

Repurposing the Old – *A behind the scenes look into the City’s demo project* – By Courtney Scott, Fire Department

You may have noticed a brand spanking new parking lot where the house at 1309 5th Ave once stood. The lot is a temporary fixture until construction efforts begin on projects associated with the newly approved Essential Facilities Strategic Plan. But what you may not have known is the house’s **historical tie to the Fire Department** and the **salvaging efforts** that went into the demolition process.



Did you know? Historical facts about the house and owner:

- Several members of the Vaning family (the owners of 1309 5th Ave) were firefighters including William Vaning, a blacksmith and volunteer firefighter in the 1890's, and his son Walker Bell Vaning, a Battalion Chief who retired in 1960 after 43 years of service to the Department.
- William Vaning sold Fire Station 51's property to the City in 1917.
- It is said that 1309 5th Ave and the City's Blue House were originally two-halves of one large house that were both moved to the location in approximately 1884 by William Vaning.
- This home did not meet the criteria for a historic resource.
- The City purchased the house in September 2014 and the home was demolished in June 2015 with special care to reuse and recycle as much as possible.

What the City salvaged from the house and property:

- **30 cubic yards** (equivalent to a rail car!) of materials were **reused**:
 - Tools and equipment
 - Windows, flooring, sinks, and other building materials
 - Cabinetry, hardware, and other household items
 - 2 boxes of donated books
- Recycled **166.3 tons** of **concrete/asphalt** and **87 tons** of other materials like wood and metal
- Turned **20 tons** of **green waste** into energy

What you can do:

If you're remodeling, improving, or even demolishing a property, here are some options to consider:

- **Donate** the items you're removing from your house. Sinks, faucets, tubs, flooring, tools, tiles, gardening supplies, and even some appliances can be donated to home-improvement reuse stores like Habitat for Humanity's [ReStore](#) or the [Away Station](#).
- Buy your **new-to-you items** from these stores! You can find some amazing antiques and unique pieces at good prices. [Check out the options at Zero Waste Marin.](#)
- For demolition projects, consider **de-construction** as a means to reuse building material. There are many contractors who will gently take apart your structure and they often cost the same as a demolition contractor.

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