

## Pointe Claire to get new grocery store

### Owner of Familiprix on Lakeshore Rd. to open L'Épicerie du Village in November

Cheryl Cornacchia  
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Pharmacist Roger Simard stands in the future home of L'Épicerie du Village. (JOHN MAHONEY/The Gazette)

The future of Pointe Claire Village looked dim back in the spring when the little grocery store that had been a fixture on the mainstreet for decades closed its doors.

Like other shoppers, Madeleine Allard, an 89-year-old village resident and a patron of the grocery store for the past 60 years, called it "a real loss," saying she wasn't sure where she would get her daily provisions in the future. But this week Allard got good news. Pointe Claire Village pharmacist Roger Simard asked the longtime village resident if she would be available in the fall for a ribbon-cutting ceremony at his new grocery store.

Just two years after opening a Familiprix pharmacy on Lakeshore Rd., Simard is preparing to open L'Épicerie du Village. The 52-year-old pharmacist, originally from Alma, Que., said this week he couldn't help himself from investing further in the historic village he has come to love. The new store will open in November, if not sooner, in the building that formerly housed Les Marchés Traditions. Renovations of the 9,500-squarefoot building are under way.

"The grocery store is really the soul of the village," said Simard.

He said his plan is to duplicate the success he has had with the pharmacy by offering old-fashioned customer service and quality products, many of them calibrated for the 21st century.

The store will offer a butcher shop, cheese counter, charcuterie, fresh fruit and vegetables and standard groceries through Sobeyes Inc. and Aliments Euromarché.

"It's very important we are not perceived as an épicerie fin," he said.

But in addition, he said, the store will have kitchen facilities where meals will be cooked daily, frozen and then vacuumed-packed and sold under the L'Épicerie du Village label in three lines - gourmet, regular and special meals for people with diabetes, hypertension or other medical conditions.

In the future, he said, there will also be herb and vegetable gardens on the store's expansive flat roof - maybe, an initiative with a local community group.

Last spring, when Les Marchés Traditions closed, the city of Pointe Claire was criticized for not doing more to attract new business and services to the village. But this week all that was forgotten.

Heritage advocate Claude Arsenault said he is thrilled by Simard's plan for the store and, more generally, his vision for the village.

"There has been a general store in the village dating back to 1753. I am happy we will have one again."

Equally pleased was Nedie El Khouri, a Pointe Claire Village art gallery owner and president of the Pointe Claire Village Association, a newly formed group working to revitalize the village. She said the grocery store is a vital service that helps attract people to the village.

As for Simard, come November, he will pack groceries four hours a week in the new store and, he said, so will Jacques Déry .

Until 2004, Déry owned the IGA franchise that was located in the building Simard is now leasing. Déry's father, Roland Déry, bought the building in 1948 from Émile Legault, who had started a grocery store in that location back in the 1930s as a house with chicken coop out back.

#### **MURAL WILL CELEBRATE POINTE CLAIRE'S HISTORY**

At the moment, it's just an old stucco wall overlooking a grocery store parking lot.

The plan is to turn it into a larger-than-life mural celebrating Pointe Claire's 300 years of history.

Among the 12 scenes to be depicted:

Pointe Claire's days as a fortified town; the fires of 1881 and 1900 that destroyed much of Pointe Claire Village; the 1910 aviation show that put Pointe Claire on the map; and quarrying of stone for the Victoria Bridge from what is today the Beaconsfield Golf Course.

"It's going to be historic," said Roger Simard.

"People are going to learn a lot."

He said he contacted Murale Création, the Quebec City company behind that city's historic outdoor murals, including the one in Place Royale. And he has also asked the city of Pointe Claire for the derogation required before any work could begin on the 60-metre long wall.

If all goes as hoped, he said, the mural would be ready to be unveiled in 2013, the 300th anniversary of the founding of Pointe Claire.

#### **COMMENTS**

##### **[I can't wait!](#)**

As a regular customer of the old grocery store, this is great news.

The convenience of this location was unmatched not to mention the value it adds to other merchants in the area.

I've been going to the Metro on St. Charles since the closing for last minute items, but it's not the same and can't wait to go back. Hasn't been the same without it.

## Great News

This is wonderful news. Don't forget to include gluten free products in your selections please!

## I lived in Pointe Claire

I lived in Pointe Claire until I was 18 years old. We had a boat at the Pointe Claire Yacht Club therefore we were in the village often. I am SO HAPPY to see the new grocery store together with murals being build in the village. During the 1960s and early 70s the village was pretty busy and there was a very friendly atmosphere on Lakeshore Road.

I wish the owner ALL THE SUCCESS in the future. If I'm in Pointe Claire in the future I will revisit the village which will bring back great memories of the past.

For the past 40+ years I have lived in the Maritimes then onto Alberta but I will always remember growing up in Pointe Claire and being part of the village life every summer when we virtually lived at the PCYC (yacht club) !

## Great news!

Great news for the Village. I live in the northern part of Pointe-Claire and when I have the occasion, I enjoy visitng the village.

It sounds as if the entrepreneurs in the village are very much eager to keep it alive.

This will be a boost for them and the local residents.

## Fantastic news! Simard

Fantastic news! Simard sounds like just the kind of businessperson the area needs.