

RISING PHOENIX

PRESERVATION & RENEWAL PROPOSAL

13210 Green Ridge Road NE | Allegany County, Maryland

**Preserve the place. Preserve the story. Preserve the possibility -
while building a future strong enough to last.**

PREPARED FOR

Loyola University Maryland and prospective preservation partners

PREPARED BY

Rising Phoenix Legacy

DATE

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CONTACT

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EXPLORATORY AND NON-BINDING

This document does not represent a funded offer, committed purchaser, or binding transaction.

Executive Summary

Rising Phoenix Legacy asks Loyola University Maryland to consider whether the former Rising Phoenix retreat can be preserved as a continuing place of faith, hospitality, renewal, beauty, dignity, and service - the values at the heart of Rev. Margee Iddings' work - while being rebuilt on a financially sustainable foundation for the future.

This proposal does not ask Loyola to recreate the center exactly as Margee operated it. Firsthand recollections from people who knew her indicate that Margee understood the center would change when Loyola assumed ownership, and that she welcomed relief from the financial and operational burden she had been carrying. That history is not a reason to abandon preservation. It is a reason to approach preservation more responsibly.

The central question is whether a coalition can be assembled before the current sale process concludes: an established nonprofit or mission-aligned owner, acquisition capital, preservation and rehabilitation funding, operating expertise, and people who understand Margee's legacy.

Immediate request to Loyola

- Designate the Loyola contact who can evaluate preservation structures.
- Tell the coalition what financial evidence and due diligence a credible preservation purchaser would need to provide.
- Indicate whether Loyola could consider a negotiated sale, seller financing, extended closing, short feasibility period, or acquisition by an established nonprofit if a credible coalition emerges.
- Where appropriate, help reconnect former supporters, retreat users, trustees, alumni, or donors who may care about the property's spiritual purpose.

1. What We Are Trying to Preserve

Rising Phoenix was more than a lodging facility. Margee created a place designed to nourish the mind, heart, body, and spirit. People who knew the center remember beauty in ordinary details, original art, welcoming rooms, fresh food, quiet corners, books, gardens, hospitality, and a sense that each guest mattered.

Her ministry also extended beyond retreat guests. Former participants recall that women rebuilding their lives after incarceration were hired, mentored, trained, and treated with dignity. Margee's concern was not merely to give someone a job, but to help people discover their strengths and rebuild a life.

The preservation goal should therefore be larger than saving buildings. It should preserve the living values represented by the place:

- faith and spiritual renewal
- hospitality and welcome
- dignity and compassionate service
- beauty, art, and care for the whole person
- meaningful work and second chances
- community, reflection, and connection with creation

2. What Margee's Transition to Loyola Teaches Us

The transition to Loyola is an important part of the story and should be represented fairly. People who knew Margee recall that she understood the center would change under Loyola's ownership. She was relieved that the existing staff would have continuity, and she was ready to step away from the level of financial and operational strain she had been carrying.

Accounts from that period indicate that Margee had been working outside the center in addition to managing its responsibilities in order to help make ends meet. She planned to continue serving women who had experienced incarceration after leaving Rising Phoenix.

This history leads to a crucial principle for any new preservation effort:

The mission must never again depend on one person carrying an unsustainable financial and operational burden.

Preservation therefore means carrying Margee's values forward, not attempting to freeze the retreat in a prior era. A renewed Rising Phoenix should be financially disciplined, professionally governed, and capable of adapting while remaining faithful to its core purpose.

3. Proposed Mission

Our mission is to honor God by carrying forward Margee Iddings' legacy of faith, hospitality, dignity, renewal, and compassionate service. We seek to preserve Rising Phoenix as a place where people can step away from distraction, draw closer to God, find rest and healing, experience caring community, and discover opportunities for renewed purpose. We will pursue this mission with responsible stewardship so the work can endure for generations.

The effort is not intended for the personal financial benefit of its organizer or any individual. The preferred long-term structure would place the property under nonprofit, charitable, trust, preservation, or otherwise mission-protected stewardship.

