



BID BYPRODUCT – HOSPITAL RAZED

There are SO many threads to the Battle for the Bid. One thread is still causing harm and controversy over 13 years later.



The Michael Reese Hospital and Medical Center was located in Bronzeville, close to the lakeshore at 2900 South Ellis Avenue. It was a 48-acre campus founded in 1881. The hospital was built to serve the Jewish community, later it served a predominately African America community. In 1991, Michael Reese Hospital was acquired by Humana and in March 1993, Humana spun off its hospitals under the name Galen Health Care. In June, Galen merged with Columbia Healthcare. In 1994, Columbia merged with HCA to form Columbia/HCA. The hospital fell on hard times and closed in August of 2009. The hospital's decline and loss was much mourned.

[\[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Reese_Hospital\]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Reese_Hospital)

The site was named one of Preservation Chicago's 2009 most endangered historic site worthy of preservation that was in danger of demolition. There were both historic and architectural reasons to preserve parts of the campus; parts of the campus was designed by noted architect Walter Gropius and landscaping was designed by noted landscape architects Hideo Sasaki and Lester Collins. [\[https://preservationchicago.org/michael-reese-modern\]](https://preservationchicago.org/michael-reese-modern)

At the time of the Battle for the Bid, a social justice fight was brewing about 30 blocks away as young people would soon be organizing to open a Class I Trauma Center for the health resources starved African American neighborhoods. When Damian Turner was shot on August 15, 2010 just three blocks south of the University of Chicago's medical campus there was no trauma center nearby (the UofC had closed their trauma facility some 20 years prior). So, paramedics had to take the young man ten miles north to Northwestern Memorial Hospital, where Damian passed at 1:23am. ["The Rumble & The Reversal," Crain's Chicago Business, April 11, 2016. <https://www.chicagobusiness.com/static/section/trauma-protest.html>]

It took six years of advocacy to bring a trauma facility to life on the UofC campus. But it only took weeks for Mayor Daly to grab the Reese site for the proposed Olympic Village and tear most of it down.

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Chicago ponied up \$85 million to purchase the site from Medline. The original deal called for Medline to contribute \$20 BACK to the city to help the Bid. If Chicago did not get the Games, the city would pay an additional \$5 million. "As this property came on the market . . . we said, 'We ought to look at it because it is something that could improve the village,'" said Patrick G. Ryan, chairman of Chicago 2016, the city's Olympic bid committee. He also said that it would be highly likely that part of the Olympic Village would be built on the site to house athletes. City officials insisted at a Tuesday news conference that no taxpayer funds would be used to finance the deal. The city intends to sell the land to a developer before any principal is due on the purchase loan, regardless of whether Chicago is selected as the 2016 Olympics city."

["City buying Reese site for \$85M to turn into Olympic Village," Crain's Chicago Business, July 8, 2008. <https://www.chicagobusiness.com/article/20080708/NEWS02/200030112/city-buying-reese-site-for-85m-to-turn-into-olympic-village>]

I would add young Damian Turner's life to the cost of the Bid. Mayor Daley rushed the purchase and demolition of the site to show our grit and determination to the IOC. We were serious, damn it, about bringing the Olympics to Chicago. Instead of preserving the hospital and keeping vital health care services going for the near South Side, the Mayor chose to destroy it and build nothing in its place.

There was a short-lived effort to raise awareness about the site and the importance of the architectural work of Gropius. ["Gropius in Chicago Coalition News," November 25, 2009, <https://www.e-architect.com/chicago/gropius-chicago-coalition-protest> + "Walter Gropius' Michael Reese Hospital Campus Threatened," The Cultural Landscape Foundation, May 6, 2009. <https://www.tclf.org/landslides/walter-gropius%E2%80%99-michael-reese-hospital-campus-threatened-0>]

The Mayor and the Chicago 2016 Committee didn't care about the heritage of the hospital or the need for MORE health care services on the South Side and their protests went nowhere.

Nothing was going to stand in the way of the plan to bring the 2016 Summer Olympics to Chicago. The site was demolished in 2012. ["Michael Reese Hospital Demolition," Public Building Commission of Chicago, set of images. <https://pbcchicago.com/projects/michael-reese-hospital-campus>]



To see what was envisioned for the Olympic Village, watch the video at www.tinyurl.com/Chi2016-Olympic-Village (3:12).

SAVE AND REUSE MICHAEL REESE HOSPITAL!

Your Voice Matters to the Future of Our Community

Chicago has just spent \$86 Million to buy Michael Reese Hospital.
The 37-Acre site – 28 buildings and acres of lush parks –
Will be **TORN DOWN**. Demolition bids have been received.

Chicago wants to build the Olympic Village here... but the historic parts of
Michael Reese Hospital should be reused as a part of any redevelopment.

