



St. Margaret's Foundation  
Att: Larry Stansberry, Director  
3525 Bienville St  
New Orleans, LA 70119

and

The St. Margaret's Daughters  
Att: Larry Stansberry, President  
3525 Bienville St  
New Orleans, LA 70119

Re: The Condition of your property at 301 North Norman C. Francis Parkway

Dear Mr. Stansberry:

In the 8th and 9th Century, the Iona Abbey off the West Coast of Scotland was regularly pillaged and razed by marauding Vikings. It was restored in the Eleventh Century at the instigation of St. Margaret of Scotland, your corporations' namesake. Please let us know if this is the same time line that you are following for restoration or redevelopment of the Mercy Hospital/Lindy Boggs Medical Center. If such is indeed the case, I hope that the Abby's owners were better able to maintain the site of the ruins than has St. Margaret's corporations' done here..

A case in point - Accompanying this is a picture of an overturned trash can with scattered trash along the Norman Francis side of the Mercy Facility that was published in Mid City Messenger on March 11, 2021. At the MCNO meeting of April 12, 2021, St. Margaret's spokesperson, attorney Heather McGowan was asked about that can and it's trash she maintained that someone "had gone out and dumped more trash". She also promised at our April 12th meeting that "Something will be done" about this most basic item. St. Margaret's Foundation must be the victim of a nefarious conspiracy as we are accompanying this letter with another picture, taken April 28th, of what appears to be the same can and the same trash two weeks after Ms. McGowan's promise.

Regarding the ongoing situation - The regular accumulation of trash at the site is not the only maintenance problem. The perimeter fence is open at numerous places. People who are probably not in St. Margaret's employ can be seen going in and out of the property daily as the windows and entrances are not properly sealed. The building is a canvas for local graffiti artists from ground to roof and has recently been used for Asian American and Pacific Islander hate messaging, which is not welcomed by your Mid-City neighbors. The flooded basement/parking area is a mosquito breeding ground and health hazard. Pending the return of the property to active use, this property must be properly secured and the grounds kept clean. If some kind of on-site surveillance or security is needed to minimize trespassers and vandals then please provide it. Saying that this is unaffordable as we have been told by your representatives is to say that you cannot afford to own the property. The continued status of disrepair and lack of regard to the security of the site is an open invitation to nefarious actors that are a constant drain on tax-payer funded public safety, sanitation, infrastructure maintenance and community volunteer efforts in order to only temporarily abate the illegal dumping, criminal trespassing, vandalism, arson, rodent harborage and infectious insect breeding caused by neglect. The drain on many of these publicly funded resources are even further exacerbated by the tax-exempt status of the property.



The long-term lack of basic property maintenance is unfortunately mirrored in the lack of progress in its development. Yes, the present condition was caused by the events of August 29, 2005, and yes we understand that you are not responsible for the first five years of this problem. The St. Margaret's Daughter's acquired the property in April of 2010. However, for the last ten years, our problem, and the problem of all Mid-City residents, has been in your hands, at your option. Whatever efforts have been made towards its resolution have fallen far short of successful.

According to the Mid City Messenger, it took four years under your ownership before hazard abatement would begin. In May of 2015 the Messenger quoted then City Councilperson Susan Guidry as saying "I've told them that it wasn't acceptable quite some while back". The same article quotes the corporations' spokesman, Michael Gilman, as attributing the lack of progress to a pending lawsuit between St. Margaret's and MCC Group who had been working with you on the project. He stated "As soon as that [the litigation] is resolved, we'll be able to publicly discuss plans for the site's redevelopment." Although since 2015 St. Margaret's has had spokespersons at several of our monthly meetings, to date we are not aware of any public discussion of concrete plans for development. Apparently, this has been "stayed", as has the lawsuit in Orleans Civil District Court.

You must take whatever steps are necessary to develop this property and to properly maintain it until it is back in commerce. We have residents who have fond memories of Mercy Hospital. They were born there. Parents and grandparents worked there. Ambassador & Congresswoman Lindy Boggs was a great New Orleans dignitary and her name on the building as it stands now does her an injustice. Please follow St. Margaret's example and restore what has become a neighborhood ruin. Do not make us, like the residents of the Isle of Iona, wait 300 years for her intervention.

Sincerely,

The Mid-City Neighborhood Organization Board of Directors

Chris Blum  
Board President, Mid-City Neighborhood Organization  
president@mcno.org  
985-869-3055