



## PHILIPPINE CULTURAL AND CIVIC CENTER FOUNDATION, INC.

### Proposal to Occupy Building within Zablocki Park

#### Summary

The Philippine Cultural and Civic Center Foundation (PCCCF) is considering a variety of relocation options to house its administrative, civic and cultural programming operations, including its Free Medical Clinic. The Zablocki Pavilion located at Zablocki Park (3717 W. Howard Avenue) would meet the needs of the PCCCF, and we believe the PCCCF's presence in this building would greatly enhance the park and surrounding neighborhood.

The PCCCF exists to construct or renovate a building to house activities of the Milwaukee Filipino community, in order to bring to the American consciousness the richness of Filipino culture, as well as the significance of Filipino contributions to the United States. In addition, the PCCCF aims to provide services of a civic nature, which would otherwise be difficult or too costly for some people to obtain.

The PCCCF's cultural programs include Filipino (Tagalog) language classes, services for new immigrants, social events that feature traditional foods and folk dances, martial arts classes, and art exhibits. The PCCCF also maintains a collection of Philippine artifacts, media, information, and fine arts. Filipino cooking demonstrations, traditional clothing exhibits, and seasonal celebrations have all been shared with the Milwaukee community. The PCCCF has helped sponsor Philippine artists, storytellers and authors, as well as music and dance concerts. At the same time, the PCCCF has organized numerous activities for young people, including chess matches, dances, martial arts seminars, and basketball and table tennis tournaments. The PCCCF Free Medical Clinic recently marked its tenth year of providing free basic health care to the Milwaukee community.

Zablocki Park lies in a desirable, centrally located area for the activities of the PCCCF. Its accessibility via Milwaukee County Transit bus service is especially important when considering the needs of the population served by the PCCCF Free Medical Clinic.

#### History and Cultural Programs of the PCCCF

The PCCCF was formed in 1995. The organization was established to build a civic center to benefit members of the community, which will be a resource center for elders, educational tool for children, and a cultural center to educate about and increase awareness of the Filipino-American culture. Cultural programming began at that time, and continues to the present. In 1998, the PCCCF began renting rooms to serve as its

Philippine Center. The PCCCF was incorporated as a non-profit organization in 2000. In October of 2000, the PCCCF Free Medical Clinic, was opened at a separate location. The Clinic presently operates two Saturdays a month at 535 N. 27<sup>th</sup> Street, Milwaukee, WI 53208, at the private office of its Medical Director, Dr. Violeta Singson.

The PCCCF has accomplished a great deal and helped organize many cultural events. In 1997, PCCCF Executive Director Gerry Ramos, was requested by Ms. Mary Korenic of the Milwaukee Public Museum (MPM) Education Department Head to help prepare the template for the MPM "Annual Celebrations of Culture". Mr. Ramos, representing the PCCCF and the Filipino American Association of WI, became active with the Wisconsin Association of Asian Americans and helped ensure the participation and inclusion of Filipino Organizations, performers and cultural exhibits at the Asian Moon Festival.

Along with the above programs, in 2004, an "American Idol" viewing party was held at the Philippine Center to celebrate the achievements of 2 young Filipinas who had made it to that program's final round. The Philippine Martial Arts National Tournament was held at Alverno College in February 2006, and a showing of the Cannes Film Festival feature "Panaghoy sa Suba" (The Call of the River) was held at Cardinal Stritch University in October 2006. Concerts were held in September 2007 that featured professional Filipino-American musicians.

In 2008, the Philippine Center assisted FEMA in distributing flyers, leaflets and other information to the Filipino American Community, helping to relay info on the available flood assistance programs of FEMA and SBA to victims of the June 2008 floods that hit Wisconsin and the greater Milwaukee area. The Center also sponsored two "Consulate on Wheels" events in November 2008 and July 2009. About 110 were served by the Philippine Consulate here in Milwaukee. Machine readable passports, dual citizenship, authentication of documents, birth and marriage registrations were processed.

