

# **4 Ocean Lane**



## **DESIGNATION REPORT**

**February 16, 2022**

**Landmark Preservation Commission**

**Palm Beach, Florida**

# **DESIGNATION REPORT**

## **4 Ocean Lane**

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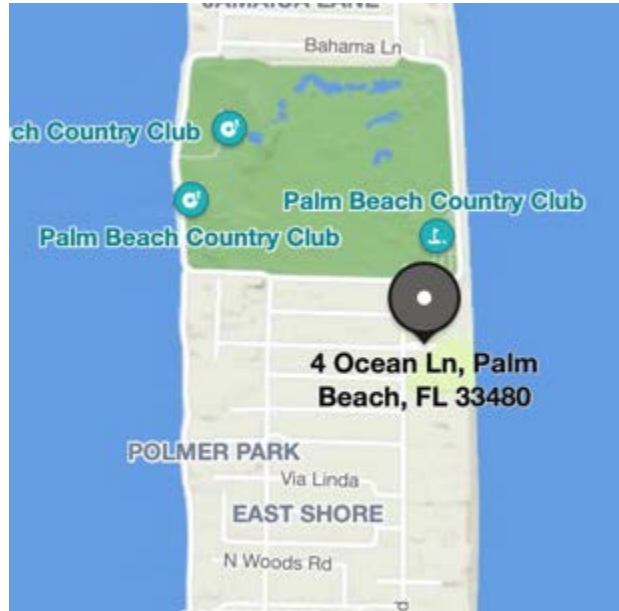
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Report produced by Murphy Stillings, LLC

## **I. General Information**

Location:	4 Ocean Lane (Previously known as 711 North County Road) Palm Beach, Florida
Date of Construction:	1952
First Owner:	Dr. David Newman
Architect:	Howard Chilton
Builder/Contractor:	P. C. Lissenden
Engineer:	James Borowski
Current Owner:	4 Ocean Lane LLC
Present Use:	Residence
Present Zoning	R-B
PBC Tax Folio Number:	50-43-43-11-02-000-0040
Current Legal Description:	Ocean Lane Lot 4

## II. Location Map





### III. Architectural Information

The residence at 4 Ocean Lane was designed in the Monterey style by Howard Chilton in 1952 for approximately \$42,000.<sup>1</sup> It is located on the southeast corner of Ocean Lane and North County Road just two lots west of the Atlantic Ocean. The driveway, which is located on the west side of the dwelling, is entered from Ocean Lane and extends south to the one-story attached garage that faces west toward North County Road. A low brick retaining wall is located along Ocean Lane and there are brick piers at the driveway entrance.



4 Ocean Lane is a very good example of Howard Chilton's interpretation of the Monterey style of architecture. The Monterey style originated in Monterey, California in the 1830s and was mostly a free interpretation of the Anglo-influenced Spanish Colonial houses of northern California. California architect Roland E. Coate, Sr., played a crucial role in reviving the style in the late 1920s when he wrote about early Monterey houses, designed at least two houses in the style and won a prestigious Better Homes in America award for a Monterey design, all helping to bring attention to the Monterey style to both professionals and the public. The style was mostly popular in the United States from the 1925-1955.<sup>2</sup> In Palm Beach, most

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<sup>1</sup> The original address for this property was 711 N. County Road. It was changed to 4 Ocean Lane in 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Virginia Savage McAlester. A Field Guide to American Houses. Knopf, Borzoi Books, 2013. Pages 537-540.

of the early architects including Trainor and Fatio, Marion Sims Wyeth, Howard Major, John Volk, Gustav Maass and Howard Chilton designed Monterey style houses. Many of the Palm Beach designs have Creole French influence with lacy metal balustrades and posts influenced by the upper-level balconies of New Orleans.

The Monterey style is a fusion of revival styles including Spanish Colonial, British Colonial and French Creole. The result is designs that are mostly two-story residences with the main identifying feature being a second story, cantilevered, open-air balcony covered by the principal roof. Decorative detailing of Monterey residences is often confined to the balcony railing, which are typically styled in wood or iron. The roofs are characteristically low-pitched with a side-facing gable or hip and windows are often flanked with shutters.



