



DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY
Planning Zoning Historic Preservation Division
1900 2ND Avenue North
Lake Worth Beach, FL 33461
561-586-1687

HISTORIC RESOURCES PRESERVATION BOARD REPORT

HRPB Project Number 25-00100231: Consideration of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to install wooden stairs over the existing front brick stairs at the property located at **128 North Ocean Breeze**. The subject property is a contributing resource to the Old Lucerne Historic District and is located in the Multi-Family and Two-Family Residential (MF-20) zoning district.

Meeting Date: October 8, 2025

Applicant/ Owner: Debra Yates

Address: 128 North Ocean Breeze

PCN: 38-43-44-21-15-030-0070

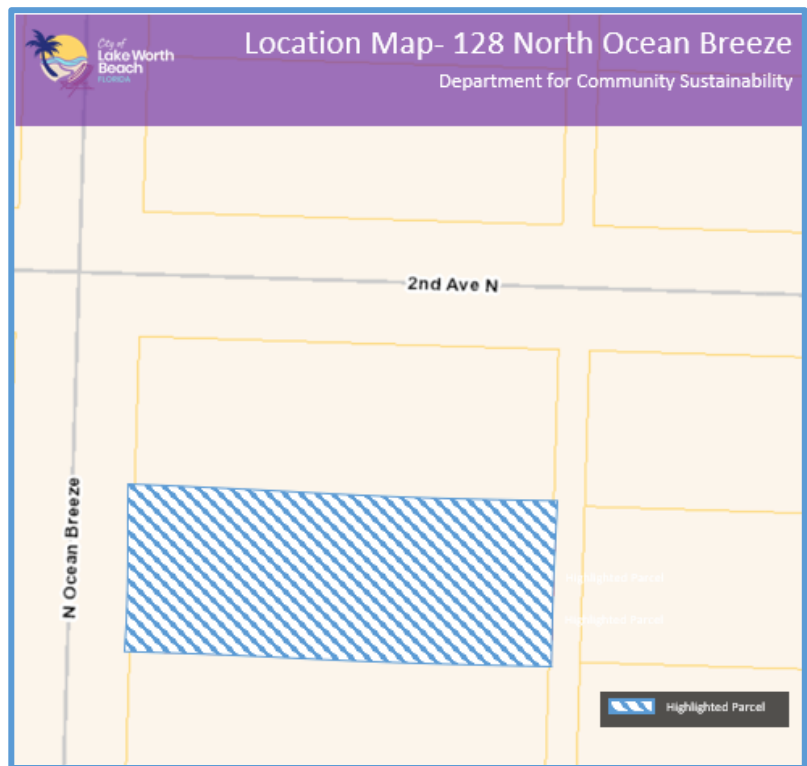
Lot Size: 0.155 acres /6,750 sf

General Location: East side of North Ocean Breeze between Lucerne Avenue and 2nd Avenue North

Existing Land Use: Single Family Residence

Current Future Land Use Designation: Multi-Family and Two-Family Residential (MF-20)

Zoning District: Downtown Mixed Use (DMU)



RECOMMENDATION

The documentation and materials provided with the application were reviewed for compliance with the applicable guidelines and standards found in the City of Lake Worth Beach Land Development Regulations (LDRs) and Historic Preservation Design Guidelines. Staff recommends that the Board not approve the request for the replacement of a front porch.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant and property owner, Debra Yates, is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to install a wooden staircase over the existing front brick stairs at the property located at 128 North Ocean Breeze. 128 North Ocean Breeze is a contributing structure in the Old Lucerne Historic District.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Staff has not received any letters in support of or opposition to the COA request.

PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

The single-family structure at 128 North Ocean Breeze was constructed in 1935 in a Wood Frame Minimal Traditional architectural style. The building is a one-story structure, and its character-defining features include the front porch semi-circular brick staircase, vertical gable siding, and a shingled gable roof.

In 1962, a flat-roofed rear addition was built onto the original structure, along with renovations and window modifications to the existing building.

In late August 2025, the applicant met with staff to discuss covering the semi-circular brick staircase with a wooden deck-board staircase. Historic Preservation staff advised that this proposal is inconsistent with the Historic Preservation Design Guidelines, as the brick staircase is a key character-defining feature of the structure. Covering it would remove a unique architectural element that distinguishes the building from others.

The applicant submitted the documentation required to take the project to the HRPB on September 2, 2025, and the project was scheduled for hearing at the next available meeting on October 8, 2025.

Photos of the existing front porch and the proposed changes to the front porch are included as **Attachment A**. The property owner's justification statement is included in **Attachment B**.

ANALYSIS

Consistency with the Land Development Regulations and Historic Preservation Design Guidelines

All exterior alterations to structures within a designated historic district are subject to visual compatibility criteria. Staff has reviewed the documentation and materials provided in this application and outlined the applicable guidelines and standards found in the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, detailed in the section below.

Section 23.5-4(K)(1) General guidelines for granting certificates of appropriateness

1. *In general.* In approving or denying applications for certificates of appropriateness, the city shall, at a minimum, consider the following general guidelines:
 - A. What is the effect of the proposed work on the landmark or the property upon which such work is to be done?