4. A Living Retreat, Not Only a Memorial

If preservation proves financially feasible, the property should continue serving people. Possible uses, subject to proper planning and governance, include:

- Christian retreats, prayer, spiritual formation, and quiet individual stays
- clergy, ministry, family, and nonprofit renewal
- women's retreats and programs centered on dignity, healing, and renewed purpose
- carefully designed opportunities for people rebuilding their lives after incarceration or other major life disruption, if qualified partners can operate them responsibly
- youth, family, educational, and community programs
- group retreats and hospitality that generate earned revenue
- gardens, trails, art, reflection spaces, and connection with creation
- a permanent interpretation of Margee Iddings' life, Rising Phoenix, and the people who helped build the ministry

5. Preservation Structures for Loyola to Consider

A. Negotiated Preservation Purchase

A qualified nonprofit, charitable organization, trust, preservation organization, religious institution, or mission-aligned buyer purchases the property at a price acceptable to Loyola. Funding could combine philanthropic gifts, foundation support, preservation financing, community fundraising, low-interest debt, and mission-aligned investment.

B. Seller-Financed Preservation Purchase

Loyola accepts an agreed amount at closing and finances a portion of the balance over time, retaining an appropriate secured interest. This could reduce the amount of immediate acquisition capital required while protecting Loyola.

C. Short Feasibility Period or Extended Closing

If credible partners and financing prospects emerge but cannot complete due diligence on the auction timetable, Loyola could consider a short, defined option, feasibility period, right to purchase, or extended closing sufficient to complete inspections, underwriting, nonprofit structuring, and commitments.

D. Interim Nonprofit Stewardship

An established nonprofit, religious organization, community foundation partner, or preservation organization temporarily acquires or holds the property while a permanent governance and operating structure is developed.

E. Combination Structure

A realistic solution may combine donor equity, a negotiated purchase price, seller financing, nonprofit ownership, preservation funding, and phased rehabilitation rather than rely on one funding source.

No assumption is made that any one of these structures is acceptable to Loyola. The request is for a candid conversation about which structures, if any, Loyola would be willing to evaluate if sufficient financial capacity emerges.

6. The Coalition Being Assembled

Outreach is underway to organizations and individuals representing several different capabilities. The aim is not to find one person to solve everything, but to assemble the pieces of a responsible transaction.

Need	What the coalition is seeking
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Ownership capacity	An established nonprofit, trust, preservation organization, religious institution, or other qualified entity capable of owning or temporarily holding the property.
Acquisition capital	Major gifts, charitable funds, bridge financing, low-interest debt, or mission-aligned investment.
Preservation capital	Historic-preservation programs, foundations, public programs, and private philanthropy for rehabilitation.
Operating expertise	Retreat-center, hospitality, facilities, nonprofit management, finance, fundraising, and ministry experience.
Legacy leadership	People who knew Margee and can help ensure the renewed mission reflects the values she actually lived.
Professional guidance	Qualified legal, tax, real-estate, insurance, preservation, and nonprofit counsel.

7. Financial Sustainability Is Part of the Mission

Margee's experience makes financial sustainability a moral and operational requirement, not an afterthought. A renewed Rising Phoenix should not be purchased until a responsible group understands both acquisition needs and the cost of operating the property.

A financial model should evaluate:

- purchase and closing costs
- immediate life-safety and deferred-maintenance needs
- utilities, insurance, maintenance, staffing, food service, and reserves
- tax treatment and any nonprofit exemptions
- occupancy and retreat-pricing assumptions
- income from group retreats, overnight stays, programs, workshops, and mission-aligned hospitality
- philanthropic support for programs that should remain accessible regardless of ability to pay
- capital reserves for long-term building and infrastructure replacement

Earned revenue and philanthropy should complement one another. Donations should expand mission and preserve access; they should not be used to hide an operating model that cannot sustain itself.

