighborhood, by saying that this zone offers facilities not only for "the special group" but for the neighborhood as a whole. In an effort to make an economically feasible proposition, her suggestion implies that these 'extra zones' are specific only to those women who are in a transitory phase of rehabilitation in their lives, and the rest of the neighborhood could have

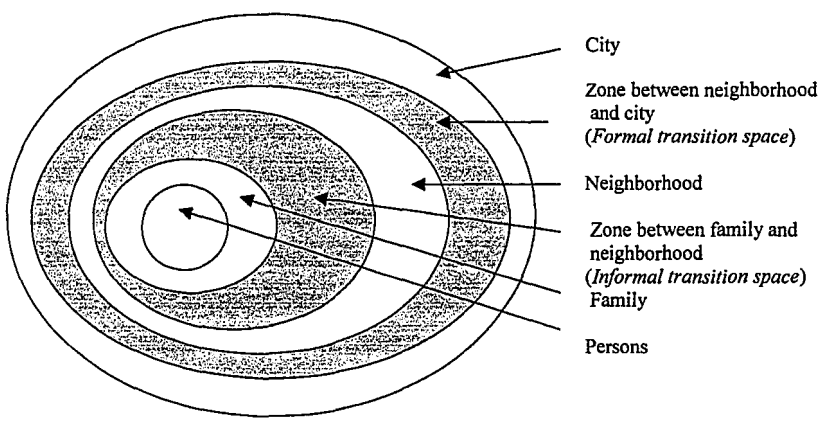


Figure: II.4.20. women's housing needs in Mainstream low-income housing.
Diagram by author.

done without it. Sprague's expanded model is interesting for the relevance it has to the housing needs of women in all low-income neighborhoods and, with a little change in definition, her model for emergency shelters can be incorporated in the conceptualization of mainstream housing.

In low-income neighborhoods, the two additional zones that Sprague introduced in her second model can be identified as, an intimate, and informal zone *between household and neighborhood* and is a more formal zone *between the neighborhood and the city*, that women need to establish and extend social networks among themselves. The previous chapter showed

that the desire to gain control of their lives compelled the female residents of Mountain Sights to establish a network of mutual support, and in the process they improved the administration of the neighborhood and the quality of life for all other residents. On the basis of the preceding discussion, this chapter exemplifies how, by redefining certain spaces in the neighborhood, these women formed the two additional zones described above, and in the process of doing so, established all the other essential zones for themselves and for other residents of Mountain Sights, signifying that the spatial empowerment that women gained in their neighborhood empowered other residents as well.

Drawn from Sprague's elaboration on the spatial qualities of the other zones, and modified for their application to mainstream housing, a definition is offered for the four basic zones, viz., person, household, community and neighborhood. The individual's personal zone is deep-seated, both, psychologically and spatially. All individuals should have complete control over their personal zone, and inclusion of any other person or material should be subject to their choice. A collective expression of all the family members defines the household zone, which is a common space and more public in nature, but the family reserves the privilege to include or exclude outsiders. As relatives and friends may be entertained in the household zone, it portrays to outsiders an image of the family that is often defined by the artifacts and furniture in the space. Feelings of territoriality and individual expression dissipate as one leaves the dwelling and enters the common areas of the building then the neighborhood, and finally the city outside the neighborhood.

In Mountain Sights a typical plan of the buildings[12] as built in the 1960s helps reconstruct the spaces as they were prescribed (see figure II.4.21 p.124). The buildings were functional, their stairs and corridors being conceived only as service spaces stacked together in a central core along with other spaces that were considered to be of secondary importance such as the bathrooms and the kitchens in the apartments.

As the only rooms in the apartment that adjoined the corridor were the bathrooms and kitchens, and they did not open onto the corridor, the individual dwellings had no visual extension onto the semipublic spaces within the building. The apartments were oriented in an

unidirectional manner and were visually isolated with each other. The balconies on the external surface of the buildings were provided for the sole purpose of serving as emergency fire exits inferred from the fact that they were not strong enough for the residents' daily use, and the residents consequently left them unoccupied most of the time. One may argue that the bedrooms in their apartments provided the residents of Mountain Sights with a personal zone, and the living room formed their household zone. But considering that the average density of the households was 2 ½ persons per room in 1987, and that the average family consisted of two parents, children and sometimes extended family members, the one-bedroom apartments could not have had personal zones for each member, and the household zone could not have been adequate for the family. Before the rehabilitation of Mountain Sights in 1987, the neighborhood zone, which could be considered as the road, the pedestrian street and the park, was inaccessible to the residents due to crime, dilapidation and unhealthy accumulation of garbage. The zone beyond the neighborhood which ideally should have offered retail shops and other commercial facilities of an urban area, was almost absent because of the warehouses that surrounded Mountain Sights, and because of the area's virtual isolation due to scarce transportation.

To gauge which of the residents were most affected by this dilapidated environment of Mountain Sights, consider the concept of 'action radius' (figure II.4.22 p.124) of separate members of the family, which in Steen Eilers Rasmussen's[13] view, varies according to different age groups, and determines different degrees of mobility for each person. Babies who were confined to their crib had very restricted degrees of mobility, which in turn reduced the extent of the mother. The action radius of children was small, and, the immediate housing environment was most important to them. In addition to the children in the neighborhood, women who worked at home, elders, and parents with small children were more restricted to the confines of their apartments and their immediate surroundings, than other adults. Lastly, the poor economic status of most female-headed households, who had minimal means of personal transportation and little money to spend on entertainment outside the neighborhood

[12] Not all buildings have the same plan, however the scheme of plan is similar. A core of services within the building and all the apartments facing outwards.
[13] Rasmussen, Steen Eiler, "Neighborhood Planning," The Town Planning Review, 27 (1956-57), pp. 197-218. Thus the individual is first confined to the cradle, then to the playpen, and then to the playroom, garden, playlot, neighborhood, etc., until adulthood, with the greatest action radius.

made them more restricted to the immediate environment than those who had cars and money to spend on things beyond their basic necessities.[14]

Thus the poor quality of housing in Mountain Sights affected women, children and seniors the most, because they were least empowered for lack of the basic individual or collective spaces that they required. They were isolated when in their homes, and helpless in an emergency. Due to the cockroach infestation and deteriorating structure, even the closest, most intimate spaces in the apartments were violated, and this worsened their perception of their already dense, crowded neighborhood.

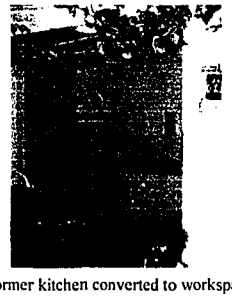
During this research in 1998, a case study of Mountain Sights led to several interviews of the residents. The author found that the perception of the neighborhood by its occupants, in particular that of some of the female residents, has changed since its rehabilitation in the early 1990s. Everyone interviewed mentioned that the neighborhood had changed from being in a state of neglect and dilapidation to being well managed, with improved services from the city. Residents mentioned that several activities in the neighborhood, such as the community garden and other collective activities, now provide a variety of events and spaces in the neighborhood. By actively participating and initiating these activities women have contributed towards making the neighborhood seem less crowded. A few women have begun to perceive Mountain Sights as an environment, which is a medium of empowerment, as they have gained valuable personal zones in their apartments and have developed spaces for interaction with other women. In some apartments, women have incorporated spaces for individual pursuits. For example see figure II.4.23 where, in the bedroom apartment and a studio apartment, Sudha, a Sri- Lankan resident, finds space for her sewing machine on one side of the former elongate studio. It sits adjacent to the balcony, which faces the street, so that in the afternoons when alone, she enjoys working there while looking out over the balcony, greeting an occasional friend

Figure II.4.23. Sudha's workspace. Photo by author. June 1998

[14] Norbert Schoenauer, " Housing Theory," School of Architecture. McGill University, Montreal, February 1998. Gerda Wekerle. "From refuge to service center: Neighborhoods that support women," Women, Housing and Community Ed. Willem Van Vliet. (England: Avebury, 1998), p. 10

who passes by. The park and the school bus stop are also in direct line of sight of Sudha's work position. Her ability to monitor her daughter's activities and to receive them when they return from school has facilitated Sudha to find uninterrupted time to work on her sewing machine, a skill she hopes to develop into a career in the future.

Another example of the spaces that women have used in their apartments to form their personal zones is, as seen in figure II.4.24, that of another Sri-Lankan resident, Mrs. Ranga,



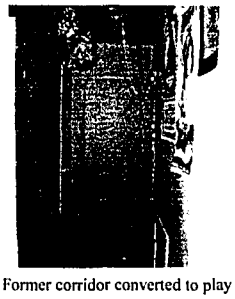


figure II.4.24 Former kitchen converted to workspace Former corridor converted to play space
Photos by author. June 1998

who has created a work-space for herself in the former kitchen of the one-bedroom apartment, after it became redundant when her apartment was joined with the adjacent one. Half walls that partition her work-space from the living area, define her personal territory, at the same time enabling her to watch over her daughter who uses the former entrance corridor of the apartment as her unshared play space. As her daughter's play-space occurs above a corridor in the lower apartment, Mrs. Ranga no longer worries about her neighbors being disturbed by her daughter's activities. Both, Mrs. Ranga and her daughter have found individual spaces in the apartment, which are connected to but separate from each other. These spaces are set off the main circulation route in the apartment and are not directly exposed to the main door of their apartment, which keeps them free of any sudden intrusion or supervision.

Some women felt that the individual and family zones in their apartments, though improved since the repairs in 1990, were inherently small and did not allow enough individual space for all the members of the family. Though the apartments are indeed small, their spaciousness is also subjective, and a matter of perception of the occupants. For example, as seen in figure

II.4.25. the different locations of apartments of the same size in the neighborhood determined residents' perception of crowd so that one-bedroom apartments that faced the commercial building appeared less spacious than those that faced the park. The apartments that were located in the corner of their building, and had two or more different views to the outside, appeared more spacious than ones that were sandwiched in between two apartments, and had a view only in one direction.

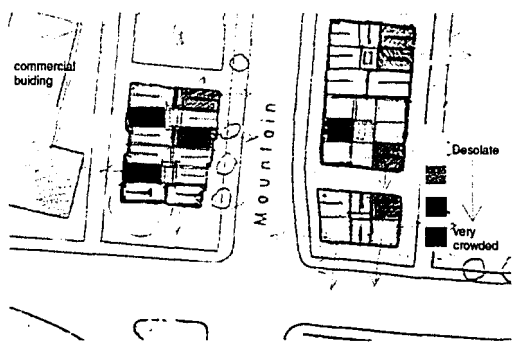


figure II.4.25. Perceptions of density according to site locations in Mountain Sights. Sketch by author

Other residents who perceived the size of their apartment to be inadequate said it was so because children played in the same space where adults wanted to work or entertain guests. Their perception of spaciousness was based on the fact that their children were forced to play indoors, due to poor physical or visual connections of their apartment with the outdoor spaces, which made the open spaces difficult to reach or monitor, and hence inappropriate for their children to play in.

