

For Immediate Release

City Of Margate

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Original City Hall Is Demolished

Margate, FL December 28, 2005-- After much discussion, the building that many Margate residents remember as the city's first City Hall was torn down today.



This building, located at 1400 W. River Drive, was constructed in the mid-1950's and was originally used as the sales office of Jack Marqusee, Margate's developer and founder. The building was donated to the City of Margate by Mr. Marqusee in December, 1968. It later housed all city departments, including Public Works, Police and Fire Departments. Sometime thereafter, the building served as headquarters for the Chamber of Commerce and subsequently housed facilities for the Parks and Recreation Department.

The City Commission vigorously pursued the possible restoration of the structure in an effort to preserve city history and give back to the community. However, after learning that the grant proposal for the property submitted to the Florida Historical Commission placed 95 out of 100 state-wide grants they decided that the \$80,000 set aside to restore the building could be better spent. On December 14, 2005 the Commission voted unanimously to demolish the building and keep the surrounding trees in hopes of creating a passive park.

On demolition day Mayor Joseph Varsallone commented, "This is a step toward the future of Margate, but we've also lost some history today." There were also several residents from the neighborhood who gathered to witness the building come down. Neighbor Shirley Ouellette added "I'm sorry to see it go, but glad it may become a park. I think the neighborhood as a whole is happy to see it come down and the money for restoration can be used elsewhere much better."

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Mayor Joseph Varsallone and Commissioner Pam Donovan