North Façade

The two-story Monterey style residence at 4 Ocean Lane is constructed of concrete block faced with brick veneer that has been painted white.<sup>3</sup> The house has low-pitched hip roofs with overhanging eaves and exposed rafters and is surfaced with flat cement tiles. The front façade of the L-shaped residence is composed of a main block and a wing that projects north.

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<sup>3</sup> The original drawings state that “old” brick was used.



The main block of the residence contains the focal point of the Monterey style house - the second story cantilevered balcony with a decorative lacy metal railing and matching ornate posts supported by exposed wood beams and thin square columns. The first floor of this section contains the main entrance offset to the west with a wood and glazed door surrounded by wood reeded molding. East of the entry is a large picture window flanked by twelve-light fixed windows. Behind the decorative rail and posts on the second story is a multi-light door leading to the balcony at the west end and three nine-light casement windows flanked by louvered shutters east of the door. The first story of the wing features a charming projecting bay window supported by a brick veneer base and covered by a standing seam copper roof, while the second story has two nine-light casement windows flanked by louvered shutters.



Detail of Cantilevered Balcony and Railing



Bay Window

The west elevation facing North County Road has nine-light and six-light casement windows flanked by louvered shutters on the first and second stories. At the rear on the west is a hipped roof garage with an overhead garage door and an attached room to the north that serves as a side entry with an awning above the door. The east elevation has a ribbon of three nine-light casement windows as well as paired nine-light casement windows.



West Facade

During the dwellings seventy-year history there have additions, alterations, and repairs to the dwelling. In 1957 a swimming pool was constructed and in 1969 a loggia was added to the rear of the dwelling. In 2019-2021, the house underwent a large renovation including the replacement of the awning windows with impact multi-light casement windows. In addition, the doors, shutters, roof, and garage doors were replaced, the house was painted, awnings were added, and the balcony was repaired. Though this was a significant renovation, the size, scale and fenestration of the house was retained, and the historic architectural character of the dwelling remains intact.

#### **IV. Historical Information**

4 Ocean Drive was designed and constructed in 1952 shortly after the end of World War II. The Second World War and its aftermath brought significant changes to Palm Beach. During the course of the War the Army stationed thousands of troops in and around Palm Beach County. Nonessential construction was halted so there was very little new construction in town during the war years.

Following World War II, Florida had explosive economic and demographic growth as America began to recover and reconvert to a peacetime economy. Thousands of people who came to Florida during the War decided to live and visit afterwards.



While the nation's overall population grew 15% after the war, Florida's population rose an astonishing 46%.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the lifting of wartime restrictions and an increasing supply of materials accelerated Florida's Post-War economy with new construction and this became the second big building boom in Palm Beach.<sup>5</sup> Although there was new construction throughout Palm Beach, the town's North End had vast growth. In May of 1952, the Palm Beach County Commission approved the Plat of Ocean Lane, a subdivision located south of the Coral Beach Club and between North County Road and the Atlantic Ocean on the former Haven's property.<sup>6</sup>

The new subdivision was being developed by Maurice Brams, Max P. Sonberg and Jacob B. Ribakoff and consisted of seven large lots of various sizes with a central turn way.<sup>7</sup> Dr. David Newman purchased Lot 4 of the Ocean Lane subdivision and commissioned Howard Chilton to design a house for the property, with the building permit dated October 1, 1952. The builder of record was P. C. Lissenden Company, Inc. Dr. David Newman was a noted Palm Beach physician specializing in heart disease who lived with his family at 4 Ocean Lane for approximately 15 years. Arthur J. and Mary Poisson purchased the house circa 1967 and lived there for over fifty years. Arthur J. Poisson was a leader in realty and investments, owned Rapids Water Park, served as president of Vacation Inn Properties and vice president of P.D. Lewis Inc. in the greater Palm Beach area. The house is currently owned by 4 Ocean Lane LLC.<sup>8</sup>

## **V. Architect's Biography**

Thomas Howard Chilton, a native Floridian, was an architect inspired by open spaces. Chilton always wanted to "capture the view and nature's gifts." While he was known to use widely varied styles in both commercial and residential designs Chilton capitalized on the tropical setting of Palm Beach for his local buildings. These influences were evident in the numerous curvilinear designs by Chilton in Palm Beach.