The value of such a connection is exemplified by the case of a female resident whose apartment is favorably connected with the outside. As seen in figure II.4.26 (p.126), Sudha, a Sri-Lankan resident previously cited, can see a part of the neighborhood park from her kitchen through the gap between the buildings across the road. That part of the park is where she allows her daughters to play occasionally, when she is too busy to accompany them. The fact that she can remain indoors and at the same time supervise her daughters outside, has increased the 'action radius'[15] of Sudha's children, giving them and hence herself greater individual space and time for their respective activities. This has not only increased Sudha's

[15] "The action radius" of separate members of the family, in Steen Eilers Rasmussen's view, varies according to different age groups, establishing environments of different extent for each person. Thus the individual is first

perception of the spaciousness of her environment, but also gives her a choice of being in the zone she prefers. Empowering mothers in this manner, benefits the entire neighborhood, because while her children play in the park, Sudha watches it for any antisocial elements that could harm her children, and in doing so very naturally ensures the safety of all the public spaces visible to her from her apartment.[16] Several women in Mountain Sights, who work at home and whose apartments are suitably situated to allow their children outdoor-play, have noted increased levels of safety, not only for their children but for everyone in the neighborhood.

Another factor in the Mountain Sights's apartments that violates individual and household zones is the undesired invasion of sound, and vibrations of movement in the buildings, which increases the perception of those apartments being crowded. The floors, walls and other acoustically transparent, vibration-prone elements in the building, destroy comfort-zones within households as residents can clearly hear conversations and feel movement from adjacent apartments, in their own. Some residents have come up with ways to counter this. For example Ragini, a Sri-Lankan resident, moved her family among residents of nationalities different than her own. The main reason for that was, that when she lived amongst other Sri Lankan families, she could not only hear but also understand their conversations and activities in her apartment. Since there was no acoustic privacy in their apartments, Ragini and her Sri-Lankan neighbors were mutually aware of each other's affairs and that caused embarrassment when the families met in the neighborhood. Now, by living among residents of different nationalities she can still hear them but does not understand their language, and is assured of the same for her family, which she believes maintains congenial relations between herself and her neighbors.

Ragini also said that her Pakistani neighbors upstairs were very considerate. When they saw that she was home, Ragini knew that her neighbors discouraged their children from walking up and down in their apartment, so as to avoid making noise and pounding on her ceiling. The

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confined to the cradle, then to the playpen, and then to the playroom, garden, playlot, neighborhood, etc., until adulthood, with the greatest action radius (1956-57, 208)"

[16] 'public policing' is discussed extensively by Jane Jacob in her The Death and Life of Great American Cities (New York: Random House, Inc., 1961) She says "... The safety of the street works best, most casually, and with least frequent taint of hostility and suspicion precisely where people are using and most enjoying the city streets voluntarily and are least conscious, normally, that they are policing", p. 36

'considerate' woman upstairs, though, complained that she was finding it increasingly difficult to make her children 'behave' and stop them from running about in the apartment. She observed that some days were particularly bad when she could not get any work done because her children decided not to obey her that day.[17] On a different note, this is why Sudha, the Sri-Lankan resident cited earlier, says her apartment, which is situated above the garage space of her building, is in an ideal location, so that she does not have to worry about the noise her daughters make when they play indoors. All the women interviewed preferred their children played where they could always be seen and reached quickly, which is why most children played indoors. As a result, play spaces in one apartment often overlap the bedrooms and living areas in the downstairs or adjoining apartments. As referred to in figure II.4.27,

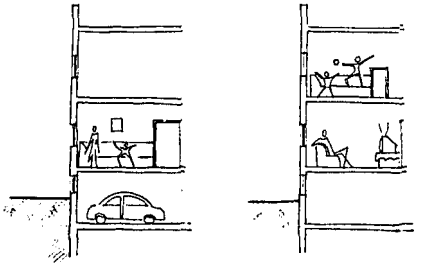


Figure II.4.27. Activity zones overlap.
Sketch by author

activities of different noise and privacy levels occur adjacent to each other. This situation, which is exacerbated by the poor quality of construction in the floors and walls, makes the apartments feel more crowded. While the apartments over semi-private and public spaces like the garage or the basement are the most coveted by residents, they are minimal and not everybody can live in them. The fear of animosity with neighbors over noise-making children, frustrates parents when restricting their children from playing becomes an all-consuming task for them and it also destroys children's natural tendency to play.

[17] Her husband says that his dream to provide adequately for his family would be when he can finally afford a house in the suburbs. Then the children would be able to play outside. When asked what she thought about that plan and how it would affect her life, the wife did not seem to have a definite opinion. She said that she would be happy if her children could play outside and there would be some peace in the house.

Semi-private areas in the buildings like the corridors and lobbies could have been designed for play and informal activities of the household. However, these corridors which are narrow and blank are used meagerly for reaching the dwellings and not as extensions of the households. According to the residents, the once dilapidated and dangerous corridors have undergone a change in image since the SHDM renovations in 1987, and figure: II.4.28, are now safe being constantly maintained and supervised by the owners. While notices and instructions on the walls and fire extinguishers are representative of the management, the warm-colored terrazzo floor that was installed during renovations reduces the institution-like feeling of the corridor.

figure: II.4.28. Building corridors. Photo by author. June 1998

However because of the inherent design limitations only a narrow door of each dwelling opens to the corridors and there are no signs of personalization by the residents except an occasional rug or shoe stand at the end of the corridor where space allows. These gestures by residents prove that they would extend their household space into the common spaces of the building if it were possible. The layout of the buildings forces the corridors which belong more to the authority than the users to be semi-public and not semi-private zones,. Since the occupants cannot personalize the space, it looks sterile and formal. Once the supervision of the authority is removed the usage and ownership of these spaces might become ambiguous and as seen, in the 1970s, neglect of these spaces may lead to their dilapidation.

Not only is their image formalized but the potential of the corridors to relieve density of the households by the embracing of some of its public uses like play areas or entrance spaces, is not utilized to its maximum. If these areas could be seen from the apartments through a window, or a semi transparent door, for example with security bars, they could be effectively monitored by the residents and hence be used as an extended 'household zone'.

The need for such a place is illustrated by the example of Veenaben, an elderly resident formerly from India, who has been in Mountain Sights for thirty years. She lives in a one-bedroom apartment with her 20-year-old son and has two daughters: one who is married to a

Jamaican and the other who is a single parent. Both her daughters live in Mountain Sights but in their own apartments, working and studying part-time. As Veenaben has retired and stays at home most of the day, her daughters leave their children with Veenaben during the day instead of sending them to a day-care center. Veenaben does not speak either English or French and as her three and four year old grandchildren do not speak Veenaben's native language, which is Gujrati, they spend the entire day quietly in a crowded three-bedroom apartment (see figure II.4.29), with little or no conversation with anybody. In joint families, women tend to find assistance with childcare among the grandparents and other older relatives. While this support structure definitely has advantages for the parent and the senior member of the family, it may not be enough for the overall development of their children or the psychological well-being of the senior who looks after them. Collective play areas not only allow children to play and grow together but also bring the elders into frequent contact with one another. If they are within the building, and easily accessible, they function well as spaces for small children and their supervision can also be collectively undertaken by few elders.

figure II.4.29. crowded apartment
Photo by author, June 1998

Due to the inherent limitations of location, construction, and design as discussed above, some apartments in Mountain Sights are perceived to be crowded. However the renovations of the buildings and neighborhood rehabilitation in 1990 did open some spaces to the households, which were previously inaccessible, as discussed already. The balconies, rear stairs and little paved areas in front of the ground floor apartments which became accessible on renovating the buildings. In addition to this the ability to open their windows and look out without fear of being attacked by somebody, or to open the window and be able to see clean streets without the sight of dilapidated buildings and garbage strewn all over the sidewalks, were significant measures whereby households could extend into the open spaces. Balconies, access stairs, and windows are building elements of importance because they connect the dwellings, which are private spaces, with the public spaces in the neighborhood forming important spatial transitions.

Transitions are essential to the co-existence of public and private spaces. They enable the women to control more than one space at a time. The window that opens on the road or the balconies that adjoin public spaces like the sidewalk, enable women to be at home as well as be aware of the goings on outside. For example balconies are semi-private zones between the dwelling and outside. The front balconies as seen in figure II.4.30b (p.126) that open unto the road are filters between the road and dwelling, preventing a direct line of sight from outside to the interior of the dwelling. They establish a connection between the dwelling and the rest of the neighborhood, so that the occupant can be within the house as well as in the open when she chooses.

With the renovation of the buildings, the choice of habitable locations in the neighborhood increased. The location of the dwellings has vital implications on the control that women have on the outside when they are indoors. Some women perceived that control could be exercised on the environment increased as connections between the dwelling and outside increased for example, apartments that had balconies facing the road were more favorable than those that faced the side. Women who participated in community activities found that, as social and physical networks increased, so did an understanding of the outdoors and with that an individual's range of possibilities. Women who had paid jobs outside the neighborhood increased their connection with the outside by physically leaving the neighborhood each day. Women, who worked at home, preferred to stay in apartments that faced the vehicular street. As opposed to that, women who worked outside the home preferred to stay on the quieter side facing the pedestrian street or the apartments that faced the commercial buildings on the other side[18]. Thus as seen in figure II.4.30 (p.126) the location of the dwelling and the manner in which it was oriented to the outside was important to the different living conditions of women in Mountain Sights.

Figure II.4.31 (p.127) shows a road and a pedestrian street along the park which are the two thoroughfares passing through Mountain Sights. Road signs enforce low speed and no-horn regulations for traffic. Movement on the road makes the area look inhabited and safe. Sudha, a Sri Lankan resident who is a homemaker, prefers to live in an apartment facing the street

[18] Interview with Mrs. Beattie Paul at Mountain Sights. Before she started working she felt lonely in their apartment which faced the park but since she started working she likes to come home to a quiet place that is undisturbed by noises on the road.

because it keeps her informed of the activities in the neighborhood. She said that they waited for their present apartment to become available because this side was 'more interesting.' Her apartment, she says, is the envy of all her friends because of its location as seen in Figure: II.4.26 (p.125) Her family lives on the first floor just over the basement, facing the road. Sudha is particularly happy that she can see the road while she works in the kitchen. Another resident, Ragini also appreciates the fact that the kitchen window in her third-floor apartment opens unto the road so that she is kept engaged with the movement outside while she works. According to her that was the only way in which she would be aware of the outside and informed in case of an emergency such as fire. Though the park and the pedestrian street are quieter areas, these families prefer to live in apartments that face the road. The road offers a view of activity and life, and it allows those who stay at home a way of being constantly integrated with people and the city outside. It helps that the traffic is slow which reduces noise levels significantly. The general sounds of activity also help to mask the individual sounds in the dwellings, which contributes to a higher degree of privacy between the households.

Some residents feel that the pedestrian street is very quiet and lacks activity during certain parts of the day especially late mornings and afternoons. As a result, those who stay at home all day prefer to stay in apartments facing the road where there is some activity at all times. The Patel family, for example, live in an apartment facing the park; while Mrs. Patel indicated that the afternoons were idle and she preferred to visit friends or her neighbors who lived facing the road. Mr. Patel found the apartment peaceful when he returned from work in the evenings. For both the thoroughfares, activity is the key issue discussed by residents. Activity outside provides policing, interaction and builds acquaintances which is important to those who inhabit the dwellings for most part of the day and, for seniors and women and others who need assistance in times of emergency.

