Glossary of Architectural terms

The following is a glossary of architectural terms that may be referred to when undertaking the heritage trails or consulting the website.

Abacus The uppermost member of a capital of a column, often a plain, square slab.

Alteration Any change affecting an existing structure externally or internally such as remodeling,

structural alterations, additions, maintenance, relocation, and change of color or texture.

Ancones Consoles on either side of a doorway supporting a cornice.

Arcade A range of arches supported on piers or columns and attached or detached from the wall.

Architectural

Features Exterior or interior details of a structure such as roofs, doors, windows, flooring, and

decorative elements.

Architrave 1. The part of the composition of the Classical Orders where an upright member meets a

horizontal.

2. The decorated interior or exterior surrounds of a window or door at the head or jamb.

3. The beam or lowest division of the entablature, which extends column to column.

Baluster A spindle or post supporting the railing of a balustrade.

Balustrade A series of balusters with a top and bottom rail.

Bargeboard A decorative board covering the projecting portion of a gable roof.

Bay 1. The division of a facade of a building, defined by window and door openings.

2. An element which protrudes from the facade. (Bay window)

Beltcourse A flat, horizontal, member of relatively slight projection, marking the division in a wall

plane.

Belvedere A rooftop pavilion.

Boynton Beach Register of

Historic

Places An official listing maintained by the City of all Historic Properties and Historic Districts so

designated by this ordinance.

Bracket A decorative support feature located under eaves or overhangs.

Building A construction, such as a house, garage, church, or hotel, created principally to shelter

any form of human activity.

Burial Placing of remains in an underground chamber, usually in a cemetery.

Burial Ground A place dedicated to the interment of human remains.

Came Material used to hold the glass assembly together in stained glass windows. Common

materials include lead, copper, and zinc.

Canales A Spanish term for a water spout used to drain water from a roof.

Canopy An ornamental roof-like structure used on commercial buildings which provides

advertisement space, shade, and protection for the storefront and pedestrian traffic.

Capital The upper portion of a column or pilaster.

Cartouche Architectural ornamentation, often in the shape of a shield or scroll, used to bear a design

or inscription.

Carve Cut a design into stone using tools.

Casement

Window A hinged window which opens outwards.

Cemetery A place dedicated to the interment of human remains.

Chamfer A 90 degree corner cut to reduce it to two 45 degree edges.

Chevron A zigzag or V-shaped decoration usually used in series.

Cladding An outer veneer, consisting of one or more materials applied to the exterior walls of a

building.

Clipped Gable A gable with the upper point replaced by a small hip, leaving a truncated gable. Also

known as jerkinhead and half-hip.

Colonnade A series of columns supporting an entablature.

Columbarium A structure containing recesses for urns containing cremated remains.

Column A vertical support consisting of a base, shaft, and capital.

Composition

Shingles A roofing material composed of asphalt, fiberglass, or asbestos.

Coping A protective cap, top, or cover of a wall, chimney, or pilaster.

Coquina A material formed from donax shells found along the east coast of Florida.

Cornice The upper portion of the entablature, also used as the term for any crowning projection.

Crenelation A decorative feature that replicates the pattern of openings of a defensive parapet.

Cresting The decorative railing along the ridge of a roof.

Cupola A small vaulted structure attached to the roof of a building and supported either upon

solid walls or four arches.

Dado The part of a pedestal between the base and cornice. The term is also applied to the

lower portion of a wall between the skirting board and dado rail.

Dentil A tooth-like ornament occurring originally in Ionic and Corinthian orders, usually occurring

at the cornice line.

Dormer A secondary roof-top feature on the slope of a roof housing a window or vent for the

provision of ventilation, lighting, or living space.

Drop Siding A siding in which the upper portion of each board has

a concave curve. Also known as novelty, rustic, and German siding.

Demolition Any act or process that partially or totally destroys a structure, feature, or

site.

Eaves The projecting overhang at the edge of a roof.

