

425 Seabreeze Avenue



DESIGNATION REPORT

November 17, 2021

Landmark Preservation Commission

Palm Beach, Florida

DESIGNATION REPORT

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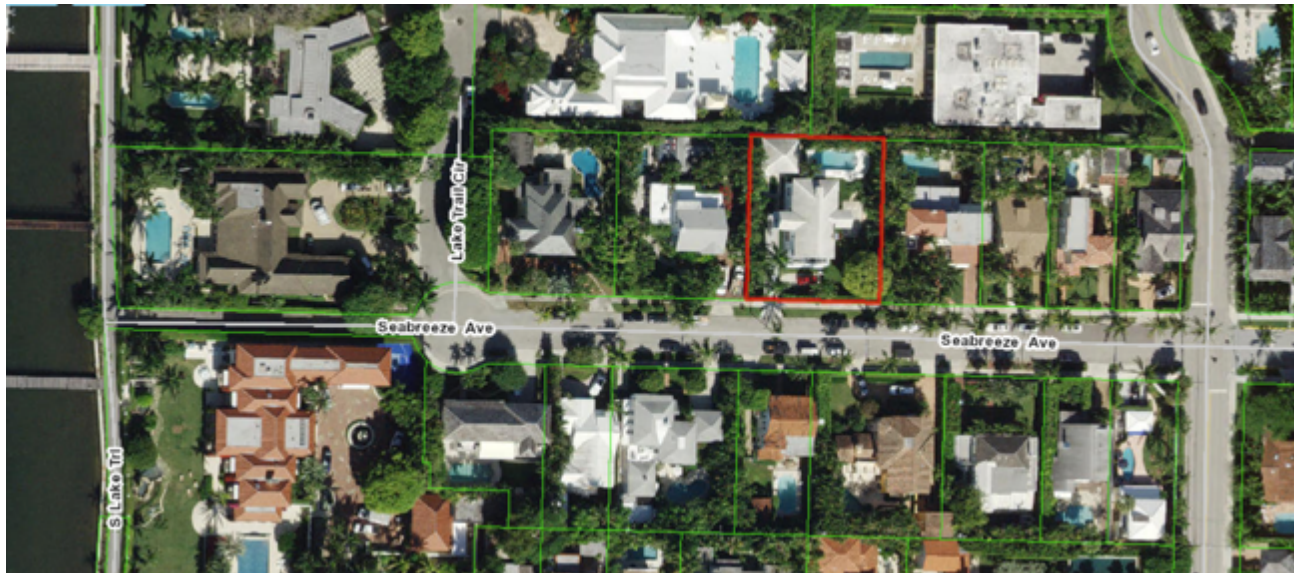
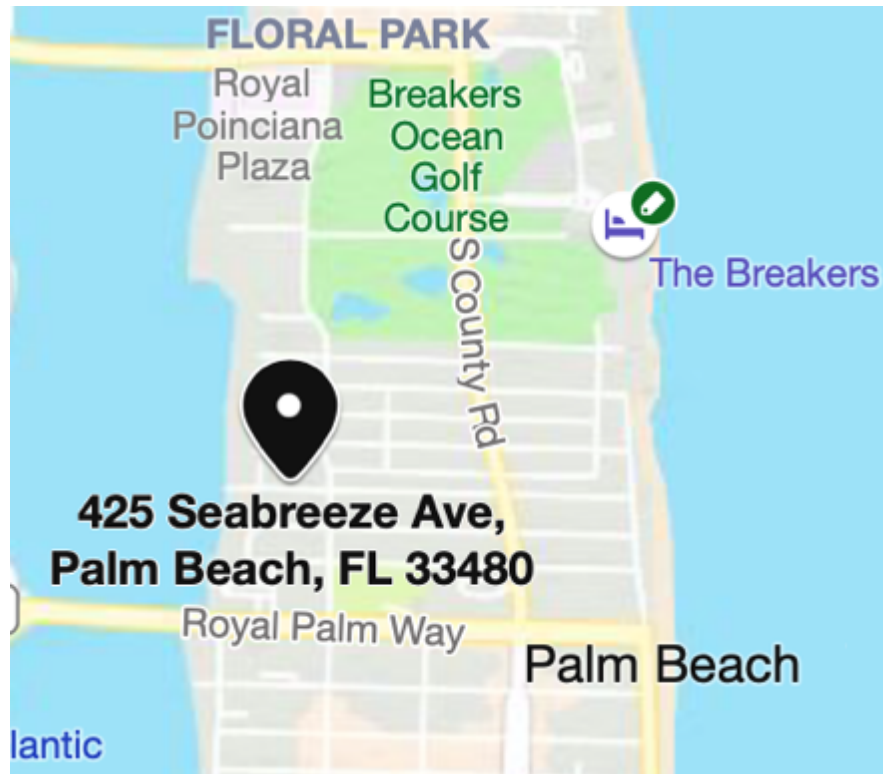
Report produced by Murphy Stillings, LLC