In addition to zones within the dwellings and their connections with the outside, residents' involvement has also resulted in a lucid articulation of the 'neighborhood zone' in the form of quality spaces in the park and on the roads on Mountain Sights avenue. Since 1980, undesired activity has been decreasing as crime and garbage reduced with a joint effort by residents, community workers and the city. This has greatly increased accessibility to the outdoors in the neighborhood. Rehabilitation of the neighborhood made it cleaner and safer so that the choice

of locations was increased for people.[19] One of the significant things initiated by women was the increased use of the park and the pedestrian street.[20] This encouraged the use of the rear stairs on the buildings for daily activities by the residents who faced the park. Increased activity in the park also encouraged activity on the pedestrian street. As seen in figure II.4.32 Furniture in the park, the design of play spaces, a jogging track and renovation of the chalet in the park increased the image of the park and thus the area around it. Change in quality of the neighborhood has enabled residents to connect the dwelling and the rest of the neighborhood by using certain outdoor spaces, which were inaccessible to them before. Residents began to landscape open spaces with plants, and with street furniture with the help of the city and community organizers. The backspaces, emergency stairs and the park have been reformed into spaces that are occupied by women and children rather than by drug traffickers. By occupying these leftover spaces women have helped reduce crime and dilapidation and have converted them to habitable spaces for the entire neighborhood.

figure II.4.32. Park De la Savanne
Photo by author, June 1998.

In addition to finding space for personal endeavors, in their apartments some women use the apartment as a place in which to extend their network by hosting informal meetings of female residents. These meetings take place most often in the living area when their children are at school. The fact that women are now using their apartments to discuss neighborhood affairs, which consequently impact their own lives, is significant because traditionally the home has been a boundary for women – it has limited their identity and isolated them from the rest of society. However, as women in Mountain Sights use their homes to increase contact and to spread their influence on the neighborhood, the home is becoming a spatial medium of empowerment. When the apartment does return to its private function of containing activities of the household, the home having once empowered them affects the women's personalities

[19] For a detailed description of the social and administrative rehabilitation of Mountain Sights see chapter 2 and chapter 3 of section II.
[20] ibid

among their family members, thus redefining their traditional role of being passive in decision making processes of the household. The new furniture that was purchased for their apartment in Ragini's family was an economic decision that Ragini had made once her family was able to afford it. She proudly pointed at the 25" color television in her apartment, saying that it was an investment towards making her home a comfortable place, having realized that upgrading her family's standard of living gave them a sense of empowerment and the encouragement to accomplish more. In addition to affecting their family, the fact that the family space in the apartment is utilized by women's meetings also has effects on the nature of their gathering, making it more intimate and informal, like that of a family, and creates strong ties between the different women. This is significant in that women relate to such personal gatherings with more familiarity and ease, and the bonding among them becomes intimate and with unconditional trust and is also conducive to the initiation of them into neighborhood activities. Women have transformed their apartments into a political space, which influences the neighborhood, and the dwelling is now a multipurpose space where women find not only their personal and household zones, but also an informal transition between the family and the rest of the community.

Figure II.4.33 shows the balconies at the side, which hang between the buildings. The sketches in figure II.4.33 show a comparison in scale of the space in front of the side and front balconies. The side balconies are more intimate than those that face the road, and establish connective zones between dwellings. Residents are more familiar with people living across the buildings than those living in the same building. This is due to the side balconies, which act as semi-private territories where it is normal to stand or work. Residents maintain potted plants, dry their clothes in these balconies and meet each other casually during the course of their work. Such spaces encourage passive peer interaction between women. In doing so the women have created for themselves an informal transition between the household and the community. This space, which was not designed into the corridors, lobby and other semi private zones within the building, has now been formed at a similar scale between buildings. This establishes a different kind of privacy for women than that experienced when they are alone or with other members of their family. It is an area where a woman may shed her role as wife or mother, and is able to talk about herself as an individual among individuals who identify with her needs and aspirations. In fact these semi-private zones are also used by the

community workers to help women build a support network among themselves. Ragini was requested to notify the police if she heard or saw the husband in the family across from hers abusing his wife. Ragini also mentioned the long conversations she has had with that woman

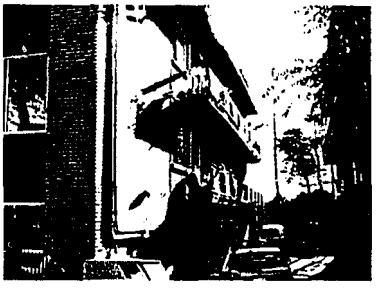
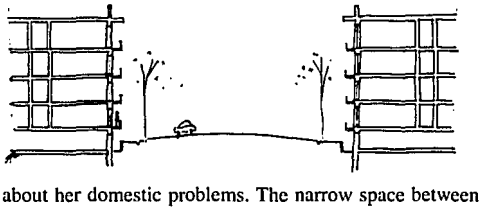
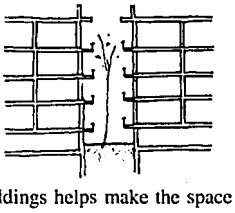


Figure II.4.33 Distance between front balconies- loose Photos and sketch by author, June 1998.

Side balconies- intimate





about her domestic problems. The narrow space between the buildings helps make the space intimate, so that one does not have to shout across the distance. However residents only like living areas to open unto these spaces and not other spaces that are more private such as the bedroom. The balconies act as a filter between the neighbor and Ragini's living room. Her bedroom window faces this side of the building with the balcony; it is always kept closed or covered with curtains, as the narrow distance is an impediment to privacy.

Since the neighborhood is safer and cleaner now, the number of pedestrians in the area has increased. Their presence further increases livability by providing a human scale to the road, and a feeling of safety. Women, in particular, use several spots on the street as formal and informal nodes of congregation. The school-bus stop at the eastern edge of the street, for example is an informal place for women to meet in the morning and afternoon when they accompany their children to the school bus. Wide, tree shaded pavements and front steps of

the buildings are some of the places where they are seen talking or gathering at different times of the day.

The most well-defined space for meeting though, is the community center in the basement of one of the buildings. This is the significant *formal transition* zone for women between the neighborhood and the city. It is a large continuous space renovated from garage spaces. Owned by the SHDM, it is operated by a local community organization called PROMIS in collaboration with CLSC Côte-Des-Neiges. The hall is used for community events. On the road-front, the community center and its surroundings establish an image of being managed and easily accessible as seen in figure II.4.34 (p. 128). The door directly opens onto the pavement, but at the same time is sunk below the level of the pavement. This difference in level makes it accessible yet spatially separate from the pavement. Flowers, landscaping, and the difference in level from the pavement create a nested welcoming feeling just off the public area. Landscaping defines the entrance of the community hall, so that it is easily discernable from the other basement residences. Large, continuous glass windows, and a glass door offer transparency to the functions within, making it inviting and less formal. Signs posted in several languages, on the outside of the windows and door are visible from the road and the pavement. These multilingual signs suggest that the community hall is open to all the residents of the area, and establishes the identity of the neighborhood as a multicultural unit. Windows and doors act as notice boards and can be seen by passersby, as well as serving as an introduction to new residents, as they suggest the provision of services available in the neighborhood.

The community center is a zone of orientation for women's public and professional interactions in the city. For example, it provides vocational training for some women and domestic support for others. Sudha and other women who stay at home each volunteer once a once a week to supervise the children in the day care center with one community worker. This gives her experience in managing a center, something that she said she would like to pursue as a career later on. For women who work outside the neighborhood, the community center supports their work by providing a place where they can leave their children with the assurance that they will be well looked after. The community center is a formal zone where women establish networks and gain information about their environment. It is formal in the

sense that participation is deliberate and is usually moderated by a community organizer. This is necessary for the development of a woman as an individual. As Denise Lublon, one of the main community workers in Mountain Sights, puts it, "when she sits across the table with her child on her lap, between her and the table, she is a mother. But as the child is taken to the crib in the play area, she sits there, with all her casts shed, as a woman."

The shift in balance between public and private spaces

In her book Women and the Making of the Modern Home Alice Friedman[21] noted that women clients who did not fit the prototype of the traditional family with man as the breadwinner and woman as the homemaker encouraged unconventional domestic architecture to suite their needs:

> [. . .] they reexamined the separation between the individual household and the community and replaced traditional divisions with a wider spectrum of alternatives. While this new approach often led to a more fluid exchange between public and private space, and to more communal activities, it is significant that many women clients sought a balance between family and privacy, or chose to live alone.

Friedman's book was primarily about women homeowners who had the opportunity to commission their own homes. However in the concluding chapter Friedman cogently notes that though women may have greater freedom of choice, a growing majority are impoverished by the heavy responsibilities of supporting their families and themselves. Some women have resorted to low-cost, collective solutions, the primary feature in which has been the *shift in balance between public and private activities and spaces*. This is an important concept in terms of the effect that empowerment of women in Mountain Sights has had on the nature of private and public spaces in the neighborhood.

As more and more women participate in collective activities in Mountain Sights, signification of conventional spaces has changed. Women visit each other's apartment in a group. They meet to make newcomers more comfortable, share information and expand networks in the community. In the process they create public spaces in the private spaces of the household. The size of the apartment being restricted, all the spaces except the most private like the bedroom are transformed to accommodate meetings. The transition, between the apartment

[21] Alice Friedman. Women and the Making of the Modern House: A Social and Architectural History (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1998)

being used as a private space for the household and a public space for the women in the neighborhood, is temporal in nature as seen in figure II.4.35 (p.128). Afternoons are used for meetings in the apartment. Many women have accommodated work-spaces in the apartment. Some women use bedrooms, extra corridors, etc as professional spaces. This has led to the redefinition of the needs of a dwelling, which from a woman's perspective has shifted from a purely private area to a medium of connection with the outside, as well as with herself as an individual. This need is responded to by the owners like SHDM, who now allow the use of an apartment for small businesses such as sewing, if it does not harm the structure or disturb the neighbors too much.

The public nature of the neighborhood, on the other hand, has become more private for the its residents. The community hall, which is accommodated in a former garage space, has domesticated the public spaces. When the community hall was established along the road it secured an identity of a collective neighborhood and personalized the faceless sidewalks of the vehicular road. The plan and photographs in figure II.4.36 (p.129) show that the entrance door opens to a wide corridor space, which leads the eye through the hall suggesting some of the activities that take place there. There is no receptionist at the entrance, Visitors and residents are admitted informally and without procedure. Everyone who works there or any of the women who use that space receive the people who enter. The entrance area flows into the interior circulation space. Half partitions that define the different spaces make the space seem to be open to all, and integrated with the entrance. All the partitions rise a little above the head of an adult. This allows maximum control of the user and necessitates them to take charge of the immediate needs of people who come in. The meeting room as seen in figure II.4.37 (p.130) has a separate entrance from outside and has an internal connection as well. Formal meetings with janitors and owners and different government officials are held in the meeting room. The room is also used for 'after school studies' and French classes and all other activities that need an undisturbed space. This meeting room is seldom used by women and their meetings since they find the environment too formal. As seen the photograph, women say the proportion of the meeting room is too narrow. The rectangular table is very long, due to which, women who sit around it do not appear to be equal participants. Those who sit at the head of the table seem to preside over the meetings while those at the other end of the table seem to be left out. The space around the narrow rectangular table does not allow free

circulation. This restricts free movement and participants are confined to their position, which increases the formality of the meetings.

