

EXCLUSIVE: Marquette, Gesu Church Clash Over Loss Of Church Parking Lot

There is a major rift building between Marquette University and the iconic Catholic Church located on the university grounds. Gesu Church officials are angry that Marquette is planning to take the church's main parking lot and use it for the site of the new sports research facility. That building was originally planned to be built near 8th and Michigan in partnership with Aurora healthcare. But the Aurora deal fell through and Marquette is downsizing and moving the project. It's not the first time under President Michael Lovell's leadership that Marquette has announced grandiose plans and was forced to backtrack. The new site will be located on campus near 12th Street, between Wells and Wisconsin.

The new site plan would use Lot F which is the main parking lot for Gesu, the thriving Catholic parish located on Marquette's campus. Both the university and the parish are controlled by the Jesuits but operate independently. Gesu Pastor Father Jim Flaherty has posted on Facebook that the loss of the lot would seriously threaten the church's future. Gesu hosts a high number of weddings and has a full slate of weekend masses. Marquette spokesman Brian Dorrington has not responded to my questions. Gesu officials say they are hoping Marquette backs down.

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