Saving and Reusing Michael Reese Hospital is good for Chicago...

- » **Improves** Current Plans by keeping great architecture and parks
- » Offers **Financial Benefits** to Help Protect Taxpayers
- » Is Better for the **Environment**
- » Preserves the only Chicago work of famous architect **Walter Gropius**
- » Saves **Acres of Parks** and over 600 Mature Trees
- » Celebrates local **Culture and History**
- » Protects **Bronzeville's Character** and adds neighborhood stability

We need to **SPEAK OUT NOW** about saving Michael Reese Hospital!
Your voice is critical to the future of our community.

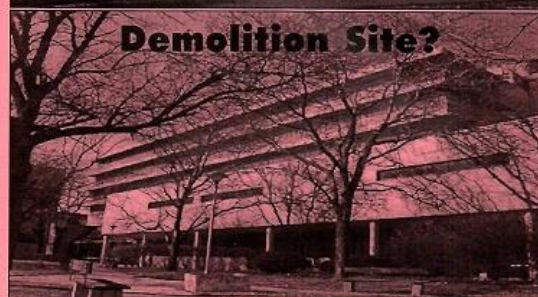
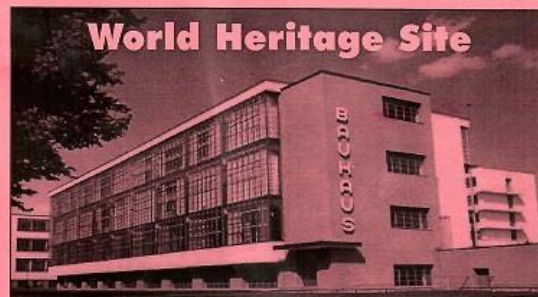
Please write to the following officials today. Ask them to keep the historic
Gropius Works at Michael Reese Hospital as a part of their plans for the South Side.

Alderman Toni Preckwinkle
Alderman, 4th Ward
tpreckwinkle@cityofchicago.org
773-536-8103

Ms. Lori Healey
President, Chicago 2016 Committee
lhealey@chicago2016.org
312-552-2016

For additional ways to help the cause, please get in touch with us.
inquiries@savemrh.com - www.savemrh.com

Sponsored by the Gropius in Chicago Coalition.
For More Information, Please visit www.savemrh.com



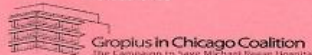
Important Meeting Tuesday Aug. 11 6 pm 4510 S Michigan Ave.
PLEASE COME WE NEED YOUR HELP

Today, Walter Gropius's built legacy in Chicago is highly threatened. Michael Reese Hospital on Chicago's South Side is one of Chicago's greatest architectural assets. At this site, Walter Gropius executed his only built work in the State of Illinois, a surprisingly complete portrait of the artist, comprising site planning, urban design, and execution of individual buildings.

What Can you do to Help Save Michael Reese Hospital? **SPEAK OUT NOW!**
Write to the following officials today! Ask them to keep the Historic Gropius Works at Michael Reese Hospital as part of their plans for the South Side

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WWW.SAVEMRH.COM

Dr. Edmund Messina met his wife, a nurse, while working at the hospital in the 1970's. He recalls returning to the rubble-filled site decades later:

“As we walked carefully over bricks and rubble, vivid memories came back to me in a rush.

This crumbled street had once been a busy thoroughfare that went past the various pavilions, now crushed, and past the Baumgarten and Kaplan pavilions.

As I looked east, there was nothing but space, providing me with a view of Lake Michigan. The buildings were gone! Along this street once had walked an endless parade of people dressed in white... nurses, technicians, medical students, interns, and residents. On a nice day, they would all be walking outside. In bad Chicago weather, they walked through the intricate maze of tunnels that connected the many pavilions.

At one time, this was the premiere hospital in Chicago, which had always been bustling. Ambulances were constantly screaming into the emergency room and there was an almost endless bustle of cars dropping people off or picking them up at the main entrance in the Kaplan Pavilion.

In my mind, these white uniformed ghosts were walking, as they always will in my memory—medical students trying to keep up with fast walking interns, nurses coming off shifts and laughing—all of them will continue to live inside of me.

To our left was the demolished parking structure that had once been a grassy knoll. I remember how the green grass had once been dotted with couples in white uniforms sitting on borrowed hospital linens, eating picnic lunches for a few stolen moments at midday.

We walked along saying nothing, almost dazed, as we slowly made our way among the ruins. Straight ahead was the partially demolished Main Reese building, built in 1907. When we got closer to it, my wife became tearful.”

<http://spatteredwhitecoat.com>

A very real and lingering toxic result of the Bid for the 2016 Olympics...