An exhibit of Filipino arts and artifacts was featured at the Milwaukee Public Museum in October 2009 and again in 2010. Also that month, a concert featuring "Flipping Coins," a band of Filipino-Americans, was held at the Tripoli Shrine Center in Milwaukee to raise funds for victims of the hurricanes in the Philippines, the PCCCF Building Fund, and a Filipino-American cancer patient. This past summer, the PCCCF along with volunteers from Marquette University--set up a computer lab and classes to teach computer basics to elders. These classes continue.

The Philippine Center is used by numerous Filipino-American Organizations for activities, meetings, choir, dance practices, and preparations for the annual Holiday Folk Fair in November and when invited to participate in Milwaukee County activities at the Mitchell Park Domes and Boerner Botanical Gardens.

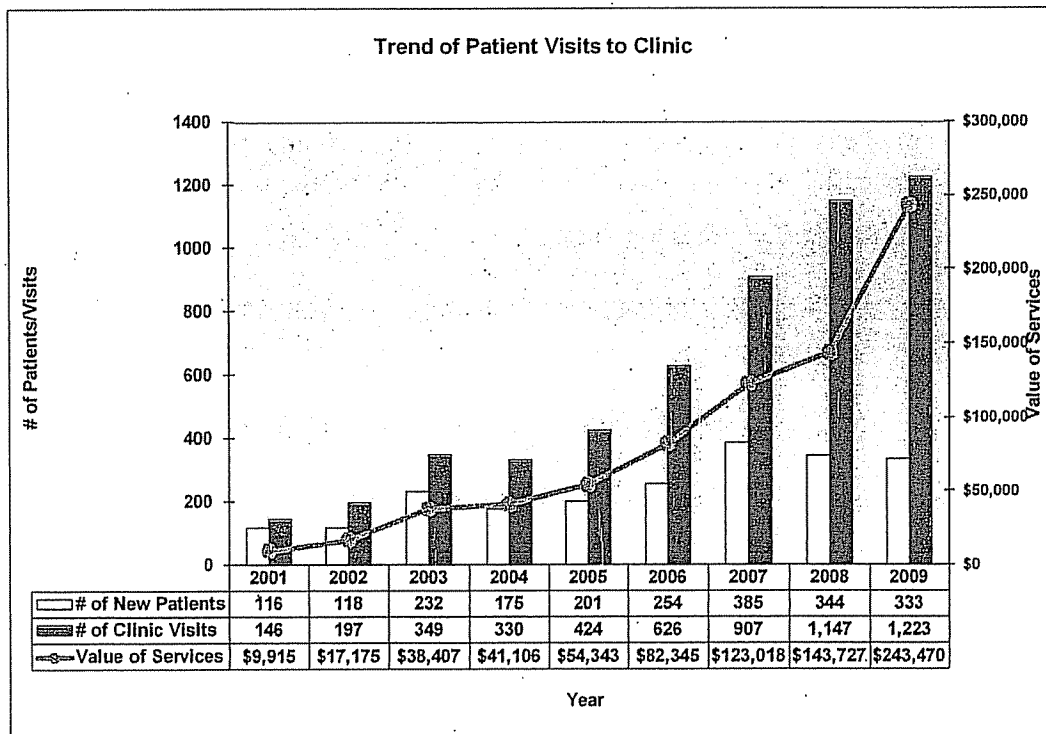
Other non-profit organizations such as the Milwaukee Mosaic Partnership Programs, Wisconsin Organization for Asian Americans, Asian Moon Festival have also held meetings at the Philippine Center.

A number of students and children's groups have availed of the PCCCF's resources and reference materials such as the literatures on Philippine culture and Filipiniana costume collections for school projects .

The PCCCF continues to assist in the process of integration for American families with adopted Philippine children by involving the families with activities that gave better understanding of their child's ethnic heritage. Americans married to Filipinos are provided with the means and support to help in their social and cultural adjustment. Providing Filipino language lessons also help their communication skills.

