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HUNDREDS OF OTTAWA RESIDENTS JOIN IN COUNCILLOR MENARD'S PUBLIC MEETING ON THE LANSDOWNE PARK DEAL

Over 200 residents joined an online Zoom public meeting hosted by the office of Capital Ward Councillor Shawn Menard to discuss changes to the Lansdowne Park deal proposed by city staff.

The staff proposal, framed as a response to the pressures brought on by COVID-19, seeks to change key aspects of the Lansdowne Park Agreement, including extending the term of the deal by ten years to 2054.

Capital Ward Councillor Shawn Menard expressed concern about the deal after it was released at the last minute without any input from the public or city councillors, worrying that the deal is a "a short-sighted stop-gap measure created out of panic".

Today, the councillor's office [released a backgrounder on the Lansdowne deal today on the councillor's website](#), the document notes:

There are significant problems with the city report that requires more reflection.

It is very unlikely that OSEG would choose to default, and they have not indicated this. Any decision by OSEG to walk away from its obligations at Lansdowne would represent a default under the Material Agreements that would result in OSEG losing the equity (>\$150 million) that it has invested in the project. That is, and will continue to be, the major deterrent to OSEG withdrawing from Lansdowne.

At tonight's meeting, residents expressed concerns about the deal, pointing to the lack of financial details and questioning what benefit it would actually bring to the city.

"This is the only time the community will be able to come out and discuss this important issue before the FEDCO meeting. That's not good governance; that's not respect for our constituents; that's just not right," argues Councillor Menard.

City management declined to attend the public meeting. The city has not held any public consultations on the issue.

"We had over 200 engaged citizens make time and come out on short notice," he continued, "and city management wouldn't even come out and participate in the discussion or listen to residents' concerns. This is no way to run a city."



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OSEG CEO Mark Goudie joined the beginning of the meeting to speak to OSEG's position, explaining that the pandemic has affected the retail and commercial businesses at Lansdowne, as well as forcing the cancellation of the corporation's large events, including the 2020 CFL season.

June Creelman, a Glebe resident and member of the Community Association, was also invited to speak at the event. Creelman has been involved in the Lansdowne issue from the community side and expressed concerns about the lack of transparency or consultation from the city and OSEG, noting that "it's hard to have a public space where you don't involve the public."

The staff report will be considered by the city's Finance and Economic Development on Thursday. If it is accepted, it will go to city council on November 25 for final approval, without any further public consultation events.