

MARGATE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY BOARD

REGULAR MEETING

April 8, 2026

MINUTES

Present:

Arlene R. Schwartz
Antonio V. Arserio
Joanne Simone
Tommy Ruzzano, Vice Chair
Anthony N. Caggiano, Chair

Also Present:

Cale Curtis, Executive Director
Larry Vignola, Assistant Executive Director
David Tolces, Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman
Rita Rodi, MCRA Coordinator (retired)
Noor Vallyani, Owner of ACE Hardware, 5843 Margate Blvd
Nur Daya, Keyes Commercial Realty

The regular meeting of the Margate Community Redevelopment Agency having been properly noticed was called to order at 6:01 p.m., on Wednesday, April 8, 2026, by Chair Anthony N. Caggiano. Roll call was taken. There was a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was held in the City Commission Chambers and was also accessible virtually through Zoom technology.

1A. PRESENTATION: TO RITA RODI ON THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT

Cale Curtis, Executive Director, congratulated Ms. Rita Rodi on her recent retirement from the MCRA after 20 years of service and expressed appreciation for her leadership and advancement of the MCRA's mission, stewardship of public resources, and commitment to community advocacy. David Tolces, Board Attorney, thanked Ms. Rodi for all her assistance over the years and extended his best wishes for her good health and happiness. Rita Rodi, retired MCRA Coordinator, reflected on various leadership changes during her tenure and expressed her utmost confidence in Mr. Curtis and his staff. She said she hoped the new developer's agreement would address the needs of all the stakeholders and would result in the beautiful downtown area the City of Margate deserved. She added her only regret was that the development had not started prior to her retirement, however, she would continue to follow its progress with interest.

2A. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL – (03/11/26 Regular)

After David Tolces, Board Attorney, read the item title, Ms. Simone made the following motion, seconded by Ms. Schwartz:

MOTION: SO MOVE TO APPROVE

ROLL CALL: Ms. Schwartz, Yes; Mr. Arserio, Yes; Ms. Simone, Yes; Mr. Ruzzano, Yes; Mr. Caggiano, Yes. The motion passed 5-0.

3. PUBLIC DISCUSSION

No one from the public came forward to speak.

4A. RESOLUTION 777: ACCEPTING THE MCRA INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2025

After David Tolces, Board Attorney, read the resolution title, Ms. Simone made the following motion, seconded by Mr. Arserio:

MOTION: SO MOVE TO APPROVE

ROLL CALL: Ms. Schwartz, Yes; Mr. Arserio, Yes; Ms. Simone, Yes; Mr. Ruzzano, Yes; Mr. Caggiano, Yes. The motion passed 5-0.

5A. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: PROPOSAL FROM ACE HARDWARE TO PURCHASE 1491 N. STATE ROAD 7 AND 5750 N.W. 15TH STREET

Vice Chair Ruzzano explained that Noor Vallyani, owner of ACE Hardware, had submitted a proposal to purchase two MCRA-owned properties, at 1491 North State Road 7 and 5750 N.W. 15th Street, for approximately \$475,000. He said Mr. Vallyani intended to construct a 10,000-square-foot standalone store, with US 441 frontage, which would accommodate a new location for his hardware store. He said Mr. Vallyani had taken a proactive approach to protect his future in the event the existing Ace Plaza was redeveloped. Vice Chair Ruzzano acknowledged the potential long-term financial loss of a \$9,000-per-month tenant and noted previous MCRA discussions around downtown incubators were intended to help similarly situated local businesses plan ahead. He expressed support for Mr. Vallyani's decision and applauded his preparation for the future. He further noted Mr. Vallyani could be free of the debt in about 9 years and said it was a great investment.

Ms. Simone expressed her full support for Mr. Vallyani's proposal and also applauded his initiative. Chair Caggiano said he too supported Mr. Vallyani's proposal in general, however, he would want to see certain protective stipulations in place if the MCRA agreed to sell the property at below market price. Some discussion ensued.

David Tolces, Board Attorney, advised statutory notice may not be necessary to consider other offers on the property as notice was previously provided with respect to the sale of the entire city center development, however, the Board would need to get consent from Brookfield as these parcels were included in the development agreement that was approved at the last meeting.

Nur Daya, Keyes Commercial Realty, appeared in support of Mr. Vallyani and stated the MCRA properties were well suited for ACE Hardware's corporate model and zoning preferences. He also emphasized the additional development investment the project would bring to the community, ACE Hardware's long-standing presence in Margate and the potential for increased long-term tax revenue. Vice Chair Ruzzano stated the \$475,000 offer was reasonable and aligned with the MCRA's goal of supporting small businesses and improved blighted areas. He noted ACE Hardware's strong relationship with the City of Margate, emphasized the store's collaboration with City staff for many years and encouraged the Board to move the item forward with clear, workable terms. Ms. Schwartz supported Mr. Vallyani's proposal with long-term stipulations, however, she said she hoped Mr. Vallyani would increase his initial offer for the properties and she wished him success in achieving his long-standing vision. Mr. Arserio stated his support for the \$475,000 purchase price and said it should be viewed as a form of assistance to the business which would make the business ineligible for additional grants beyond the discounted sale. He said he supported reasonable stipulations to protect the City's interests and expressed flexibility regarding future sale or lease with appropriate MCRA oversight.