I. General Information

Location:	425 Seabreeze Avenue Palm Beach, Florida
Date of Construction:	1917-1918
First Owner:	Mrs. Blanche G. Van Every
Historic Name:	Por-El-Mar
Current Owner:	Timothy and Marion Murphy
Architect/Builder:	Unknown
Present Use:	Residential
Present Zoning:	RB
Palm Beach County Tax Folio Number:	50-43-43-22-06-000-0260
Current Legal Description:	Poinciana Park Lots 26, 28, 30 & 32

II. Location Map

425 Seabreeze Avenue



III. Architectural Information

The residence located at 425 Seabreeze Avenue is a 2-story frame structure covered with smooth stucco constructed in 1917-1918.¹ A two-story rear garage apartment at the northwest corner of the property was constructed at the same time. The house and garage were originally built in the frame vernacular style which was common of early Palm Beach houses built in the 1910s.



South and West Facades Looking Northwest

In 1937, noted Palm Beach architect Howard Major designed additions and alterations to this dwelling that included two wing additions projecting to the east and west as well as alterations to the south façade and portions of the east and west facades which turned the frame vernacular dwelling to a dwelling with a Georgian Revival design.² The Georgian Revival style had become a fashionable style in Palm Beach in the 1930s and Howard Major was adept at designing buildings in this style.

¹ This date was derived from researching Sanborn Insurance Company Maps, City Directories and newspaper articles.

² Palm Beach Building Permit #5537 dated April 9, 1937. The builder was Karl Riddle.

The south facing façade features a glass enclosed full-length front porch topped by a roof deck with a decorative rail.³ The symmetrical second story has two sets of French doors topped by a prominent triangular pediment on the front gable end. Within the pediment are vertical boards and a circular attic vent.



South Façade Looking North

As previously noted, in 1937 two wing additions were constructed projecting to the east and west.⁴ Both of these wings are second story additions supported by square posts and pilasters. Above the posts are molded cornices and like the south façade the wings have prominent triangular pediments on the gable ends. Along the west wall beneath the wing is the main entry to the dwelling which consists of a wood-paneled door flanked by sidelights and accessed by tiled stairs. The projecting west wing also creates a porte cochere. Along the east wall under the wing are three multi-light French doors leading to a covered patio. Adjacent to this east wing is a tall, narrow chimney. The dwelling features eight-over-one and eight-over-eight double-hung sash windows as well as fixed multi-light windows.

³ The porch currently has large louvered Bermuda shutters covering much of the windows.

⁴ Both wings were built to contain bathrooms.



West Façade Entry to Dwelling Looking East.



East Façade Looking Northwest

The rear portion of the house north of the projecting wings reflects the original Frame Vernacular style of the dwelling. This portion has wide overhanging eaves with carved rafter tails, eight-over-one double-hung sash windows on the second story and a roof vent dormer with wide overhanging eaves and rafter tails.



East and North (Rear) Facades Looking Southwest

The garage apartment, though altered with the garage doors removed and replaced with windows and doors, is still reflective of the early frame vernacular style with its hipped roof with wide overhanging eaves and rafter

tails and the ribbon of six-over-one double-hung sash windows on the south façade.⁵



South (Front) Façade of Garage Apartment.



East Façade of Garage Apartment

Although 425 Seabreeze Avenue has had significant additions and alterations during its over one-hundred-year history, the 1937 additions and alterations have derived their own significance and therefore the house retains historic architectural integrity.

IV. Historical Information

The house at 425 Seabreeze Avenue is located in the Poinciana Park subdivision. Poinciana Park was platted and largely developed by Oscar A. Jose and his City Builders Realty Company. Jose created Poinciana Park by purchasing tracts of land south of the Breakers and the Royal Poinciana Hotel from Lake Worth to the Atlantic Ocean. This area became the “Sea” streets with Sea Breeze platted in 1914 followed by Sea Spray in 1917 and the north side of Sea View in 1923.⁶ A brochure designed and distributed by City Builders Realty Company titled “Poinciana Park, The Preferred Location,” goes into great detail about the many advantages of wintering in Palm Beach and the benefits of owning a house in centrally located Poinciana Park, close to all of the town’s amenities but removed from the “rush and bustle of the hotel center.”⁷ Oscar Jose was one of the early developers to recognize the

⁵ This building now serves as a cabana and storage on the first floor with bedrooms and a bath on the second floor.