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<sup>4</sup> The 1940 pre-war population of Palm Beach County, nearly 80,000, would grow to almost 115,000 by 1950 and escalate quickly from there.

<sup>5</sup> Augustus Mayhew. Palm Beach: A Greater Grandeur.

<sup>6</sup> The Coral Beach Club is now The Beach Club.

<sup>7</sup> The subdivision was on the former Havens property and all lots were at least the required 10,000 square feet. J.T. Havens was an early resident of Palm Beach and in addition to being a real estate developer, Havens was a member of the Palm Beach Town Council, President of the Palm Beach Chamber of Commerce, inventor of the Afro-mobile, and owner of several businesses in town including the Garden Theater on Main Street.

<sup>8</sup> An October 11, 2021, Palm Beach Daily News article links 4 Ocean Lane to Elizabeth Ailes, the widow of Robert Ailes.

Chilton, born in 1909 in New Smyrna, was raised in West Palm Beach. A graduate of Palm Beach High School in 1927, he later earned a degree in fine arts and architecture from New York University in 1931. During several college summer breaks he worked for Treanor and Fatio. His earliest works were in Manhattan where he worked on the original RCA Building. Establishing his own office in Palm Beach in 1941, Chilton designed numerous properties in Palm Beach in addition to alterations and additions for the Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables and for Mount Vernon Lodges in Jacksonville and Miami. Chilton's foreign travel for design inspiration included trips to Argentina, Chile, Brazil and the West Indies.

Chilton designed numerous residences in Palm Beach. Many of his residential designs are found from Sanford Avenue north to the Inlet. His private clientele included P.A. Widener III, Judge Richard P. Robbins, Dr. J.R. Soy, Dr. Stuart F. Roux and Mrs. Jose de Landa. Chilton had a big impact on Palm Beach with his numerous apartment and condominium projects. His Palm Beach apartment designs include the Regency House, Lake Drive Apartments, Ocean Terrace Apartments and the Monte Christo Apartments. His curvilinear Palm Beach apartment and condominium designs include 2500 South Ocean Boulevard, 300 South Ocean Boulevard, One Royal Palm Way, Park Place at 369 South Lake Drive, Southlake at 315 South Lake Drive, 389 South Lake Drive, Melbourne House at 227 Australian Avenue, The Australian of Palm Beach at 429 Australian Avenue and 880 South Ocean Boulevard.

The socially prominent Chilton served as president of the Norton Gallery of Art and the Palm Beach Art League as well as being a member of the American Institute of Architects, secretary of the local AIA chapter and a member of the Society of the Four Arts. His works were featured in the AIA magazine and in numerous newspaper articles. Chilton died in 1992, having designed over 700 private residences and numerous apartment buildings and condominiums throughout his career. Always known to carry a sketchpad and pencil, Chilton was married to Sylvia Chilton, a popular local artist.

## **VI. Statement of Significance**

4 Ocean Lane is significant as a very good example of the Monterey style designed by noted Palm Beach architect Howard Chilton in Palm Beach's post-World War II building boom. Its unobstructed location on the corner of North County Road and Ocean Lane makes this a familiar Palm Beach dwelling, and its recent renovation updated the house in a manner that preserved the house while maintaining the size, scale, and fenestration of the original design.

## VII. 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, which 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.”**

4 Ocean Lane reflects the broad economic history of the Town of Palm Beach as it was built during the Post World War II building boom in Palm Beach’s newly plated Ocean Lane subdivision. It’s location along North County Road in the near north end with adjacent beach access made the lot and dwelling a prime real estate location and asset.

- (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.”**

4 Ocean Lane is a classic Monterey style house with the focal point being the second story cantilevered balcony with a decorative lacy metal railing and matching ornate posts covered by an extension of the principal roof. A common Florida version of the Monterey style found on this dwelling are the overhanging roof eaves with exposed rafter tails. Additional interesting features of the dwelling are the projecting bay window on the north facing wing and the wood reeded molding surrounding the main entry door.

