

Dear Friends,

In 1994, many of us met for the first time. We had discovered that convicted juvenile offenders were being housed in what was formerly a temporary site for volunteers working with the Hurricane Andrew recovery effort. It was done without approval or public hearing, utilizing structures that were later condemned. We staged a Herculean fight but lost the battle. It was then we realized that we did not have the power, or influence, to determine what was acceptable in our own neighborhood. Furthermore, our future was being determined by 13 members of a commission, all but one of whom did not even know where we lived. They were not swayed by the hundreds of letters and emails nor the petitions signed by 4,500 neighbors, nor the busloads of personal appearances, opposing the facility. It was this experience that served as the genesis for the incorporation movement.

On December 7<sup>th</sup>, the Cutler Bay Mayor and Council will decide whether to revoke the Certificate of Use which was granted back then. Although the state closed the facility in 2009, the property can still be used as a detention facility.

According to the Miami Herald, the state closed Bay Point School for the following:

“Regulatory records obtained by The Miami Herald show Bay Point has been plagued by a host of problems in recent years, including repeated incidents of medical neglect, a spate of escapes, inadequate staffing, gang-related graffiti and numerous allegations the program failed to pay its bills or make payroll.

“Since 2003, DJJ administrators have recorded 98 significant incidents at the Cutler Bay campus, including 34 escapes involving 63 youths, and allegations of unnecessary force, abuse or neglect, improper supervision and falsification of records, said DJJ spokesman (Frank) Penela. Perhaps the most significant recurring complaint from DJJ administrators was that Bay Point lacked sufficient staff to secure the camp, which was cited for falling below minimum staffing requirements in 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2008,”

Additionally, according to the Herald, “ during a January 2008 inspection, a DJJ monitor saw a former Bay Point detainee -- who also had spent two years at an adult prison -- in a staff uniform supervising DJJ youth. The man said he was a volunteer, records show.”

This should never again be a concern for the residents of Cutler Bay. The citizens were ignored once when they opposed the detention facility. Now, in light of all of the violations, the elected representatives of the town should be able to close this chapter forever.

Whatever the future of the site will bring, I am certain it will be used in compliance with the desires of the community and the requirements of the town in an effective and prudent manner.

Please attend the meeting and let your elected officials know you support the revocation.

Sincerely,  
Nancy McCue