Dear Mr. Barker, 11-5-2016

The Middlesex Canal connected the Merrimack River at todays Lowell with the Charles River in Charlestown. Digging began when George Washington was in the second term of his presidency, opened in 1803 and operated for 50 years. It was 27.3 miles long and was dug by hand with pickax and shovel. There were 20 locks and 8 aqueducts. It was later extended as far north as Concord, NH and south through Boston. It was the engineering marvel of its time.

The Middlesex Canal Association was started in 1962. The Middlesex Canal Commission was created in 1977. The Middlesex Canal Museum and Visitor Center opened in July 2001. Time flies!

Your Family Foundation has assisted us in starting our school program by enabling us to provide material for the teachers. The money has been very helpful. Hundreds of third graders have passed through our doors, hopefully wiser and appreciative.

For the first 6-7 years, the Museum space was donated by Ron Paré who owns the Faulkner Mill. We now pay rent. Two years ago Pace Industries, which now owns the Talbot Mill, gave the Middlesex Canal Association a derelict brick storage building next to the Concord River Mill Pond for a new Middlesex Canal Museum. This is the summit of the entire canal. Much work needs to be done! We have had it looked over by a structural engineer, preliminary plans drawn by an architect and inspected by some of the Town departments.

We started a Fund Raising effort ~two years ago. We have an initial budget goal of $600,000. This would clear out the building, add an additional story, replace the roof with support from steel framing and generally tighten up the building. We have raised $40,000. plus a promise of $100,000. when the project gets underway.

Can your Family Foundation help us achieve our monetary goal? This is an initial approach. I can provide additional detail at your request.

Thank you for considering us.

Betty M. Bigwood, MCA Fund Raising Committee

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