As indicated in the plan in figure II.4.36, the kitchen space in the community hall occupies the posterior space, and is not directly visible from the entrance. Figure II.4.38 (p. 130), shows the kitchen space to have a work counter, a cooking range, a small refrigerator, a sink, and storage space for essential supplies and kitchenware. The center of the space is occupied by a large dining table, which accommodates 10 to 15 individuals. It sets an intimate and homelike space in the midst of a public space and is used for several administrative, social and economic activities. The space is used for formal and informal meetings between women and community workers. The walls are covered with inspiring charts and crafts that women make or bring in. Women organize lunches that are prepared by groups of different cultures, or make coffee and snacks during a meeting. This system of working is, they say informal and participatory. Several planners[22] believe that one reason for lack of input from women during participatory planning efforts is that women are socialized to believe that they have nothing valuable to say. This being true they have tried the anecdotal and informal 'storytelling' format among small groups of women, and found that women relate to it with much more ease and consistency than to a formal discussion. The kitchen space provides an informal and neutral environment, which domesticates the community hall. As it is removed from the traditional boundaries of the household it is a space that instills individuality, confidence and control among women bringing them out of silence. Women use this domestic aspect of a public space like the community hall to carry out many individual and administrative activities.

In addition to being a zone between the neighborhood and city, the community hall also provides for an extension of the personal zone and household zone of each individual. The community hall allows spaces to be personalized by the users. Each child is designated a space. As seen in figure II.4.30 the entrance corridor is decorated with paintings made by the children. Paintings are pinned up on the felt covered modular partitions on the other side of which is the play space for children (figure II.4.39 p.130). This serves two purposes; it allows

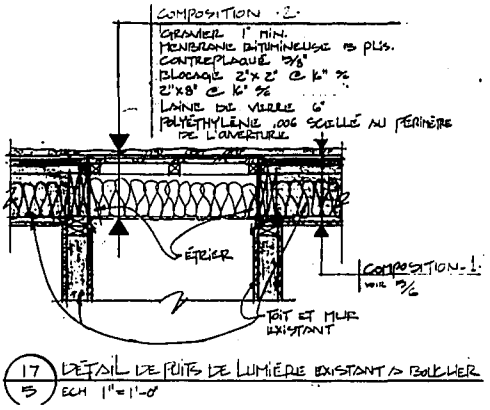
[22] Leonie Sandercock and Ann Forsyth, "A Gender Agenda: New Directions for Planning Theory" Ed. LeGates, Richard and Stout, Fredric, The City Reader. (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 407-420.

children to designate their space behind the partition and to proudly exhibit their work to visitors. Hangers in the closet have names of the children on them made by the children themselves. In the homework area and the play spaces children hang drawings and other things they make. The older children paint the walls in colors they like, and arrange furniture as they wish (figure II.4.40 p.131). The community hall has intimate spaces like an exercise room for pregnant women where women keep books on health and other personal issues (figure II.4.41 p.131). It also has a cubicle to hold periodic medical visits by a doctor, a counselor and a social worker from the CLSC. All these spaces are personalized by each user and constitute an important extension of their 'home' that is lacking, due to the small sizes of their dwellings. Though none of the spaces except the exercise room for pregnant women and the meeting room, are separated by doors, spaces are zoned according to type of users. In the teenagers' room they have collective sense of ownership. Mothers let their children play unassisted when they are in the play space. Women know that they can prevent intrusion in the kitchen space when they wish. Every individual is independent in their respective peer zone, which helps them develop their own personality. This, Denis Lublon, a community worker notes, is as important for the women as for the children or teenagers who come there. These spaces provide expression for burgeoning support groups, which strengthen networks in the neighborhood. The collective provision of such spaces which at the same time maintain separate spaces for each group, make up for absence of a member in the family- a parent or children, in case of childless couples or children with single parents, offers an experience that helps people complete their family.

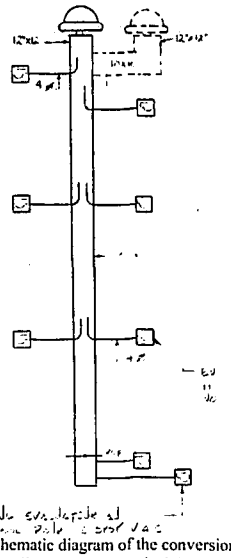
In summary, having been enabled to act after the rehabilitation in the early 1990s, women in Mountain Sights built for themselves the essential zones of interaction that they required, by redefining existing spaces. Being able to do so has increased their degree of spatial empowerment, perpetuated rehabilitation of these spaces in the neighborhood, and also enhanced the spatial control exercised by other residents. The community hall is the most visible example of the relationship between the effect of women's control on neighborhood sustainability and its benefits to other residents. The community space was created out of an unused, basement space for women, and is sustained today, by the active participation of the

Marianne Hood and Roberta Woods, "Women and Participation", Housing Women Ed. Gilroy, Rose and Woods, Roberta. (Routledge, 1994), pp. 58-74.

female-residents because it represents that critical *formal transition zone* between the neighborhood and the city. But the community hall is also the seat of political decision-making in the neighborhood, and the decisions that women make there ensure the maintenance and serviceability of the neighborhood, as well as defending the rights of all the residents of Mountain Sights from the owners and the city. On a more sensory level, all the spaces that women now use for their casual, informal social networking such as the side balconies, the streets, the backspaces of their buildings and the park are the ones that were severely degenerated before rehabilitation in the 1990s. By making active use of these spaces, by engendering them, women ensure their safety, repair and livability- attributes, which are enjoyed by all other residents. Perhaps the most important manner in which women's empowerment has affected other residents is that by domesticating the various public areas, and making them important extensions of the household spaces, women have increased the perception of spaciousness of this housing environment, providing more spatial choice for all other residents. Tenants, with the active initiation of women, have been able to spread their 'stuff' (which is considered as basic possessions of any individual on which her/his ownership is uncontested) outside the dwellings, thus establishing a mark of ownership on the 'site' (over which tenants, usually, have no rights or ownership). In fact, the element that make livability on the 'site', is the 'stuff' that women have added through tenant meetings with owners and city authorities. Increased amounts of furniture in the park such as benches, a skating rink, a play areas, facilities of the chalet, resources of the community hall, and the public areas that women occupy in the widening spaces of the tree-shaded sidewalks now belong to all the tenants (figure II.4.42 p.132). Informal household activities, like children's play, social interaction, or just enjoying a good book on a holiday, spill out in public and semi-public areas of the neighborhood, which the residents now perceive as zones they can control. These have enabled the residents to create vital extended parts of their homes that were lacking before. The neighborhood now acts as an extended household space in which the streets are the corridors, the buildings lead to private spaces, and, the community room and the park are used as living spaces.



a) Detail to cover the lightwells so that they could be converted to mechanical ducts.



b) schematic diagram of the conversion of the light-wells intothe mechanical duct

AVANT DE PROCEDER A L'EXECUTION DES TRAVAUX, TOUTES LES DIMENSIONS DEVRONT ETRE VERIFIEES SUR LES LIEUX PAR L'ENTREPRENEUR.

NOTES

1- Pour l'alimentation en eau froide et chaude domestiques de chacun des appareils de plomberie, voir plan M-5 et M-1.

2- Puit de lumière existant pour la ventilation des toilettes à condamner. Voir architecture. Ces puits de lumière deviennent des puits mécaniques.

3- Pour les raccordements de drainage des nouveaux appareils de plomberie, voir les détails au plan M-1.

4- La localisation exacte des conduits de ventilation dans les puits de mécanique devra être coordonnée sur les lieux, avec les tuyauteries de drainage et d'évent existantes ainsi qu'avec la nouvelle tuyauterie d'eau domestique.

c) see note no. 2 for conversion of the light-wells intothe mechanical duct

Figure II.4.2. Light-wells converted to mechanical ducts

Source: Boulay, Deschamps, Paradis,Rayside, 7800-7810 Mountain Sights, Cote-des-Neiges Details , Project No. 90131-2, 21January 1991, p. A-4/7

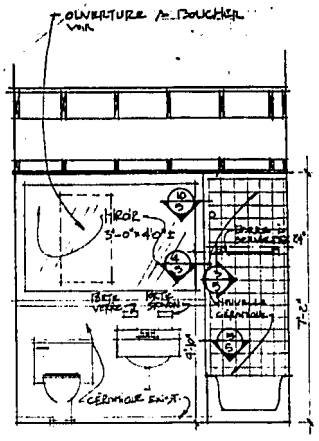


Figure II.4.3 Former window converted to duct access in bathroom

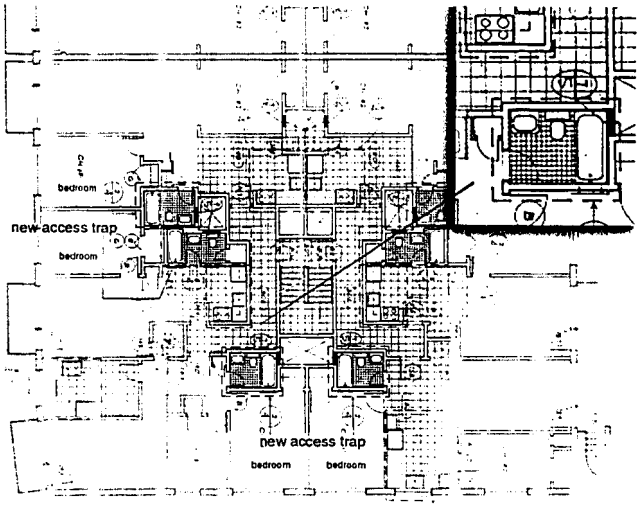


Figure II.4.3 Access traps to bath face bedroom instead of outside corridor.

Source: Boulay, Deschamps, Paradis,Rayside, 7800-7810 Mountain Sights, Cote-des-Neiges Floor Plans , Project No. 90131-2, 21January 1991, p. A-2/7

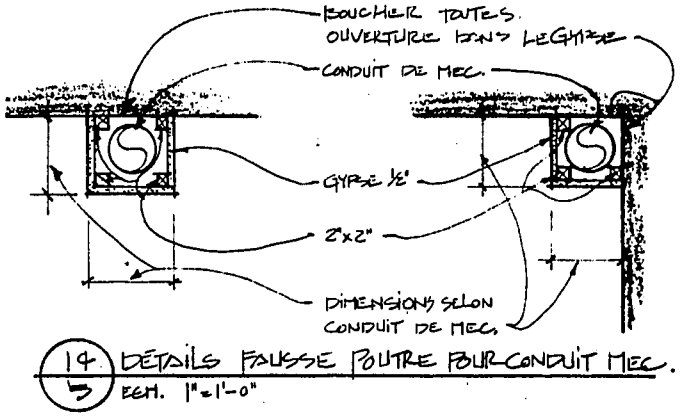


Figure II.4.4. False beam to conceal horizontal conduits
Source: Boulay, Deschamps, Paradis,Rasyside, 7800-7810 Mountain Sights, Cote-des-Neiges Details , Project No. 90131-2, 21January 1991, p. A-5/7

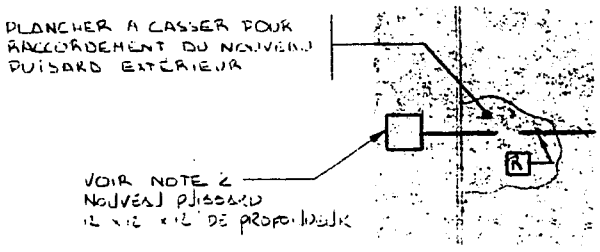


Figure II.4.5. Removable floor section in basement.
Source: Boulay, Deschamps, Paradis,Rayside, 7800-7810 Mountain Sights, Cote-des-Neiges Mechanical and Plumbing, Project No. 90131-2, 21January 1991, p. M-1/7

