

LaRosa petition dismissed

The 11th District Ohio Court of Appeals on Monday, August 14, 2023, dismissed a motion by convicted murderer Jacob LaRosa appealing a 2022 ruling by a Trumbull County judge denying the defendant post-conviction relief.



In a half-page entry, the court dismissed the appeal, agreeing with a motion filed by the state that asked for dismissal because LaRosa's attorney failed to prosecute the appeal. The state had made two motion to that effect, one on May 5 and one on June 26, and the court had since held both in abeyance waiting for action from LaRosa's defense which had not come.

In late December 2022, retiring Common Pleas Judge W. Wyatt McKay ruled that LaRosa, 23, was not entitled to an evidentiary hearing on his petition for post-conviction relief.

In October 2018, McKay had sentence LaRosa to life in prison for the brutal 2015 beating death and attempted rape of 94-year-old Marie Belcastro of Niles. Belcastro was LaRosa's neighbor. The defendant was 15 at the time of the murder and was prosecuted as an adult.

LaRosa had pleaded guilty to felonies connected to the crime. Evidence had showed that LaRose had struck Belcastro in the head several times with a heavy flashlight and drgged her body to a bedroom of her home, where he tried to rape her.

LaRosa had appealed his sentence and voiction to both the 11th District and Ohio Supreme Court, which had both ruled against the defendant. LaRosa then filed a petition for post-conviction relief with McKay claiming he received ineffective counsel, saying LaRosa's counsel should have sought a change of venue and that his no contest plea should have been set aside.

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