Elevation A two-dimensional representation or drawing of an exterior face of a building.

Engraving Symbols, letters, or images etched into stone.

Entablature Beam member carried by columns containing an architrave, frieze, and cornice,

supported by a colonnade.

Epitaph An inscription on a gravestone.

Façade An elevation or face of a building.

Fanlight Semi-circular window over a door or window with a radiating glazing bar system.

Fascia Board A board at the edge of the eaves outside a building which caps the end of the rafters.

Fenestration The design and arrangement of windows and other exterior openings in a building.

Finial An ornament that caps a gable, hip, pinnacle or other architectural feature.

Florida Master

Site File An archive and database of recorded archaeological and historical sites and districts in

Florida that is maintained by the Florida Department of State Division of Historical

Resources.

Fluting The vertical channeling on the shaft of a column.

Footprint The outline of a building's ground plan from a top view.

Frieze The central section part of an entablature between the architrave and the cornice.

Gable The triangular section of a wall at the end of a pitched roof.

Gallery An upper story porch, balcony or walkway running along a wall either inside or outside a

building.

Gambrel Roof A double-sloped gable roof, which maximizes headroom on the upper level of a building.

Gothic Arch A pointed arch.

Grave A burial site dug into the ground.

Graveyard A place, generally around a church, for the burial of human remains.

Hip Roof A roof with sloping sides and no vertical ends.

Historic Site Any site, building, structure, object, or improvement designated by the City Commission

as having historical, cultural, architectural, or archaeological significance.

Incise Scratch a design into wet concrete using tools.

Infill Descriptive of a new structure that has been built to fill a gap in a streetscape

Integrity The authenticity of a property in terms of location, design, setting, materials,

workmanship, feeling and association.

Inscription Letters or symbols etched into stone.

Jalousie A type of window comprised of a series of horizontal slats connected to a mechanical

device operated by a crank.

Jamb Either of the vertical sides of an opening, such as doors, windows, arches, etc

Keystone The wedge-shaped stone at the top of an arch.

Knee Brace A wooden triangular brace that supports the eaves of a building.

Lattice A panel of crisscrossed, diagonal or perpendicular slats often utilized as decorative infill

between masonry foundation piers.

Light A pane of glass in a window.

Lintel A horizontal beam located above a window or door opening.

Loggia A gallery open on one or more sides, sometimes pillared.

Louver A small opening comprised of overlapping, downward sloping slats, which shed rain while

admitting light and air.

Mansard Roof A roof having two slopes on all four sides.

Marker A monument or memorial to mark the place of burial.

Masonry Brick, block, or stone.

Massing The arrangement of the various geometric forms of a building into a whole.

Mausoleum A free-standing building used for the placement of caskets or urns.

Medallion A circular tablet, ornamented with embossed or carved figures or patterns.

Modillion An ornamental block or bracket under the cornice in the Corinthian and other orders.

Molding A continuous decorative strip of material applied to a surface.

Mullion A division between multiple windows or screens.

Muntin The small members that divide glass in a window frame; vertical separators between

panels in a panel door.

National Register of Historic

Places The official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized by the

National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

Newel The post in which a handrail is framed.

Niche A cavity in a wall, to receive a statue or other ornament.

Object A primarily artistic item closely linked to the history of the property that is typically

relatively small in scale and simply constructed, such as a statue, milepost, statuary, or

fountain.

Offset The distance by which one thing is out of alignment with another.

Ogee A molding or arch with an s-shaped profile made up of convex and concave curves.

Order The specific configuration and proportions of a classical column, including the base,

shaft, capital and entablature. The classical orders are Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, Tuscan

and Composite.

Palladian

Window A window composed of a central arched sash flanked on either side by smaller side

lights.

Parapet A solid protective or decorative wall located along the outside edge of a roof.

Paterae Circular ornaments resembling classical saucers.