⁶ Sea Breeze, Sea Spray and Sea View were the original spellings of the Poinciana Park Avenues.

⁷ “Poinciana Park, The Preferred Location,” Brochure distributed by City Builders Realty. No Date. Located in the Poinciana Park file at the Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach. Ownership or seasonal rental of a house in Poinciana Park included a membership in the Sea Spray Beach Club. Located on the

potential in Palm Beach for building something other than a grand estate or spending the season at a hotel. Poinciana Park was an attempt to make Palm Beach more family oriented and the Palm Beach lifestyle more accessible to the “upper-middle class.”⁸ City Builders built houses on speculation as well as houses commissioned by clients. A number of the houses built on speculation were popular rental properties prior to being purchased. City Builders also sold lots to other builders and developers. At the time, the houses were called “cottages” and residents were considered part of the “cottage colony.” Many people named their cottages as a way to personalize their homes.

Mrs. William H. (Blanche) Van Every commissioned 425 Seabreeze Avenue to be constructed in 1917 and it was successfully completed in 1918. An April 11, 1918, Palm Beach Post article stated:

“Mrs. William H. Van Every left for her summer home in Troy, New York, expecting to return at an early date in the fall to occupy her house in Poinciana Park which has just been completed. Mrs. Van Every was so delighted with Palm Beach that no time was lost after having purchased a homesite in entering a contract for the erection and completion of a handsome bungalow, and she delayed her departure north for a short time to witness the completion of the structure.”⁹

Mrs. Van Every named the house Por-El-Mar and lived in the dwelling for eight years. Several people lived at 425 Seaspray Avenue from 1926-1937 including E.L. Hendricks, Gail Q. Porter, and Mrs. George W. (Dorothy) Helme. In 1937, Prince Balthasar Odescalchi purchased the dwelling and hired noted Palm Beach architect Howard Major to make additions and alterations to expand the living space and turn the Frame Vernacular style house into a Georgian Revival style house. Prince Balthasar Gialma Odescalchi was a member of the Hungarian branch of a patrician Italian family. He was a descendent of Livia Odescalchi, a nephew of Pope Innocent XI, who was created a Prince of the Holy Roman Empire in the seventeenth century. He was born in Hungary and in his youth served in the Austro-Hungarian

ocean side of South Ocean Boulevard and Seaspray Avenue, the fashionable club provided members with an Olympic-sized pool, tennis courts, a solarium, and popular dining facilities.

⁸ “Preservationist’s Home Gets Landmarks’ OK,” Palm Beach Daily News, 22 January 1998.

⁹ Palm Beach Post, April 11, 2018, Page 3. It is not known if Mrs. Van Every purchased her homesite from City Builders and commissioned them to construct her house or whether she purchased the homesite from City Builders and had an outside builder/contractor construct the house.

diplomatic service.¹⁰ Prince and Princess Odescalchi lived at 425 Seabreeze Avenue from 1937 – 1946 and were often noted in local newspapers entertaining at their dwelling.¹¹

The current owners, Timothy and Marion Murphy, purchased the house in April of 2021 and have plans to be excellent stewards of this historic dwelling.

V. Statement of Significance

Constructed in 1917-1918, 425 Seabreeze Avenue is one of the early extant houses constructed in Poinciana Park prior to the building boom of the 1920s. Palm Beach is known to attract eminent residents, and Prince Balthasar Odescalchi lived in the dwelling for nearly ten years and hired noted architect Howard Major to design additions and alterations to the dwelling that created a more formal design.

VI. Criteria For Designation

Section 54-161 of the Town of Palm Beach Landmarks Preservation Ordinance outlines the criteria for designation of a landmark or landmark site and suggests that at least one criterion must be met to justify the designation. Listed below are criteria that relate to this property and justification for designation:

(1) “Exemplifies or reflects the broad cultural, political, economic or social history of the nation, state, county or town.”

The house located at 425 Seabreeze Avenue reflects the broad cultural, social and economic history of the Town of Palm Beach. Seabreeze Avenue is part of the Poinciana Park subdivision that was one of the Island’s first successful large residential developments. While prior to 1919, Palm Beach’s reputation had mostly rested on the fashionable hotels, the success of Poinciana Park and early houses like 425 Seabreeze Avenue helped to establish another dimension to the development of Palm Beach. The house is also important as it was owned and by Prince and Princess Balthasar Odescalchi for nearly ten years and because it helps maintain the historic fabric of Seabreeze Avenue, the Sea Streets, and the development of the town.

