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### **Update: Misericordia's Campus Expansion Plans: 1925 W. Thome**

Thursday night's Chicago Tonight program on WTTW included a segment about the proposed demolition of the building at 1925 West Thome Avenue. The building is on a three-acre property, purchased by Misericordia in 2018, immediately south of our campus. As you know, our plan for the site is to build much needed additional housing. The television coverage was initiated as part of a last minute effort by a local preservation group to save the building. The coverage characterized the building as being historic, a term typically reserved for structures bearing landmark designation or those deemed worthy of such designation. The fact is that the City of Chicago authorities charged with making such determinations, after a thorough analysis made within the mandatory 90-day review period required by the city's Landmarks Ordinance, concluded that the building does not meet the city's standards for such recognition.

The coverage also focused on the fact that this building was the work of renowned architect George Maher, heralded for his Prairie School style single family homes. In fact, the building on Thome Avenue which was designed to reflect Tudor architecture, was ultimately not built to that standard and has been so altered over time that significant elements of its original design and use are virtually nonexistent. Notably, a recent and very detailed 180-page thesis on Maher's work, which contains a comprehensive list of his most acclaimed buildings, makes no mention of this structure.

Misericordia voluntarily agreed to delay demolition of the building for an additional 90 days beyond the expiration of the mandated city review period. That courtesy was extended to preservation groups so as to afford them the opportunity to find a user for the building willing to remove it to another site, where it might be used for other purposes. The WTTW segment gave credence to the preservation group's unsubstantiated claim that relocation and repurposing of the building can be accomplished for \$1.5 million dollars. No mention was made of the fact that experts hired by another statewide preservation group set the cost of removal/relocation at in excess of over \$9 million. In addition, since agreeing to a 90-day extension in early March, we still have had no written offers/proposals from any group or entity.

With thousands of people waiting for services in Illinois, we do not feel we are in a position to wait any longer. There comes a time in which all parties must come to the realization that there are no viable options to move the building to another location. Since we purchased the property, we have tried to be a good neighbor that is sensitive to the needs of others. It is time for us to begin construction to help those men and women, as well as their families, who have been waiting patiently to become a part of the Misericordia community.

*Sharing life with children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities through a full continuum of care.*

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