Staff Analysis: The proposed work will replace the front stairs at 128 North Ocean Breeze by covering the existing brick entry stoop with a wooden deck and stairway. Per the Historic Preservation Design Guidelines, character defining features are an integral part of preservation. The semi-circular brick steps are the primary visual focus of the front façade and visually complement the semi-circular feature of the

portico; the proposed rectangular wooden stairs significantly alter that visual feature. Therefore, staff contends that the replacement of the brick staircase with wooden staircase is not appropriate.

- B. What is the relationship between such work and other structures on the landmark site or other property in the historic district?

Staff Analysis: The proposed change to the front staircase will have no direct physical effect on any surrounding properties within the Old Lucerne Historic District.

- C. To what extent will the historic, architectural, or archaeological significance, architectural style, design, arrangement, texture, materials and color of the landmark or the property be affected?

Staff Analysis: By covering the brick stairs with wooden stairs, the appearance of the structure would be significantly altered, impacting a key character-defining feature. This style of entry porch and staircase is rare for this architectural style in the City and covering it could lead to neglect and potential loss of the original material.

- D. Would denial of a certificate of appropriateness deprive the property owner of reasonable beneficial use of his property?

Staff Analysis: No, denial of the COA would not deprive the applicant of reasonable use of the property. Alternative solutions for accessing the front porch, such as a ramp, could be considered without covering the front brick stairs.

- E. Are the applicant's plans technically feasible and capable of being carried out within a reasonable time?

Staff Analysis: Yes, the applicant's plans can be completed in a reasonable timeframe.

- F. Are the plans (i) consistent with the city's design guidelines, once adopted, or (ii) in the event the design guidelines are not adopted or do not address the relevant issue, consistent as reasonably possible with the applicable portions of the United States Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation then in effect?

Staff Analysis: The brick stairs are one of the major character defining features of the structure at 128 North Ocean Breeze, and the proposal would cover over this major character-defining feature. The City's Design Guidelines specifically recommend against removing or radically changing entrances and porches as it diminishes a building's historic character.

- G. What are the effects of the requested change on those elements or features of the structure which served as the basis for its designation, and will the requested changes cause the least possible adverse effect on those elements or features?

Staff Analysis: The structure is a contributing resource within the Old Lucerne Historic District. As a contributing structure, altering any character defining features, such as the brick stairs, goes against the City's Guidelines. This review aims to promote architecturally appropriate alterations over time, ensuring that contributing structures maintain their designation status. Based on the Design Guidelines, changing the brick staircase to wooden staircase is not appropriate for 128 North Ocean Breeze as the proposed alteration causes an adverse effect on the character defining features of the contributing structure. Visually, the proposed rectangular porch feature is not in harmony with the semicircular portico on the front façade and destroys the relationship between these two character-defining elements.

Section 23.5-4(k)(2) Additional guidelines for alterations and additions, landmark and contributing structures.

- A. Is every reasonable effort being made to provide a compatible use for a property that requires minimal alteration of the building, structure or site and its environment, or to use the property for its originally intended purpose?

Staff Analysis: Yes, the property is still being used as a single-family residential, which is its originally intended purpose.

- B. Are the distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure or site and its environment being destroyed? The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features shall be avoided whenever possible.

Staff Analysis: Although the original brick staircase would not be destroyed, covering it with a wooden staircase would conceal its historic design features and disrupt the visual compatibility between the staircase and the portico.

- C. Is the change visually compatible with the neighboring properties as viewed from a primary or secondary public street?

Staff Analysis: No, the visual impact would not be compatible with the neighboring properties, as the proposed wooden staircase is not compatible with the original design and neighboring structures with front brick staircases in the Old Lucerne Historic District.

- D. When a certificate of appropriateness is requested to replace windows or doors the HRPB or development review officer, as appropriate, may permit the property owner's original design when the city's alternative design would result in an increase in cost of twenty-five (25) percent above the owner's original cost. The owner shall be required to demonstrate to the city that:
1. The work to be performed will conform to the original door and window openings of the structure; and
 2. That the replacement windows or doors with less expensive materials will achieve a savings in excess of twenty-five (25) percent over historically compatible materials otherwise required by these LDRs. This factor may be demonstrated by submission of a written cost estimate by the proposed provider of materials which must be verified by city staff; and
 3. That the replacement windows and doors match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials where the property is significant for its architectural design or construction.
 4. If the applicant avails himself of this paragraph the materials used must appear to be as historically accurate as possible and in keeping with the architectural style of the structure.

Staff Analysis: Not applicable; the application does not involve window or door replacement.

CONCLUSION AND CONDITIONS

The semi-circular brick staircase is one of the main character-defining features of the single-family residence at 128 North Ocean Breeze, and covering the brick stairs with a wooden staircase does not comply with the regulations or intention of the Historic Preservation Ordinance and Design Guidelines. **Staff recommends that the Board not approve the requested porch alteration.**

BOARD POTENTIAL MOTION:

I MOVE TO **DISAPPROVE** HRPB Project Number 25-00100231 for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install wooden stairs over the existing front brick stairs at **128 North Ocean Breeze**, because the applicant has not established by competent

substantial evidence that the application complies with the City of Lake Worth Beach Land Development Regulation and Historic Preservation requirements.

I MOVE TO **APPROVE** HRPB Project Number 25-00100231 for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install wooden stairs over the existing front brick stairs at **128 North Ocean Breeze**, because [Board member please state reasons].

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Installation Map, Photos, and Proposed Stairs
- B. Applicant's Justification Statement