Cale Curtis, Executive Director, noted the general consensus from the Board and said he would work with the applicant to negotiate an agreeable purchase and sale agreement, which would be brought back before the Board for consideration.

4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Cale Curtis, Executive Director, provided the following capital project updates:

Chevy Chase Plaza Improvements - He reported the repair work to the columns had been completed and parking lot repairs, sealing and restriping had started, however, the recent incessant rain had hampered the progression. He said the parking lot would be completed once the rain subsided, which would be followed shortly thereafter by the painting of the plaza.

Margate Boulevard Improvements – He reminded the Board any landscaping that had recently been installed would not be maintained by the contractor while the project was an active construction zone. He added the contractor would deliver a fully manicured landscaped area along Margate Boulevard when the project was completed.

Undergrounding Utilities – He said staff expected to have bid ready documents in the next couple of months.

Coral Gate Park Improvements – He reported the new playground equipment, and the restoration of the restroom building was 90% completed.

Mr. Arserio asked when the Margate Boulevard project was expected to be completed and Mr. Curtis said the goal was to finish before the Fourth of July. Mr. Arserio requested occasional attention to the landscaping to keep the weeds under control until the project was completed.

4A. TENANT UPDATES

Chair Caggiano referenced the rent rolls and noted there were three tenants in arrears. Jim Nardi, Advanced Asset Management, said he expected to receive the rent plus late fees with no issues. He added he had emailed TBT Athletics after the last meeting and asked them to wire their rent earlier than usual in an attempt to avoid late fees moving forward.

5. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Ms. Schwartz – She requested staff provide a one-page informational summary to address public misinformation that clarified what actions had and had not occurred when any Brookfield item came before the MCRA in the future.

Mr. Arserio – He referenced the nation's upcoming 250th anniversary on the Fourth of July and suggested the addition of drones to the firework display in honor of the celebration.

Ms. Simone – She expressed her sympathies on the recent passing of Mark Weissman. She said he was a recent commissioner for the City of Parkland and sent her condolences to the family.

Vice Chair Ruzzano – He also remembered Mr. Weissman and sent his condolences to the Weissman family. He noted the City's long-standing Fourth of July parade and fireworks tradition and encouraged an enhanced celebration. He referenced Panda Express and said they had received final approval from the Development Review Committee the previous evening to renovate the old Boston Market building along West Atlantic Boulevard. He praised City staff that efficiently addressed code challenges and commended the strong presentation and collaboration that led to the redevelopment of the previously vacant site. Mr. Arserio said the developer had an aggressive construction timeline, and thanked the Building Official, Richard Nixon, who had recommended separate demolition and build-out permits. He noted that approach would allow demolition to begin quickly while full permitting was underway, which would maintain the developer's goal of opening earlier the following year.

Vice Chair Ruzzano referred to Ms. Schwartz's comments about misinformation regarding the development agreement (DA) and noted its length, rapid approval timeline and lack of public understanding about certain provisions, which included consent requirements for the sale of MCRA properties as discussed earlier that evening. A lengthy debate followed over the merits of the DA, which included concerns about the number of units, the 99-year ground lease structure, the MCRA's \$35 million contribution towards public improvements, and whether the city should instead pursue a city-led design-build approach to retain full rental revenue. Cale Curtis, Executive Director, clarified that although the DA was executed, the ground lease had not yet been signed. He said the Board could decline to proceed if they did not approve the final design, at which point the developer could walk away. Vice Chair Ruzzano referred to the MCRA-owned property at 1423 North State Road 7 and suggested the MCRA should build a small multi-tenant plaza. Some discussion ensued about prior opportunities to purchase the property located directly south of the forementioned property, located at 1303 North State Road 7, and it was generally agreed to pursue acquisition when possible. Ms. Schwartz cautioned against misinformation and divisive rhetoric on social media and emphasized the "either you're with me or against me" messaging undermined collaboration. She stated she valued cooperation, communication, and respected discourse, rejected personal attacks or hate speech, and affirmed her commitment to working constructively in the best interest of the City.

Chair Caggiano – He agreed with Ms. Schwartz and said confrontational language stunted constructive conversation. He expressed his condolences to the families of former Parkland commissioner Mark Weissman and Coral Springs Commissioner Nancy Metayer Bowen, and reflected on the shock of domestic violence and the importance of mental health awareness and intervention.

There being no additional business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Transcribed by Fiona Christmas, MCRA Coordinator

Anthony N. Caggiano, Chair