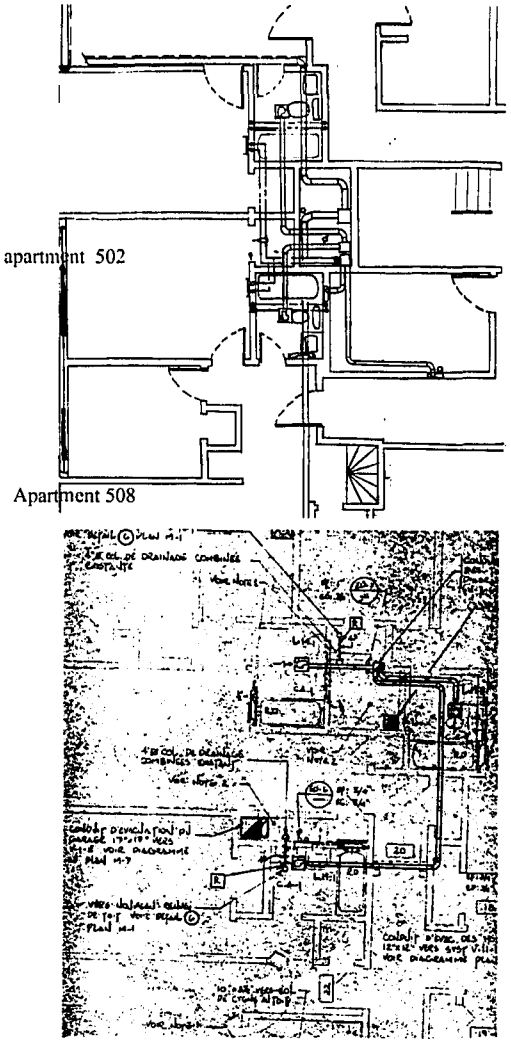


Figure II.4.7
New plumbing that was introduced through the former light wells
pipes of one apartment penetrate through another apartment.
Boulay, Deschamps, Paradis,Rayside, 7800-7810 Mountain Sights, Cote-des-Neiges
Floor Plans , Project No. 90131-2, 21January 1991, p. A-2/8

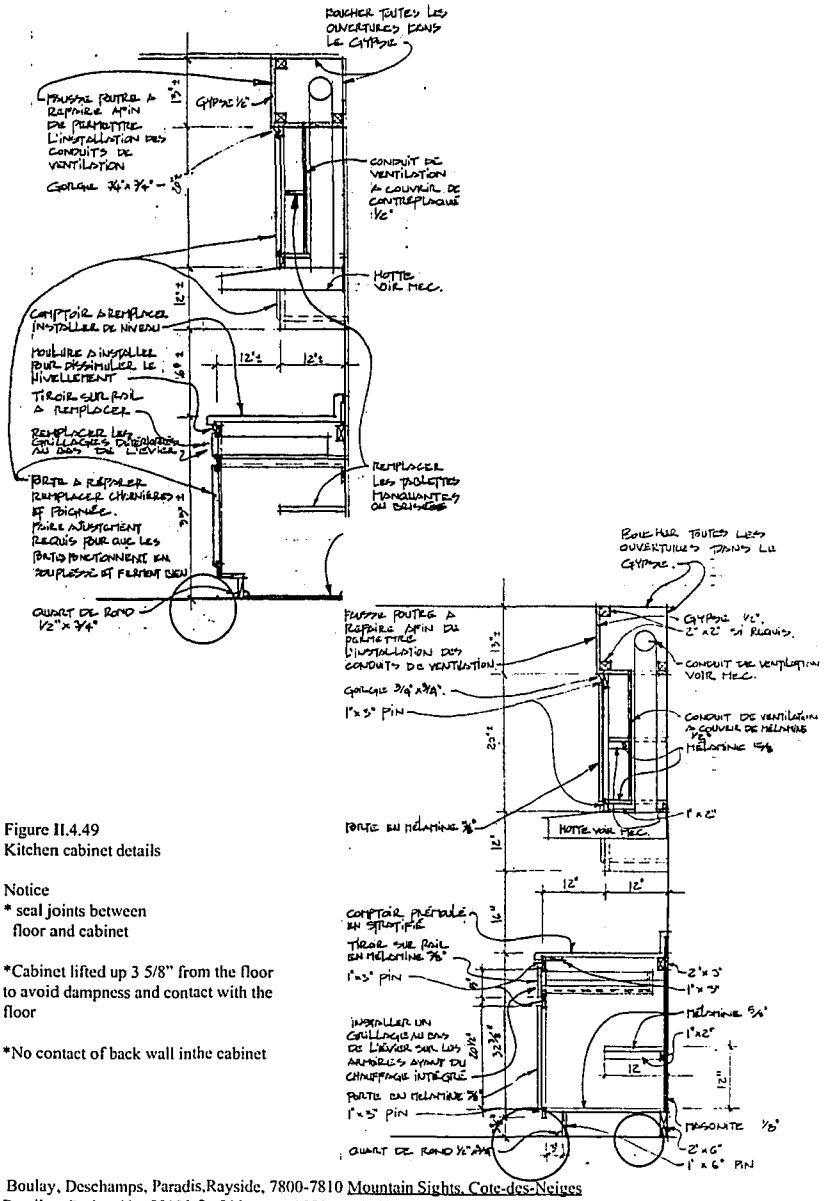


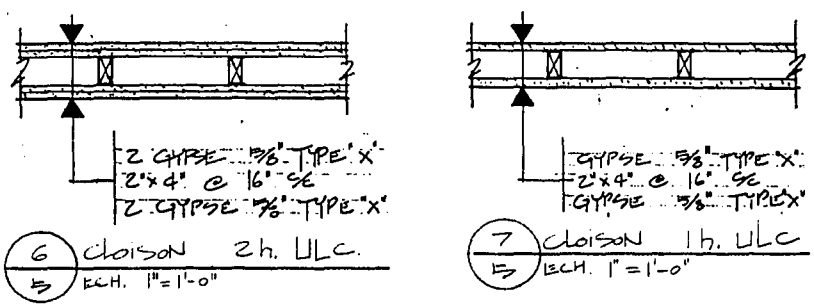
Figure II.4.49
Kitchen cabinet details

Notice
* seal joints between floor and cabinet

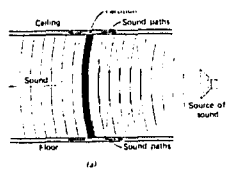
*Cabinet lifted up 3 5/8" from the floor to avoid dampness and contact with the floor

*No contact of back wall inthe cabinet

Boulay, Deschamps, Paradis,Rayside, 7800-7810 Mountain Sights, Cote-des-Neiges Details , Project No. 90131-2, 21January 1991, p. A-4/7.

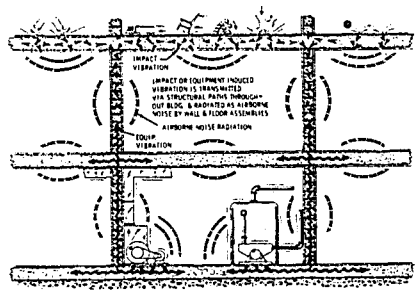


a) wall sections of the apartments in Mountain Sights show no insulation for acoustic privacy



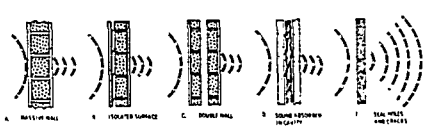
(a)

Fig. 27.11 (a *Airborne sound is so called, since it originates in the air. (b) Structure-borne sound originates from mechanical contact between structure and vibrating or impacting sources. As such its energy level is usually much higher than airborne sound. c Illustrates the techniques available for controlling airborne sound.* A Guide to Airborne, Impact and Structure Borne Noise Control, in Multi-family Dwellings, *U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, D.C., 1963*



Transmission of Impact and Structure-Borne Noise.

(b)



(c)

Figure II.4.9. Study of wall and floor sections for acoustic privacy.
McGuinness, Stein, and Reynolds, Mechanical and Electrical Equipment for Buildings 6th Ed., (New York: John Wiley and Sons, January 1980), p. 1234, 1240, 1244.

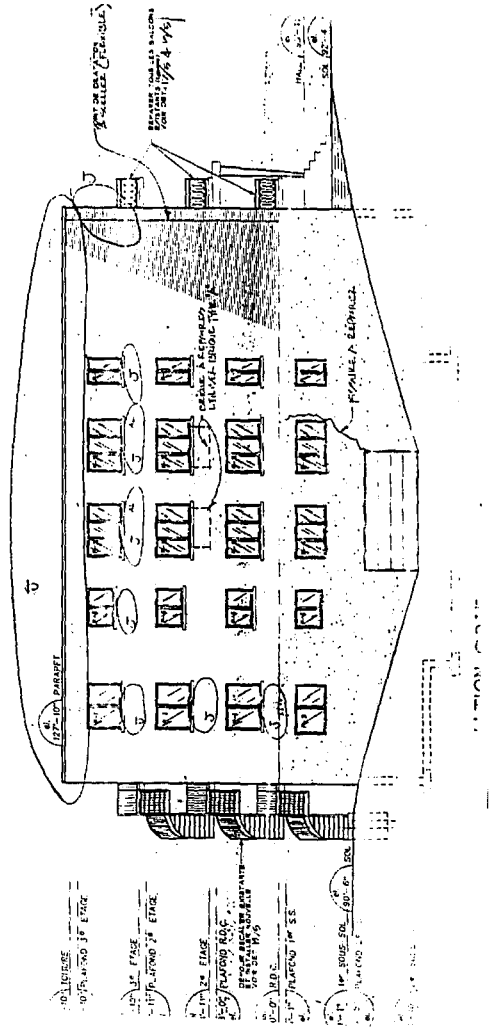


Figure II.4.10. Large cracks on the face of buildings.
Boulay, Deschamps, Paradis,Rayside, 7800-7810 Mountain Sights, Cote-des-Neiges Elevations et Types de Fenetres , Project No. 90131-2, 21January 1991, p. A-3/7.

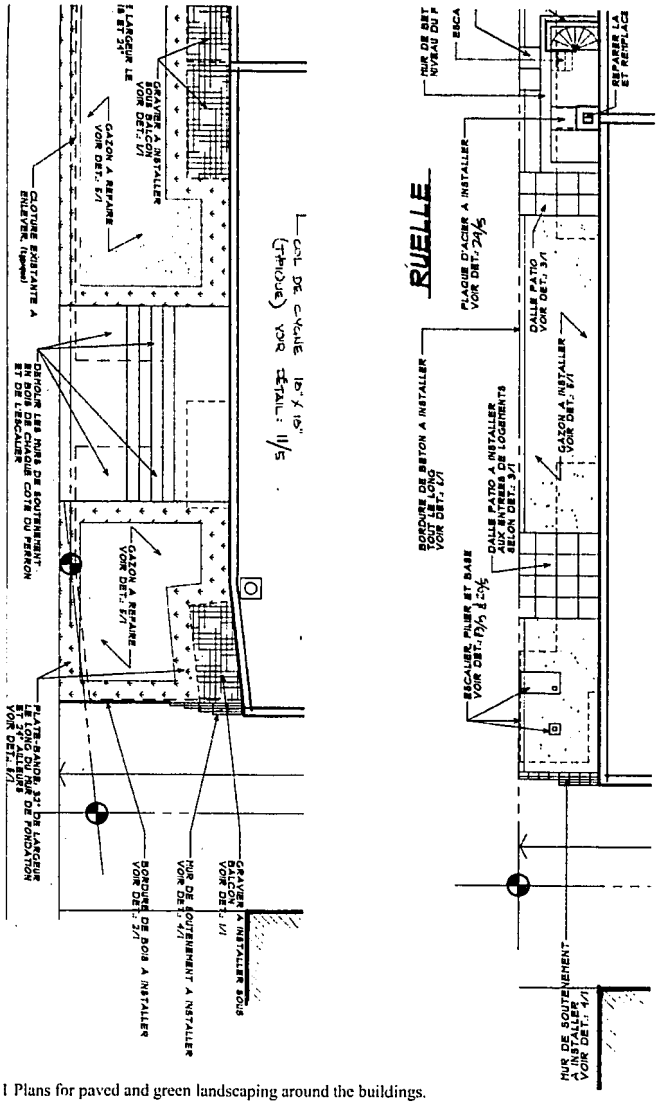


Figure II.4.11 Plans for paved and green landscaping around the buildings.

