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We'll help find new locale for synagogue: CSL mayor

By Joel Goldenberg The Suburban Jun 21, 2017



Mayor Mitchell Brownstein.

City of Côte St. Luc Photo

Twenty-three Côte St. Luc residents living near the site of a proposed new synagogue on Mackle Road signed a register Thursday calling for a referendum on the necessary rezoning.

Seventeen signatures were needed to prompt a referendum.

But as was made clear at a recent special Côte St. Luc special meeting, there will be no referendum. That means officials of the Fondation Sepharade Kollel Avrechim will have to find a new location.

Mayor Mitchell Brownstein told *The Suburban* that after the register process was complete, he met with the residents and spiritual leader Rabbi Yehouda Benliol.

"I assured everyone that we shall work together as a community to find the congregation a more suitable place for them in our city," the mayor explained. "We are moving quickly to find solutions and all parties are pleased with our proactive approach.

"I expect to be able to announce an excellent alternative shortly. We are a beautiful proud community that shall always find solutions to accommodate each other through consensus building."

Councillor Ruth Kovac, along with Councillor Steve Erdelyi, had previously voted against letting the process go forward to allow a register, as a petition calling for the register clearly indicated enough signatures would be attained to prompt a referendum or the withdrawal of the rezoning bylaw. Kovac has emphasized that she is not against the synagogue, just the location. Several residents were opposed, as was Quartier Cavendish because of potential parking issues.

Other members of council had voted in favour, while Dida Berku has abstained because she is a lawyer in a case, unrelated to the zoning, involving Rabbi Benliol.

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