¹⁰ The New York Times. July 15, 1957.

¹¹ In 1940, Prince Odescalchi became an American citizen and dropped his title of prince.

(3) “Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or is a specimen inherently valuable for the study of a period, style, method of construction or use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship.”

425 Seabreeze Avenue is a specimen inherently valuable for study as it is an example of the changing preference of architectural styles in Palm Beach. The house was originally constructed in 1917-1918 in the Frame Vernacular style which was a common building style at the time. Frame vernacular dwellings were often designed and constructed by builders and developers without the aid of an architect. By the mid-1930s, more formal architecture had come to Palm Beach and Howard Major designed additions and alterations to the property which included prominent triangular pediments more reminiscent of the Georgian Revival style. Evidence of the original Frame Vernacular style remains on the rear of the dwelling as well as the accessory building that originally served as the garage apartment.

VII. Selected Bibliography

The Historical Society of Palm Beach County. Palm Beach County History Online

Marconi, Richard A. and Murray, Debi. Images of America: Palm Beach. Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2009.

McAlester, Virginia Savage. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 2015. Revised and expanded from the original edition written by Virginia and Lee McAlester.

Palm Beach County Official Records Books, Poinciana Park Second Addition 1917 – 1950.

The Palm Beach Daily News. Archived Articles Online

The Palm Beach Post. Archived Articles Online


The Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach. Files on Poinciana Park; 425 Seaspray Avenue file

Sanborn Insurance Map of Palm Beach. New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1919 and 1926. City of West Palm Beach Public Library, Florida Room.

Town of Palm Beach. Building Permits, 1937 – 2021.

West Palm Beach City Directories. Asheville, NC: Florida-Piedmont Directory Company, 1916 -1986. These city directories included Town of Palm Beach directories and information on Palm Beach residents.

VIII. Florida Master Site File Form

Page 1 

Original
 Update

**HISTORICAL STRUCTURE FORM
FLORIDA MASTER SITE FILE
Version 5.0 3/19**

Shaded Fields represent the minimum acceptable level of documentation.
Consult the Guide to Historical Structure Forms for detailed instructions.

Clear Form Values

Site# **PB06727**
Field Date 12-8-2019
Form Date 9-16-2020
Recorder # MAS

Site Name(s) (address if none) 425 Seabreeze AVE Multiple Listing (DHR only) _____
Survey Project Name Palm Beach Historical Site Survey Survey # (DHR only) _____

National Register Category (please check one) building structure district site object

Ownership: private-profit private-nonprofit private-individual private-nonspecific city county state federal Native American foreign unknown

LOCATION & MAPPING Clear Location Values

Address: 425 Seabreeze Avenue

Cross Streets (nearest / between) _____

USGS 7.5 Map Name PALM BEACH USGS Date 1986 Plat or Other Map _____

City / Town (within 3 miles) Palm Beach In City Limits? yes no unknown County Palm Beach

Township 43S Range 43E Section 22 ¼ section: NW SW SE NE Irregular-name: _____

Tax Parcel # 50434322060000260 Landgrant _____

Subdivision Name POINCIANA PARK IN Block 000 Lot 0260

UTM Coordinates: Zone 16 17 Easting Northing

Other Coordinates: X: _____ Y: _____ Coordinate System & Datum _____

Name of Public Tract (e.g., park) _____

HISTORY Clear History Values

Construction Year: 1920 approximately year listed or earlier year listed or later

Original Use Private Residence (House/Cottage/Ca From (year): 1920 To (year): 2020
Current Use Private Residence (House/Cottage/Ca From (year): 1920 To (year): 2020
Other Use _____ From (year): _____ To (year): _____

Moves: yes no unknown Date: _____ Original address: _____

Alterations: yes no unknown Date: _____ Nature windows

Additions: yes no unknown Date: _____ Nature _____

Architect (last name first): _____ Builder (last name first): _____

Ownership History (especially original owner, dates, profession, etc.)
WULGIN HENRY H &

Is the Resource Affected by a Local Preservation Ordinance? yes no unknown Describe _____

DESCRIPTION Clear Description Values

Style Frame Vernacular Exterior Plan T-shaped Number of Stories 2

Exterior Fabric(s) 1. Stucco 2. Wood siding 3. _____

Roof Type(s) 1. Cross-gabled 2. _____ 3. _____

Roof Material(s) 1. Concrete tile 2. _____ 3. _____

Roof secondary struc. (stomers etc.) 1. _____ 2. _____

Windows (types, materials, etc.)
various, incld: grouped fixed replacement, wood 8/1, wood divided fixed, stucco sills, Bermuda & hinged shutters, narrow French doors