Source: Boulay, Deschamps, Paradis,Rayside, 7800-7810 Mountain Sights, Cote-des-Neiges Details , Project No. 90131-2, 21January 1991, p. A-4/7.

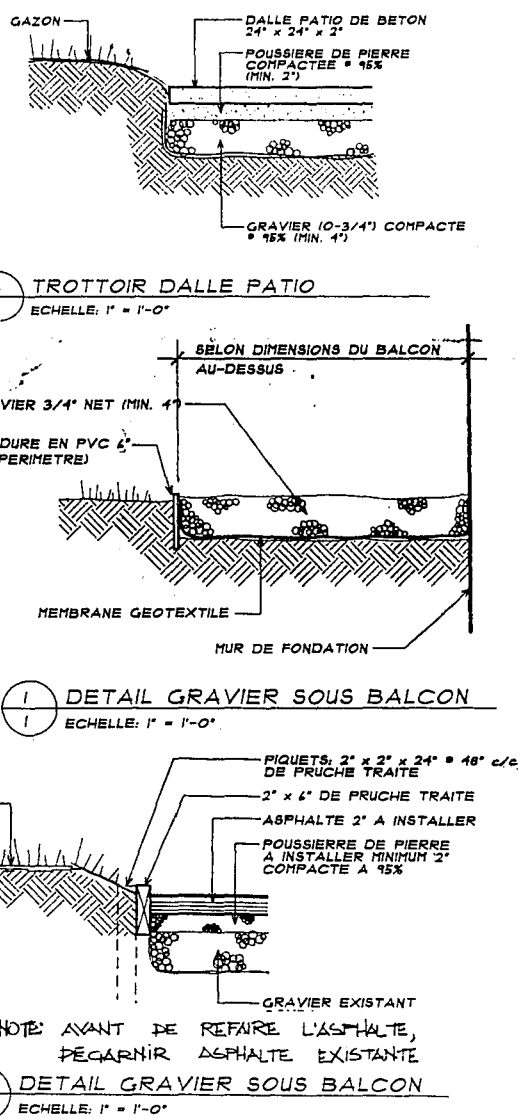


Figure II.4.12a. Retaining wall for landscaping in front and behind the buildings

Boulay, Deschamps, Paradis,Rayside, 7800-7810 Mountain Sights, Cote-des-Neiges Details , Project No. 90131-2, 21January 1991, p. A-4/7

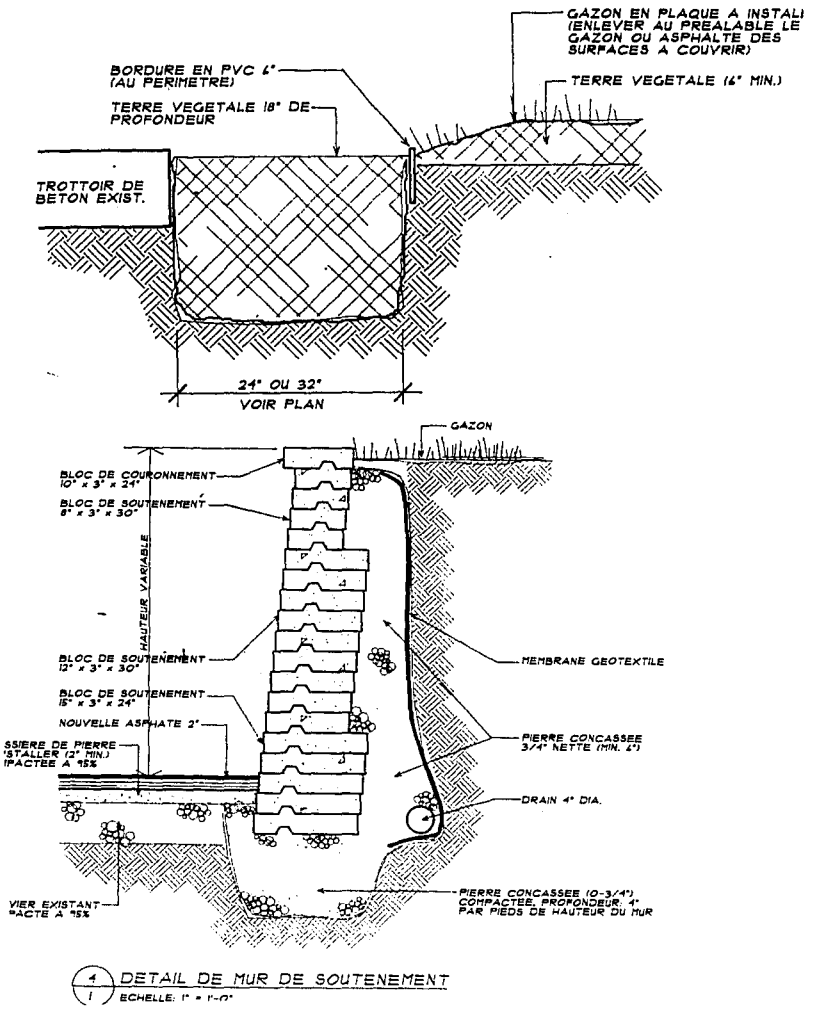


Figure II.4.12b Retaining walls were added to provide- landscaping

Boulay, Deschamps, Paradis,Rayside, 7800-7810 Mountain Sights, Cote-des-Neiges Details , Project No. 90131-2, 21January 1991, p. A-4/7

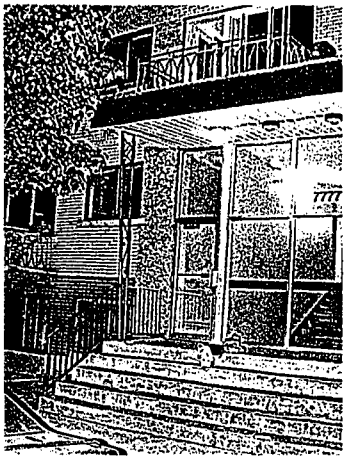


Figure II.4.13 Entrance steps and awning.
Photo by author, May 1999

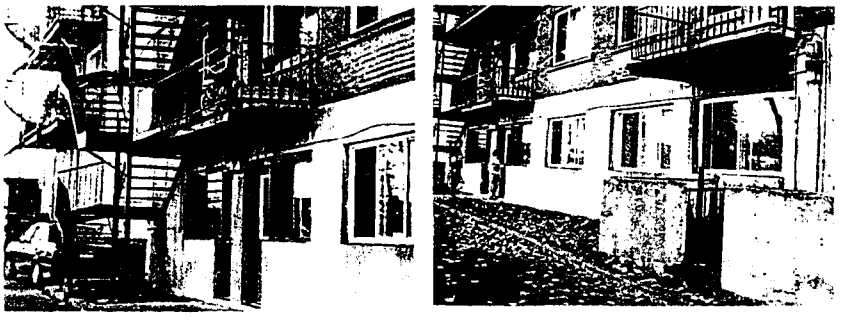
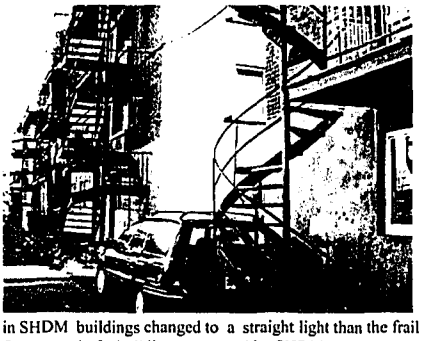


Figure: II.4.14 External access to ground floor apartments after renovations in 1991.
Photos by author, June 1998



Rear stairs in SHDM buildings changed to a straight light than the frail circular stairs that can be seen in the fore ground of a building not owned by SHDM

Photo by Author, June 1998

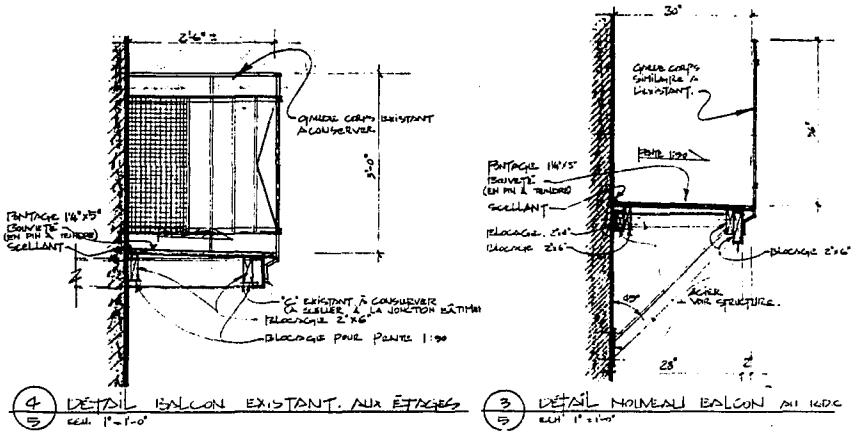
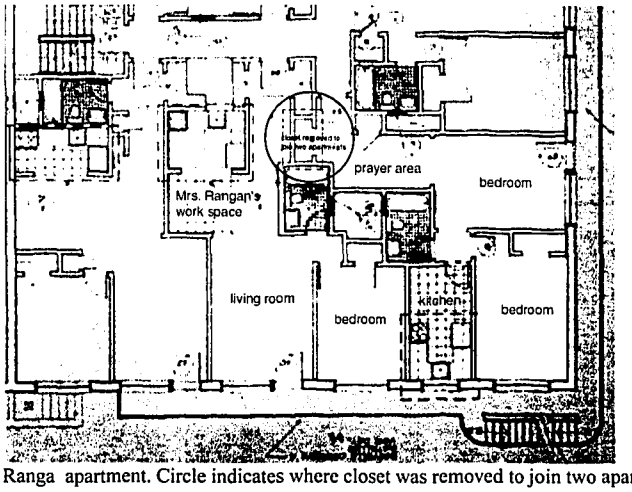


Figure II.4.16 Details of existing and new side balconies- additional supports added to be and look more sturdy
Source: Boulay, Deschamps, Paradis,Rayside, 7800-7810 Mountain Sights, Cote-des-Neiges
Details , Project No. 90131-2, 21January 1991, p. A-6/7



Plan of the Ranga apartment. Circle indicates where closet was removed to join two apartments.

