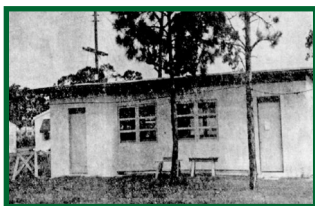
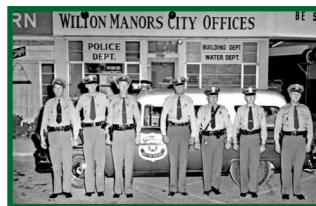


A brief chronology of Wilton Manors early “seat of government” buildings

It began in **1946** when a group of homeowners met at the real estate office of Alvar “AP” Hagen to form the *Wilton Manors Civic Association*. The *Civic Association* became the unofficial quasi-government of the growing community. Through committees it facilitated water and electrical service, garbage pickup, street maintenance and even public safety services for its members. By the following year members voted to incorporate as the *Village of Wilton Manors*. Hagen’s office became the legal address of the Village as well as the first polling place. It’s now Tropics Grille on Wilton Drive.



By the end of **1949** the Village had grown enough to need a dedicated meeting place. The *Village Hall* was built on N.E. 26th Street, on land donated by Dave Turner; using volunteer labor and funded through donations—including the famous Village barbeques. (It’s now the site of the Sullivan Library.) In **1953**, after incorporation, this became *City Hall*. City offices were soon opened in a storefront at 2197 Wilton Drive—between a tavern and a gas station.



But it was clear (even as early as 1950) that these tiny facilities could not support the long-term growth of the city. (The City’s Accountant kept its financial records in her bedroom and the City Clerk operated from her kitchen!) Planning immediately began for a new, full-service municipal building. But that was not easy in the 1950s. Location was open to question, and funding was an issue. What followed was a seven year battle of small-town politics. It pitted Dave Turner, James Dean and John U. Lloyd, who were newly developing land east of the railroad, against Al Hagen and the original business/property owners on Wilton Drive. The underlying political question ... where would “downtown” Wilton Manors ultimately evolve? The backstory is far too complex to even summarize here—but see the link below.

After the years of wrangling, in **July 1957**, the city took possession of its new “imposing municipal center” at 524 NE 21st Court (now the Hagen Park parking lot). City administrative offices were in the center of the one-story building, flanked by a two-bay Fire Station at the east end and the Police Station at the west end. It served until the current City Hall opened in **2010**.



For the full story, including never-before-published vintage photos, go to <https://wmhistory.org>, then click the **RECENT ADDITIONS** dropdown menu to download the archive.