

# Orléans EMC

## Neighbours want to slow Bruyère expansion

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BY CHARELLE EVELYN

EMC News - The neighbours of the Saint Louis Residence off Hiawatha Park had another chance to voice their concerns over the proposed expansion last week.

Orléans Coun. Bob Monette hosted a public consultation with representatives from the long-term care facility, which operates under Bruyère Continuing Care, city staff and conservation officials.

The expansion plans come after a study by the United Way revealed gaps in housing and care for seniors.

With second-fastest growing seniors population in Canada, Ottawa is expected to have 22% of its population over the age of 65 by 2031.

"People may be forced to move out of the community if we don't address this," said Daniel Levac, chief financial officer at Bruyère.

The main concern for those who stood up to ask questions was about traffic, especially on St. Louis Dr., which is the only route - through a residential area - to the facility.

One resident, Mary Taylor, said that St. Louis Dr. is more like a laneway and is very busy with pedestrians, children, as well as traffic.

"This is something that needs to be addressed," she said.

Coun. Monette said that he has heard the concerns and is making steps to address them.

One of those steps, met with enthusiastic applause, was the motion being entered to the city's transportation committee on his behalf to extend Orléans Blvd. and make it a private access directly to the site.

"St. Louis was not designed for major traffic for a project like this," Coun. Monette said.

Saint Louis staff said they want to move forward on the project in order to take advantage of the \$5.4 million in stimulus funds available from the federal and provincial governments. In order to do that, they would have to break ground by July.

For some residents in attendance, the speed at which plans were going forward was a little overwhelming, especially as many concerns had yet to be fully addressed.

"Certainly (the extension of Orléans Blvd.) can't happen fast enough for this development," said Ms. Taylor.

Other speakers said that the project should not move forward at all unless all areas are addressed.

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Pamela Eisener, a physician at Bruyère said that she understands that people are upset about the effect the expansion will have on their street.

However, she said that where she takes issue, is with the thought that the discussion should be about more than what's best for the centre's residents - her patients.

"This is about the needs of the people I serve that can't go back home," she said.

"We need this affordable housing."

Coun. Monette said that no one is disputing the fact that the residence is a good idea.

"The residents support the project if it's done properly," he said.