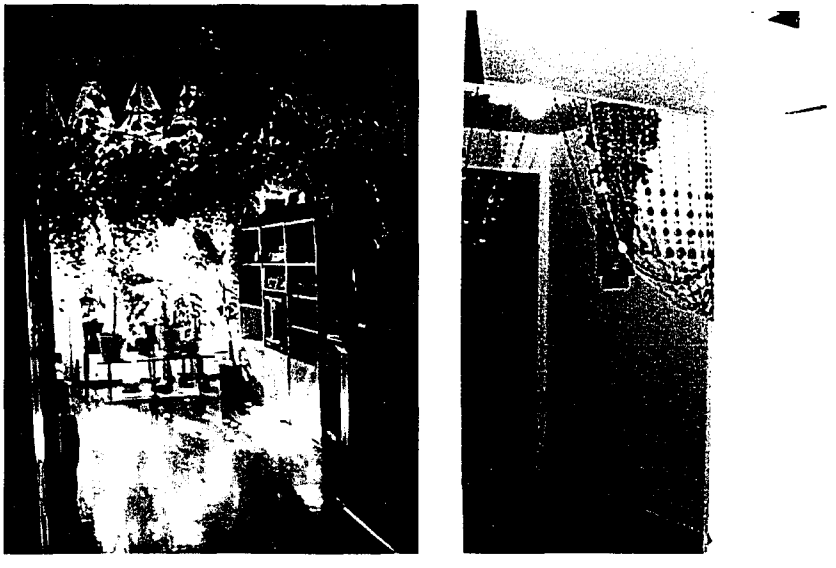


Figure II.4.17 Living room in the Ranga Apartment. Decorated and personalized with plants and bead curtains
Photo by Author, 1998

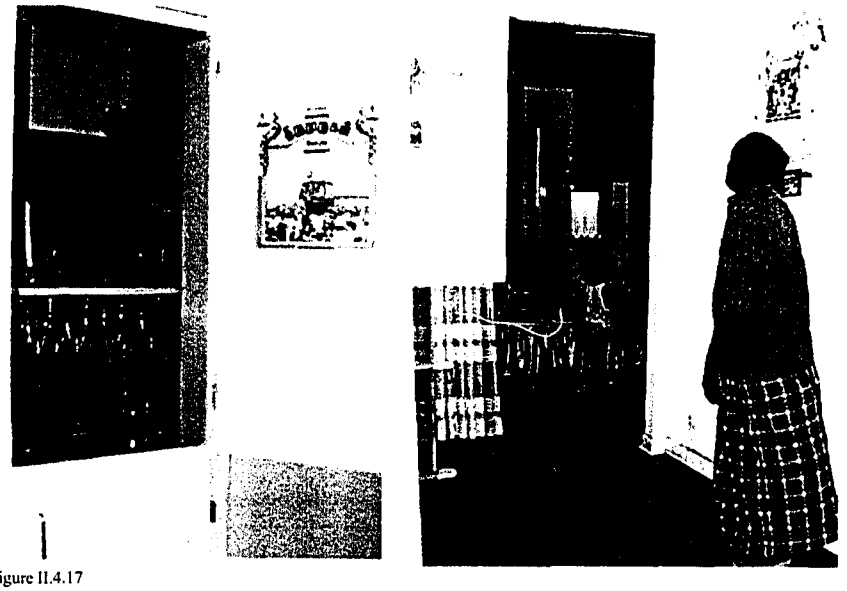


Figure II.4.17

The extra corridor after breaking down the partitioning closet in the Ranga apartment is used as a prayer space. The small closet is used as a *'pooja sthal'* to keep idols of gods.
Photo by Author, 1998

Figure II.4.18 (Included in text) Four basic zones of Housing

Figure II.4.19 (Included in text) Additional zones in Women's Emergency housing

Figure II.4.20 (Included in text) Essential zones for women in Mainstream housing

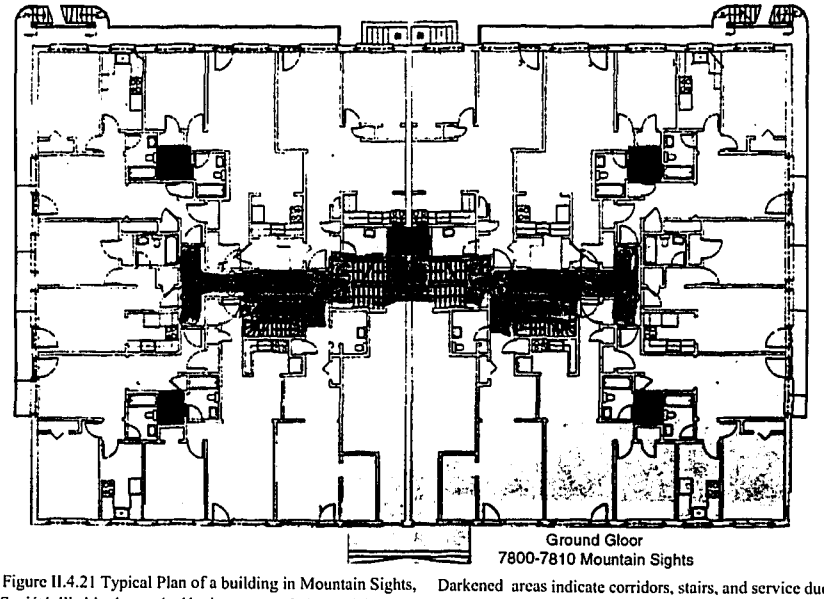


Figure II.4.21 Typical Plan of a building in Mountain Sights, Darkened areas indicate corridors, stairs, and service ducts
Société d'habitation et de développement de Montréal.

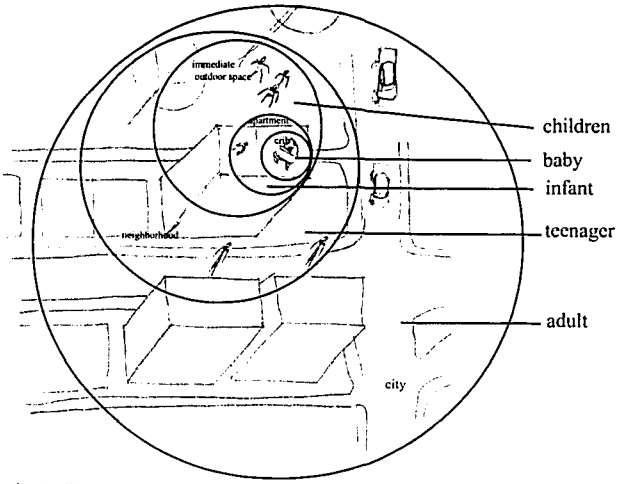
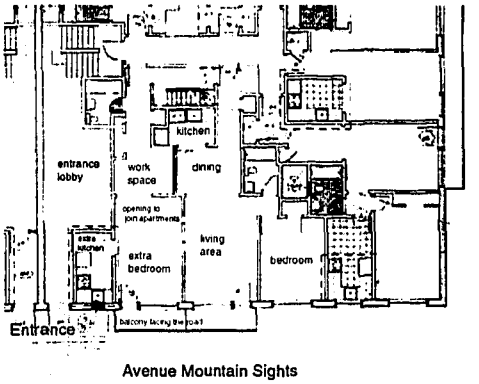


Figure II.4.22 Concept of Action Radius applied on the site plan of Mountian Sights
Sketch by author. 'Action Radius' concept, Steen Eiler Rasmussen, "Neighborhood Planning," The Town Planning Review N.p, 1956-57. P.27.

Figure II.4.23 (Included in text) Sudha's workspace. Photo by author, June 1998.
Figure II.4.24 (Included in text) Mrs. Ranga's Workspace. Photo by author, June 1998.
Figure II.4.25 (Included in text) Perception of density. Photo by author, June 1998.

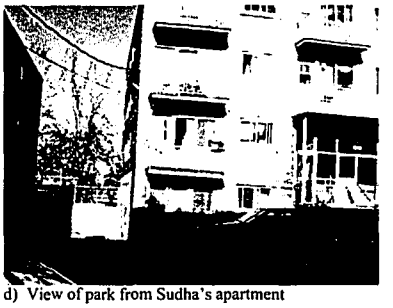
a) Circle shows location of Sudha's Apartment above basement. The apartment faces the road, with a wide balcony as the transition.



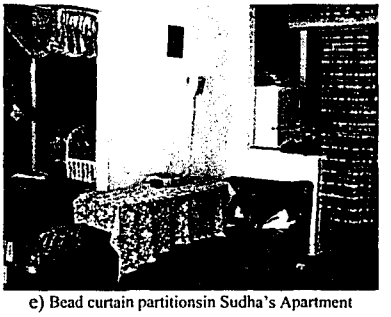
Avenue Mountain Sights

b) Sudha's Apartment Plan

c) Opening in the wall to combine two apartments



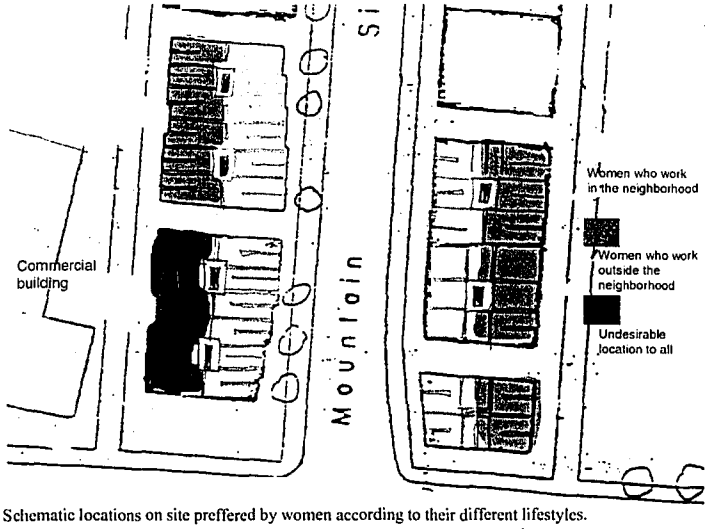
d) View of park from Sudha's apartment



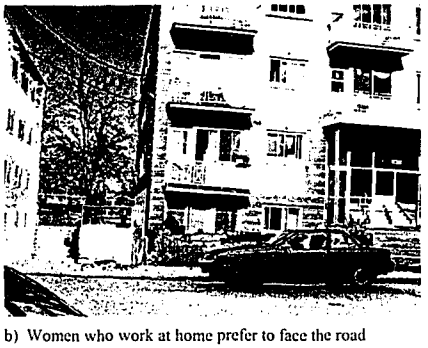
e) Bead curtain partitionsin Sudha's Apartment

Figure II.4.26 Sudha's Apartment. Plan and Photographs.
Photos by author, 1998

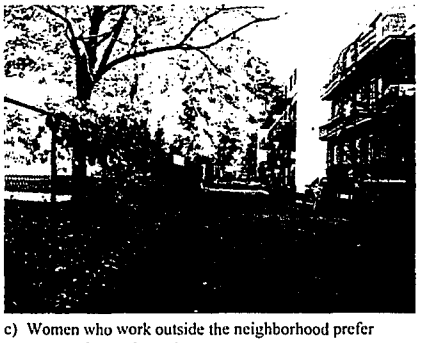
Figure II.4.27 (Included in text) Activity zones overlap. Sketch by author.
Figure II.4.28 (Included in text) Public corridors in the building. Photo by author, June 1998.
Figure II.4.29 (Included in text) An overcrowded apartment. Photo by author, June 1998.



a) Schematic locations on site preffered by women according to their different lifestyles.