Distinguishing Architectural Features (exterior or interior ornaments)
cross gable w/o overhang, passthrough, maybe enclosed porch, balcony over porch, round vent & vertical siding in gable end

Ancillary Features / Outbuildings (record outbuildings, major landscape features; use continuation sheet if needed.)
paver drive, ancillary rear bldg, gravel, privacy hedge

DHR USE ONLY	OFFICIAL EVALUATION	DHR USE ONLY
NR List Date _____	SHPO – Appears to meet criteria for NR listing: <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> insufficient info KEEPER – Determined eligible: <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no Clear Check Boxes NR Criteria for Evaluation: <input type="checkbox"/> a <input type="checkbox"/> b <input type="checkbox"/> c <input type="checkbox"/> d (see National Register Bulletin 15, p. 2)	Date _____ Init _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Owner Objection		Date _____

DESCRIPTION (continued)

Clear Description Values

Chimney: No. 0 Chimney Material(s): 1. _____ 2. _____
 Structural System(s): 1. Wood frame 2. _____ 3. _____
 Foundation Type(s): 1. Continuous 2. _____
 Foundation Material(s): 1. Concrete, Generic 2. _____

Note: you may use the text box in each field to type in an answer that does not appear in the list provided.

Main Entrance (stylistic details)

perpendicular to street, multi panel, sidelights, wood frame

Porch Descriptions (types, locations, roof types, etc.)

under projection, masonry steps, square piers

Condition (overall resource condition): excellent good fair deteriorated ruinous

Narrative Description of Resource

This 1920 Frame Vernacular style building is in fair condition. It was previously identified as a Colonial Revival, suggesting additional alterations.

Archaeological Remains _____ Check if Archaeological Form Completed

RESEARCH METHODS (select all that apply)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FMSF record search (sites/surveys) | <input type="checkbox"/> library research | <input type="checkbox"/> building permits | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sanborn maps |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FL State Archives/photo collection | <input type="checkbox"/> city directory | <input type="checkbox"/> occupant/owner interview | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> plat maps |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> property appraiser / tax records | <input type="checkbox"/> newspaper files | <input type="checkbox"/> neighbor interview | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Lands Survey (DEP) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> cultural resource survey (CRAS) | <input type="checkbox"/> historic photos | <input type="checkbox"/> interior inspection | <input type="checkbox"/> HABS/HAER record search |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other methods (describe) <u>Town Staff</u> | | | |

Bibliographic References (give FMSF manuscript # if relevant, use continuation sheet if needed)

OPINION OF RESOURCE SIGNIFICANCE

Clear Significance Values

Appears to meet the criteria for National Register listing individually? yes no insufficient information
 Appears to meet the criteria for National Register listing as part of a district? yes no insufficient information

Explanation of Evaluation (required, whether significant or not; use separate sheet if needed)

This structure does not appear to meet criteria for individual listing, and more research regarding any alterations would be needed to determine district eligibility.

Area(s) of Historical Significance (see National Register Bulletin 15, p. 8 for categories: e.g. 'architecture', 'ethnic heritage', 'community planning & development', etc.)

1. _____ 3. _____ 5. _____
 2. _____ 4. _____ 6. _____

DOCUMENTATION

Clear Documentation Values

Accessible Documentation Not Filed with the Site File - including field notes, analysis notes, photos, plans and other important documents

- 1) Document type _____ Maintaining organization _____
 Document description _____ File or accession #s _____
- 2) Document type _____ Maintaining organization _____
 Document description _____ File or accession #s _____

RECORDER INFORMATION

Recorder Name Patricia Davenport-Jacobs Affiliation Environmental Services, Inc.
 Recorder Contact Information 7220 Financial Way, Suite 100, Jacksonville, FL 32256/9044702200/pdavenport@
 (address / phone / fax / e-mail)

Required Attachments

- ① USGS 7.5' MAP WITH STRUCTURE LOCATION CLEARLY INDICATED
- ② LARGE SCALE STREET, PLAT OR PARCEL MAP (available from most property appraiser web sites)
- ③ PHOTO OF MAIN FACADE, DIGITAL IMAGE FILE

When submitting an image, it must be included in digital AND hard copy format (plain paper grayscale acceptable). Digital image must be at least 1600 x 1200 pixels, 24-bit color, jpeg or tiff.