### The PCCCF Free Medical Clinic

In addition to its cultural and educational activities, the PCCCF donates time and services to those in need. The PCCCF operates a Free Medical Clinic two Saturday mornings a month, offering basic medical treatment, exams, screenings, and routine immunizations for those who would otherwise not be able to afford care, the un-insured and underinsured. The health care given at the clinic is provided by Filipino and other doctors and medical professionals as a service to the community *absolutely free*. More than 5,000 visits have been made to the PCCCF Free Medical Clinic since its doors opened 10 years ago. Most patients are from the Milwaukee and Waukesha area, but patients from other parts of Wisconsin and as far away as Tanzania have also been served.



According to Clinic records, 18% of patients are under the age of 18. 8% of

patients seen are over 65. 40% live in low-income Milwaukee neighborhoods. Between 2008 and 2009, there was a 10% increase in the number of patients seen, and an 8% increase in the number of visits. In 2009, 493 new patients were treated.

The PCCCF Clinic provides the following services, completely free of charge:

- Well baby and child exams, including immunizations
- Day care/school/sports/camp physicals
- Pre-employment exams, including tuberculosis skin testing
- General exams for adults
- Blood pressure checks
- Screenings for cholesterol, blood glucose, anemia, and strep
- Vision and hearing screenings
- Follow up lab tests, bone density screenings and mammograms
- Flu shots
- Free medications
- Medically necessary dental care

The PCCCF Clinic does NOT provide:

- Prenatal or OB/GYN care
- Psychiatric counseling
- Immigration physicals
- Treatment of work-related injuries
- Prescription of controlled medications and "lifestyle" drugs, such as Viagra or Propecia
- Weight loss programs
- Workman's compensation exams

The ongoing financial requirements of the Clinic include rent for space, the cost of medications and tests, and blood and urine screenings. Because the cost of health care and the number of uninsured continues to rise while the economy worsens, this program is a vital and potentially life-saving program for people in Milwaukee and Wisconsin.

The Clinic is presently located at 535 N. 27<sup>th</sup> Street, Milwaukee, WI 53208, at the office of Medical Director, Dr. Violeta Singson. Dr. Singson has won numerous national awards in recognition of her important volunteer work with the PCCCF Free Medical Clinic. In November 2010, Dr. Singson was recognized as a Classic Woman in the *Traditional Home* magazine national contest for volunteers.

#### Intent for Use of the Zablocki Park Building

The members of the PCCCF wish to contribute back to the community in which they have lived and prospered while sharing their cultural heritage with the greater community. The benefits of parks are well-documented: increased property values and civic pride, reduction of crime and gang violence, health benefits to nearby residents,

and protection of green space. The PCCCF's presence in the Zablocki Park building would ensure these benefits continue at this site while contributing important and richly diverse programs and events to the people of Milwaukee and Wisconsin.

The PCCCF has long maintained a building fund for acquisition or building of a Philippine Center, and has actively raised funds continuously toward that goal. PCCCF Executive Director Gerry Ramos is a licensed architect, and has developed both the specifications for retrofitting of space for a Philippine Center as well as supporting relationships within the community. The architectural plans for the PCCCF Center include permanent space for the PCCCF Free Medical Clinic, a library, a Philippine cultural museum, office, meeting and activity rooms and storage.

### Conclusion

A long term occupancy of the Zablocki Park building by the Philippine Cultural and Civic Center Foundation would sustain and strengthen the park and surrounding area while bringing important programs to nearby residents, as well as the many members of the Filipino community.

The PCCCF is a well-established non-profit organization with a solid history of service to the people of the Milwaukee area, and an interest in expanding its programs in a permanent space. The PCCCF's members have the professional savvy and commitment needed to maintain a Philippine Center. The Zablocki Park Pavilion is an underutilized space with great potential. A partnership and agreement between the Milwaukee County Park System and the PCCCF would be a win-win for all involved.