



Mater Dolorosa Passionist Retreat Center

The Passionists of Holy Cross Province 700 N. Sunnyside Avenue, Sierra Madre, CA 91024-1023
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April 15, 2014

Property Communications

Dear Friends,

The Passionists of Holy Cross Province, headquartered in Park Ridge, Illinois and the owners of the property on which the Mater Dolorosa Passionist Retreat Center stands, has confirmed a final decision to develop an unused portion of this property, which they have owned since 1924.

The Passionists have our full support in this decision. This property is below the retreat house and is not used nor needed for our mission. As we have previously communicated, this sale has been in the planning stages since 2007.

The Passionists are selling the land to raise monies for the retirement and care of their aging priests and brothers and for the continuation of its global mission and their ongoing work. All monies raised from the sale of this parcel will go back to the Provincial Headquarters for this purpose.

We are now in the feasibility stage of our planning process. Based on the information gathered over the past seven years, the development will be in keeping with our neighborhood of single-family homes. This direction is important to the city, to our neighbors and to the many who come to Mater Dolorosa for the nearness to God, our quiet setting and Stations of the Cross provide.

As this property sits at our entrance and is around our neighbors, we have been conducting a thoughtful process to identify a firm that represents our values. Openness, listening and sensitivity to the environment are amongst the issues we have looked for compatibility.

We have looked at a range of approaches to divesting of the property from an outright sale as is to us developing the property on our own. We do not have the expertise to thoughtfully develop the property and feel it is important that we participate in offering our thoughts throughout the development process. Consequently, we plan on entering into an agreement that in many ways acts as a joint venture arrangement with the ability for us to protect the serene environment through input and approvals throughout the development process.

Our due diligence process has included cordial meetings and ongoing phone conversations between a number of concerned residents, including Matthew Bryant, a Mater Dolorosa neighbor, Council Member-elect Denise Delmar and Leslee Hinton, a General Plan Update

Steering Committee member. We have also received input from members of the Sierra Madre business community and many other long-time residents of our community.

While we will never be able to make everyone happy about this land being sold, we have found that once people learn the details and understand that any development will be in keeping with city regulations and will involve a very public process, they are more understanding.

The Passionists and Mater Dolorosa are in the final steps of selecting a developer to implement the decision in a manner that is sensitive and responsible to both the retreat center and its neighbors.

We commit to:

- speak with transparency and openness;
- keep the community informed of development milestones and provide updates on our website;
- support the developer in their intent to implement a design compatible and complementary to our retreat mission, our neighbors and surrounding land uses;
- work with the developer to provide information in a timely and detailed manner to representatives of the City of Sierra Madre as we move through the development process.

Once a purchase and sales agreement is executed, I will formally introduce the developer we will be working with.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Michael Higgins, C.P." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Fr. Michael Higgins, C.P.

Retreat Director