8. Protecting the Mission Beyond the Next Owner

If the property is preserved, the legal structure should make it harder for the mission to disappear again simply because ownership changes. Qualified counsel should evaluate tools such as nonprofit ownership, charitable trust provisions, preservation or conservation easements, mission covenants, board-governance requirements, restrictions on private benefit, and appropriate provisions governing any future sale.

The goal is not to make adaptation impossible. It is to protect the underlying purpose while allowing responsible leaders to respond to changing needs.

9. Preserving Margee's Story Regardless of the Real-Estate Outcome

The historical work should continue even if the property cannot ultimately be acquired. Rising Phoenix Legacy is collecting memories, photographs, donor history, stories from retreat participants, former staff and board accounts, and information about how the retreat was built and operated.

If the property is preserved, this material could become part of a permanent archive, interpretive exhibit, library, memorial space, website, or oral-history project. If the property is not preserved, the archive can still ensure that the work and the people behind it are not forgotten.

10. What We Ask Loyola to Do Now

1. Designate a point of contact

Identify the Loyola representative who should receive and evaluate further preservation proposals.

2. Define the credibility threshold

Tell us what evidence of funds, financing, organizational capacity, and due diligence a preservation purchaser would need to show.

3. Clarify transaction flexibility

Indicate whether Loyola could potentially consider a negotiated sale, seller financing, extended closing, short feasibility period, nonprofit purchaser, or another structure if sufficiently credible.

4. Permit rapid due diligence

If a credible buyer or nonprofit partner emerges, allow appropriate inspections and document review on a compressed timetable.

5. Help reconnect the community where appropriate

Where legally and institutionally appropriate, consider introductions to former supporters, retreat users, Loyola alumni, trustees, donors, or ministry partners who may care about preserving the property's spiritual purpose.

11. Proposed Immediate Timeline

Period	Objective
October 7-12	Confirm Loyola's willingness to evaluate preservation structures; identify nonprofit/ownership candidates; continue donor, preservation, religious, women's-history, alumni, and local-development outreach.
October 12-18	Develop acquisition and first-year operating assumptions; identify serious funding prospects; begin legal, lender, preservation, and property-condition review.
October 18-24	Determine whether a credible preservation transaction can be assembled; document committed or highly probable sources of capital and organizational capacity.
Before October 27	Either present the strongest responsible preservation structure available, or conclude honestly that acquisition cannot be justified on the available facts and timeline.

12. Why This Is Worth Attempting

There is no guarantee Rising Phoenix can be saved. The timeline is short. The financial requirements may be substantial. The buildings may require more work than a preservation coalition can responsibly support. The necessary organization or donors may not emerge in time.

But the uncertainty does not make the effort meaningless. Margee once brought people together around a vision and, together, they created a place devoted to faith, hospitality, beauty, dignity, renewal, and service. Loyola then carried the property into another chapter of retreat ministry. The present moment asks whether another responsible chapter is possible.

The lesson of Margee's transition is that love for a mission is not enough by itself. The next chapter must combine mission with stewardship, compassion with governance, and vision with financial discipline.

We are not asking Loyola or any one donor to solve this alone. We are asking for the opportunity to determine whether enough people and institutions can come together, quickly and responsibly, to preserve the possibility.

Proposed Next Step

Rising Phoenix Legacy respectfully requests a short conversation with Loyola University Maryland to determine:

1. whether Loyola is willing to continue receiving a preservation proposal while the auction remains underway;
2. which transaction structures Loyola could potentially consider;
3. what financial and organizational evidence would be required from a prospective preservation buyer;
4. whether Loyola could consider a short feasibility period or extended closing if a credible coalition emerges; and
5. who should represent Loyola in further discussions.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam

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Public Property References

Public listing and Loyola retreat-center materials were used only to confirm the current property description, facilities, and sale context. Historical interpretations in this proposal are based on the developing Rising Phoenix Legacy archive and firsthand recollections from people connected to Margee and the retreat.

- Loyola University Maryland Retreat Center FAQ - 13210 Green Ridge Road NE and guest accommodations.
- Current commercial/auction listing for 13210 Green Ridge Road - property description and October 27, 2026 auction timetable.