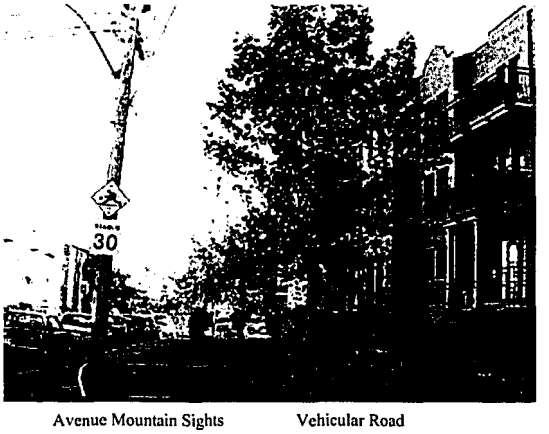


b) Women who work at home prefer to face the road



c) Women who work outside the neighborhood prefer apartments facing the park

Figure II.4.30 Locations preferred by different women. sketch and photos by author.



Avenue Mountain Sights Vehicular Road

Pedestrian Street Facing Park De la Savanne

Figure II. 4.31 Vehicular and Pedestrian Thoroughfares in Mountain Sights.
Photo by author, June 1998.

Figure II.4.32 (Included in text) Park de la Savanne. Photo by author, June 1998.

Figure II.4.33 (Included in text) Comparison of the front and side balconies. Photo by author, June 1998.

a) Community Hall in basement along the pavement

b) Flowerbeds and ramp access to community hall

Figure II.4.34 Community hall in Mountain Sights.
Photo by Author, 1998

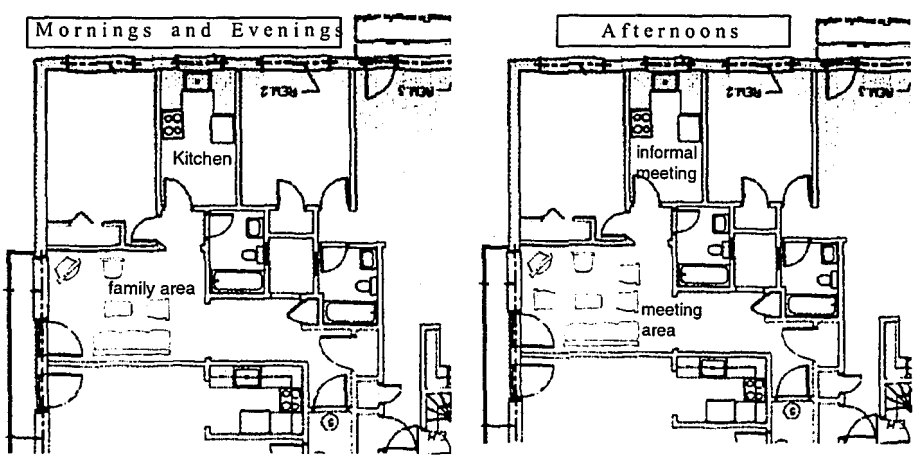
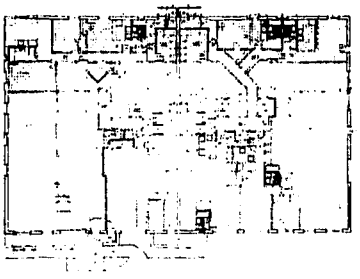
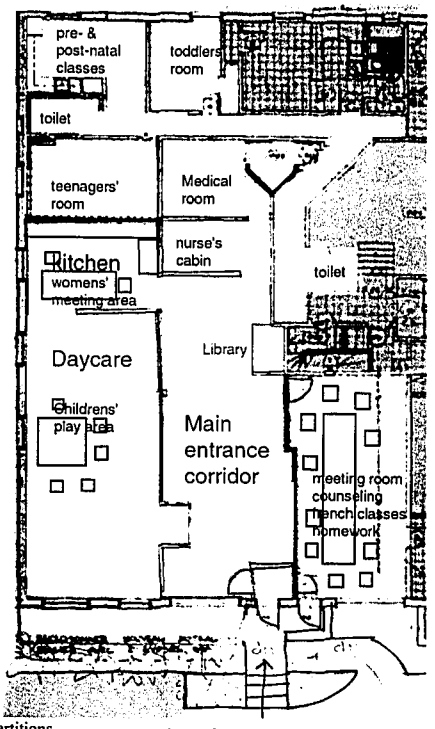


Figure II.4.35 Temporal comparison of the use of their home by women
sketch by author.



Key Plan of Community Hall in
the basement of 7800 Mountain Sights

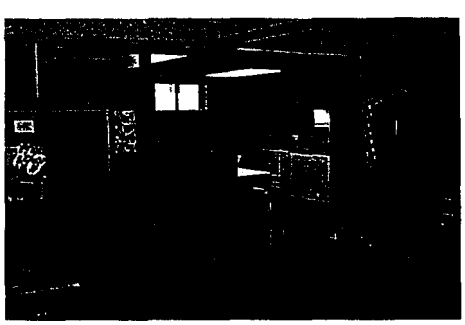


Plan of community hall

Entrance Space. Childrens' paintings decorate half partitions

Figure II.4.36 Plan and entrance space in the community hall.
Sketch and Photo by author.

Figure II.4.37 Meeting Room in the community hall.
Photo by author,November 1998



a) Kitchen Space seen from main corridor

b) Kitchen and Women's meeting area

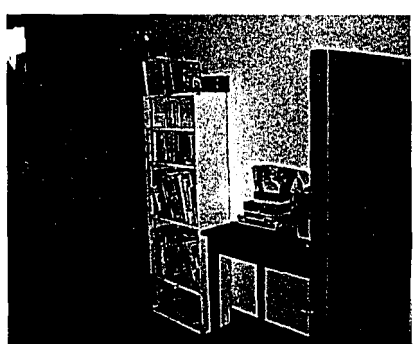
Figure II.4.38 Kitchen area in community hall
Photos by author, November 1998

Childrens' Play area and neighborhood toy library

Childrens'play and study area

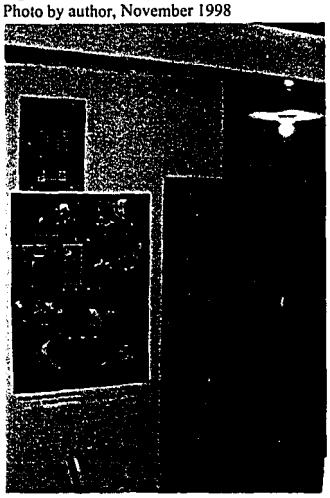
Figure II.4.39 Children's play space in community hall
Photos by author, November 1998

a) Teenagers' room



b) Neighborhood library

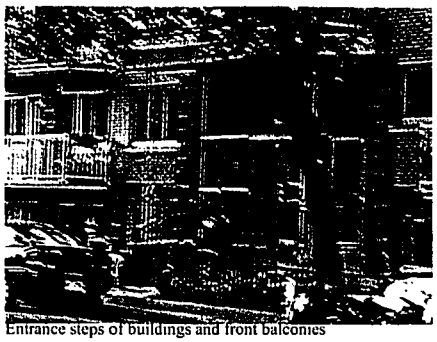
Figure II.4.40 Teenagers' room and other facilities in community hall
Photo by author, November 1998



Pre and post Natal Exercise room

Denis Lublon shows off a spice chart made by a women

Figure II.4.41 Personal Space for women in community hall.
Photo by author, November 1998



Entrance steps of buildings and front balconies

Personalized spaces

Balconies as extended living rooms

Chalet in Park De la Savanne

Community garden, Mountain site.

Balconies as extended household space

Figure II.4.42 'Stuff' that women add to the 'Site'.
Photos by author, July 1999.

CONCLUSION

"In reflecting on our past during our anniversary, we hit upon one basic necessity for the future – dialogue."

Municipal Office of Habitation of Montreal (OMHM), "Low-rent Housing Demystified," Press release, Montreal, February 1994.

A report published in 1997 by the Quebec Government stated that "In the past 30 years, housing assistance [had] developed in the context of sustained economic growth."[1] The government's emphasis on community development which coincided with the report, showed that, economic sustainability had evolved not only from a strategy of building anew to renovation of existing buildings, but also from tenant anonymity to recognition of the importance of tenant participation. It showed that the government saw the economic benefits that could result from the social well being of the neighborhoods.

Mountain Sights is an example of neighborhood revitalization in the 1990s. The initiative was born through local community organizations and through the efforts of women in the neighborhood. Women became actively involved in neighborhood matters, because they are most affected by, and thus conscious of the quality of their housing and the services it has to offer. Self interest has been the key motivation in their desire to introduce better services. By empowering women administratively and spatially, this desire can be used to sustain the services, and enrich the lives of other residents.

Housing policies geared towards producing affordable housing in the private sector are increasingly looking at urban renovation and renewal schemes as efficient models to deliver housing to low-income households. The creation of new government subsidized housing having virtually stopped, the housing body of the city of Montreal (OMHM) is currently concentrating solely, at the importance of social renewal through community development in its existing projects. Whether renovations and recycling of neighborhoods are adequate steps in an effort to meet housing demands is a subject for another study. However whether newly constructed or

rehabilitated, neighborhoods need active participation of users to sustain them socially and economically. In this regard the agency of women must be taken in account. Women as community workers and women as residents have increasingly politicized the housing environment, developing channels of demand and co-operation with public and private sectors to better their living conditions. This seems to be a promising model for the social sustainability of low-income neighborhoods, ensuring their livability and economic value.

Women's housing issues have often been discussed in the context of government subsidized, public housing. However very little research has been done on the status and contribution of women in privately owned neighborhoods, which provide the bulk of housing to low-income families and women. Further research into the impact on and of empowered women on the physical and administrative nature of private rental stock is needed, with further analysis on what affects women's empowerment in housing. Government intervention in private housing should continue at the neighborhood level, ensuring basic services and facilities that will provide a forum of co-operation and control for women. Each privately owned low-income neighborhood should have a space that can be used as a platform for dialogue between women, owners and the city.

Such a service center, not only benefits women but holds general significance to all the residents of that low-income housing. This owes to the fact that low-income rental neighborhoods are unlike a traditional neighborhood sociability in which, has been conformed by a homogenous family type and common cultures of entertainment and relaxation as well as similar lifestyles that make co-habitation effortless. Heterogeneous household types, where individual backgrounds are different, characterize low-income rental neighborhoods and the only way of maintaining a sociable environment, and promoting interaction between residents is to cater to their economical and day-to-day needs. Retail shops, co-operatives of facilities for emergencies, day care centers, vocational training centers, and language classes, are basic facilities essential to all households. This necessity would promote interaction between residents, and strengthen the idea of the role of the neighborhood as an important social and spatial link between the household and the society.

[1] Government Action in Housing: Strategies and Plan of Action. Société d'habitation du Quebec. 1997. Pg.1

The thesis attempted to identify the nature of a built form that enables empowerment of women in low-income private housing. While renovating buildings or constructing anew, to create such low-income housing, formal and informal spaces for interaction between women, with better connections of the personal, domestic, and public spaces, must be designed into the housing fabric. By doing so, that housing empowers its most basic users – women, which not only ensures its sustainability, but also provides an essential choice of different spaces and their functions in the neighborhood and its dwellings, and this offers a sense of empowerment to all its residents. One of the critical spaces for interaction that must be incorporated in the design of any private low-income housing is a service center which should be inherently designed in a neighborhood - as a space for orientation and education of the choices available to women, and by extension all other residents. Such an environment superlatively absorbs the diversity of its residents and their different lifestyles precisely because that is what it is made up of. Based on the premise that sustainability of housing can be achieved only when its female residents are empowered, further research on architectural configurations that enable women's empowerment in mainstream housing is needed.

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