



Property of the Month: Endless possibilities for buyer of 18-acre former Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph campus

February 12, 2013 - Upstate New York

For years, the campus of the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph (FSSJ) has changed young women's lives. It has housed them, educated them, and trained them for service within our communities. Nearly nine decades later, the campus stands ready for a new mission.

The property at 5286 South Park Ave. was vacated two years ago when the sisters downsized to a smaller facility. "With more than 18 acres of dividable space, the location boasts endless possibilities for an appropriate buyer," said Vito Picone, director of business development for McGuire Development Co., which has been retained to market the property.

Most recently, the price has been reduced by \$1 million in an effort to generate interest and help a new purchaser redevelop the beautiful parcel. "The property has always been developed with the philosophy of serving others," said sister Sharon Goodremote, FSSJ, leadership team councilor. "It is our goal that this campus continue to serve the needs of the people in our area."

A highlight to the site is a 57,966 s/f health care facility that was constructed in 1992 to meet the needs of aging sisters. The 40-bed structure is ideal for acute care or long-term care operations, as well as, senior or low-income housing. It is outfitted with all of the standard amenities for a health care facility along with a prayer room, podiatry section, and a garage with bays for an ambulance, a van, and three cars. The structure meets New York state health code requirements and is in move-in condition.

The property also features the 116,630 s/f convent constructed in 1928 that served as the motherhouse to more than 200 women at its peak in the late 1950s. As the numbers increased, the facility was expanded with additional residential wings, a new chapel, a small infirmary and three attached garages with 13 bays. A smaller stand-alone 5,364 s/f house with an attached three-car garage and car port, rounds out the dwelling structures on the campus. A grotto, chapel and greenhouse are also on-site. The numerous acres have allowed the sisters to enjoy vegetable gardens and fruit orchards. There are many areas for quiet reflection.

The campus is accessible via the NYS Thruway which is minutes away. The campus is also flanked by two notable educational institutions, both founded by the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph. Immaculata Academy began in the original 116,000 s/f building and was originally founded as a high school for young women who were interested in becoming sisters. Later, it was open to all girls who desired a Catholic education. Over time, enrollment expanded, and the school built a new facility, where it currently operates adjacent to the campus. Likewise, Hilbert College was founded on campus by the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph.

With such a colorful history in education, the property would lend itself to an educational institution or not-for-profit organization looking to expand within a southtowns location. Additional amenities such as the McKinley Mall, Erie County Fairgrounds, Ralph Wilson Stadium, and densely occupied

retail and entertainment districts make this property "one of a kind."

In addition to serving as the broker, McGuire's in-house team can also be of assistance to the purchaser for redevelopment and re-visioning of the structures, as well as coordinating the sale or lease of their current property, if appropriate.

New York Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540