Pavilion A tower-like projecting element on an exterior wall usually at the center or at each end of

a building.

Pedestal A support for column, pilaster, statue or urn.

Pediment A triangular piece of wall above an entablature which fills in and supports the roof.

Pier A masonry structure, usually made of brick or concrete block, which elevates and

supports a building or part of a building.

Pilaster An architectural ornament imitating a column that projects from a wall with the same

proportions and details as the order in which it is used.

Pitch A term which refers to the steepness of a roof slope.

Plaque A stone or metal tablet on which is inscribed the name of the deceased.

Plinth A square solid piece under the base of a column, or pedestal.

Plot A single burial space in a cemetery.

Porch A covered, visually open space, projecting from the façade of a building, which serves as

a transition between inside and outside.

Porte Cochere A covered entrance providing protection from the elements which allows vehicles to pass through. They are normally attached to buildings, although some are free-standing.

through. They are normally attached to ballatings, although some are need ste

Portico The space enclosed within columns and forming a covered ambulatory.

Quoins Large stones or other materials used to decorate and accentuate the corners of a

building, laid vertically, usually with alternating large and small blocks.

Rafter A wooden member of a roof frame which slopes downward from the ridge line.

Reconstruction The process of reproducing by new construction the exact form and detail of a

demolished property as it appeared at a certain point in time.

Rehabilitation The process of repairing or altering a property so that an efficient, sustainable and

appropriate contemporary use is achieved, while preserving those significant historical,

architectural, or cultural features which establish the character of the property

Relief Carving raised above a background plane.

Relocation Any change of the location of a building, structure or object from its present setting to

another setting.

Restoration The process of accurately recovering the form and details of a property as it appeared at

a particular period of time, which may involve the removal of later additions or alterations,

or the replacement of missing features.

Return Usually a cornice return, where the cornice is carried a short distance onto the gable end

of a building.

Ridge The highest part of a roof.

Rustication A method of forming stonework with recessed joints and smooth or roughly textured block

faces.

Sash A frame that encloses the panes of a window.

Scale The proportions of a building in relation to its surroundings, particularly other buildings in

the surrounding context.

Setback A term used to define the distance a building or structure is located from a property line.

Setting The physical environment of a property including all landscape elements.

Shaft The part of a column between the base and the capital.

Shed Roof A roof with a single sloping pitch.

Shutter Dog Decorative hardware designed to secure shutters in an open position.

Sidelight A glass window pane located at the side of a main entrance way.

Site The location of an event, a prehistoric or historic occupation or activity, or a building or

structure, whether standing, ruined, or vanished, where the location itself possesses historic, cultural, or archaeological value regardless of the value of any existing structure.

Soffit The underside of an architectural feature such as an arch, cornice, eave, beam or stair.

Stamp Impress symbols or letters into wet concrete using an engraved block.

Stucco A masonry material applied as exterior wall fabric.

Structural

Glass Glass building blocks, reinforced plate glass, or pigmented structural glass.

Structure A combination of materials to form a construction, generally used to distinguish from

Buildings those functional constructions made for purposes other than creating human

shelter. (For example, a bridge, wall, fence, a pond).

Terracotta Earth colored baked clay products formed into molds and used as ornaments.

Tomb An enclosed space intended for the placement of the deceased

Transom

Window A glass pane, usually rectangular, which is located above a window or door.

Urn A container into which cremated remains or flowers may be placed.

Valley A depressed angle formed by the meeting at the bottom of two inclined sides of a roof, as

a gutter.

Vault An underground or partly buried structure used for the placement of the dead.

Verandah In Florida a porch extending along more than one elevation of a building.

Viga A projecting rounded roof beam found in Colonial and Spanish revival style buildings.

Wainscot The lower three or four feet of an interior wall when finished differently from the

remainder of the wall.

Weatherboard A type of cladding characterized by beveled overlapping boards with either tongue and

groove or rabbeted top and bottom edges.