- (4) “Is representative of the notable work of a master builder, designer or architect whose individual ability has been recognized or has influenced his age.”**

Howard Chilton was an important and prolific architect in Palm Beach from the 1930s through the 1970s. He designed many single-family dwellings in Palm Beach’s north end as well as 15 apartment or condominium buildings in midtown Palm Beach. His designs were innovative and provided the most modern conveniences for the time. This dwelling is a very good example of Howard Chilton’s interpretation of the Monterey style in Palm Beach.



## **VIII. Selected Bibliography**

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Town of Palm Beach. Building Permits and Microfiche Records 1952– 2021.

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## IX. 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.

Site# **PB18946**  
Field Date **11-22-2019**  
Form Date **8-20-2020**  
Recorder # **MAD**

Site Name(s) (address if none) **711 N County Rd** 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

Street Number **711** Direction **N** Street Name **County** Street Type **Road** Suffix Direction \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
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 **11** 1/4 section: ☐ NW ☐ SW ☐ SE ☐ NE Irregular-name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tax Parcel # **50434311020000040** Landgrant \_\_\_\_\_  
Subdivision Name **OCEAN LANE IN** Block **000** Lot **0040**  
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: **1953** ☐ approximately ☐ year listed or earlier ☐ year listed or later  
Original Use **Private Residence (House/Cottage/Ca** From (year): **1953** To (year): **2020**  
Current Use **Private Residence (House/Cottage/Ca** From (year): **1953** To (year): **2020**  
Other Use \_\_\_\_\_ From (year): \_\_\_\_\_ To (year): \_\_\_\_\_  
Moves: ☐ yes ☐ no ☐ unknown Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Original address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Alterations: ☐ yes ☐ no ☒ unknown Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Nature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Additions: ☐ yes ☐ no ☒ unknown Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Nature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Architect (last name first): \_\_\_\_\_ Builder (last name first): \_\_\_\_\_  
Ownership History (especially original owner, dates, profession, etc.)  
**POISSON ARTHUR J**  
Is the Resource Affected by a Local Preservation Ordinance? ☐ yes ☒ no ☐ unknown Describe \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIPTION

Clear Description Values

Style **Montarey** Exterior Plan **Rectangular** Number of Stories **2**  
Exterior Fabric(s) **1. Brick** 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
Roof Type(s) **1. Hip** 2. **Hip** 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
Roof Material(s) **1. Concrete tile** 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
Roof secondary strucs. (domes etc.) **1. Shed extension** 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
Windows (types, materials, etc.)  
**single 3 and 4 light metal awning windows, operable louvered shutters, bay window**  
Distinguishing Architectural Features (exterior or interior ornaments)  
**hip roof, exposed rafter tails, brick exterior, partial width 2nd story balcony, rear semi detached garage**  
Ancillary Features / Outbuildings (record outbuildings, major landscape features; use continuation sheet if needed.)  
**corner lot, mature vegetation, single car drive, palms**

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 Date _____ Init. _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Owner Objection	KEEPER – Determined eligible: <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> insufficient info Date _____	
	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)	

## DESCRIPTION (continued)

Clear Description Values

Chimney No. 0 Chimney Material(s): 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Structural System(s): 1. Masonry - General 2. Brick 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Foundation Type(s): 1. Continuous 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Foundation Material(s): 1. Concrete, Generic 2. \_\_\_\_\_

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

## Main Entrance (stylistic details)

slightly off center main entry under balcony on recessed facade

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

partial width recessed facade under balcony, square supports, balcony has decorative iron railings and supports

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

## Narrative Description of Resource

This 1953 Monterey style building is in good condition.

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 building may meet criteria for individual listing, but more research regarding any alterations would be needed to determine individual eligibility. It meets district criteria based on its architectural features and association within the Town of Pal

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

1. Community planning & development 3. \_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. Architecture 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

Document type \_\_\_\_\_ Maintaining organization \_\_\_\_\_  
 1) Document description \_\_\_\_\_ File or accession #s \_\_\_\_\_  
 Document type \_\_\_\_\_ Maintaining organization \_\_\_\_\_  
 2) 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.