

# **McLean Hunt Homeowners Association** **Standards and Guidelines for Exterior Architectural Changes**

## **Introduction**

Under the Restrictive Covenants recorded in the land records for McLean Hunt, the Board is charged with regulating the construction and improvement of homes within the community as to the “quality of workmanship and materials, harmony of external design with existing structures and location with respect to topography and finished grade elevation.” Obviously, this authority is rather broad, and challenges arise in applying these requirements to a particular submission.

As a result, the Board has developed this set of guidelines to assist homeowners in their projects and to implement a set of fair and uniform standards. This document is therefore intended to do two things: publicize the procedures that residents must follow when applying to the Association for permission to make an exterior change; and (2) to articulate specific architectural guidelines to assist residents in proposing acceptable changes to their property.

The goal of these guidelines is not to preclude homeowners from enhancing their houses to make them their homes; it is to provide guidelines on behalf of all the homeowners in the Hunt to ensure that our common look and feel—the curb-appeal that first attracted all of us to the neighborhood—remains intact. As homes begin to change significantly, especially from the front, the cohesiveness of the Hunt as a neighborhood is lessened and the value of all our homes is diminished. The Board seeks to protect all our homes’ values by avoiding the mishmash and hodgepodge that is commonplace in our area for non-HOA protected neighborhoods.

As previously stated, homeowners are strongly encouraged to open a dialogue with the Board as soon as they begin to contemplate renovations. The Board can help guide the homeowner away from changes that are less likely to be approved and even point homeowners to neighbors who have made similar renovations.

McLean Hunt Board  
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## **Part 1: Directions to Members seeking approval from the Architectural Control Committee**

### **Initial Plans and Schematics**

Prior to hiring a design professional, homeowners are encouraged to review the Restrictive Covenants for the Hunt, available on the McLean Hunt website, and these guidelines regarding the feasibility of proposed work.

Although not required, owners are strongly encouraged to seek an advisory opinion from the Board. In order to obtain an advisory opinion, the homeowner need have only a general idea of the work desired and be able to provide a rough sketch of their concept, also known as a schematic design. Documents submitted for this purpose can be of any nature that conveys the intent of the project. The homeowner may re-submit plans and specifications as frequently as needed to ensure compliance (no matter how preliminary the design materials). The idea is to save time and minimize design fees in cases where the conceptual design is not acceptable. The Board will then provide suggestions and guidance to the homeowner to assist in moving to the next phase where formal designs can be developed. An advisory opinion from the Board is not binding on either the Board or the homeowner, and should not be considered approval of the project.

### **Formal Plans**

Once formal design plans are developed, the homeowner must submit a formal and complete application to the Board for approval. A formal and complete application must include floor plans and elevations showing the existing house and proposed work, free of obvious mistakes and omissions.

The application should be to the entire HOA Board which can be reached at [maoob@mcleanhunt.net](mailto:maoob@mcleanhunt.net). Electronic submission is preferred for ease of sharing among the Board, but if a paper submission is made, the Board requests three complete copies to facilitate an expeditious decision. After a complete application is received, the Board will acknowledge receipt by email. If additional information is required by the Board, the homeowner will be notified that the application is deemed incomplete and what information is needed to complete the application. The Board will not act on the application until it is complete.

The Board will respond within 30 days to a proper submission. Generally, there will be a seven day comment period before the Board will vote. If the Board votes to reject the plans, the Member may appeal the decision and make a direct presentation to the Board. The homeowner may also choose to present their project to the Board at the start of discussions. In the case of a complex design, the Board may ask the homeowner to make a presentation to help understand details of the design. Once plans are approved by the Board, the homeowner has one year to start work, otherwise they must resubmit for approval.

## Purpose of the Plans

The purpose of the plans is to supply adequate information for the Board to make an informed and accurate judgment as to the appropriateness of the proposed project. The essential quality of the plans is to provide the Board with a visual match between what was applied for and what was approved.

## Variances

If the owner deviates from the approved plan in any way, the entire project may be deemed an unapproved exterior modification. The owner can apply to the Board for a variance at any time. In order to apply for a variance, the owner should re-submit the approved application, with the additional materials that explain the variance and any necessary plans, schematics or other documentation that illustrate the proposed change. The approval process for variances will otherwise be the same as for the initial application.

## General Design Criteria

The following guidelines should be used for the purpose of understanding what is expected by the Architectural Control Committee:

1. Changes to the front of the house should be minimal. For all changes to the front of the house, plans must include:
  - a. high-quality materials and construction,
  - b. design harmony with the existing structure,
  - c. siting that fits the topography, with appropriate finish grade elevation (the level of the soil or pavement adjacent to the structure), and
  - d. design compatibility with the McLean Hunt development viewed in its entirety.

*Nota Bene: In general, the Architectural Control Committee is going to be more stringent regarding design details at the front of the house and less so at the rear.*
2. Size and Mass: The overall size and mass of the existing house should remain reasonably unchanged from the street view. Larger additions are more acceptable in the rear of the house than in the front or sides.
3. Materials and Finishes: Only materials and finishes that are prevalent in the neighborhood are acceptable, primarily brick and horizontal siding.
4. Cohesiveness of the finished product: One major criterion for the Board is the cohesiveness of the finished product, especially as viewed from the street. The goal should be that when the project is finished, the renovated house, as a whole, looks as though it was completed at the same time.
5. Knockdowns: The Board recognizes that the economics of the building industry is making removal and replacement of houses more prevalent in our area. The Board will not approve a new home that appears to be substantially different in size, style or mass as

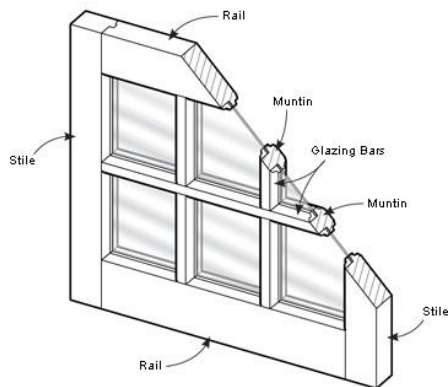
compared to existing Hunt homes. Given the complexity of these projects, the Board reserves the right to impose conditions on approval that protect the peace and tranquility of the neighborhood.

6. Style: The Board recognizes a *colonial motif* present in the original design intent of the neighborhood. Changes visible from the street should be seen as reinforcing that original intent. In addition, we see low foundations (most houses have 1-2 steps from grade to first floor) and overall height of 24-28'. The overall size and mass of the houses are consistent throughout and there is symmetry in each structure, especially in how the windows are arranged.

Typically, in the Hunt, there is a main central body of the house that is two stories and the side structures are subordinate to this main structure. This is achieved when the 2nd floor front wall on the side structure is set back 2-3 feet from the 1st floor front wall and there is a small portion of roofing breaking up the 1st and 2nd floors. These original houses are examples of what we are talking about: In both cases, the central main structure is two stories but over the side structures, the 2nd floor front wall is set back several feet and the lower roof breaks up the 1st and 2nd floor.

7. Height of house: The height of the house should remain unchanged. Raising the existing roofline of the house is not permitted and any addition to the house must be lower than the existing roofline.
8. Window Muntins and Shutters: The board has a preference for window muntins and shutters per the original design of the houses. Nevertheless, the HOA typically has not regulated the window styles, muntin patterns or shutters. It is permissible to change or eliminate them. Changing the size of the window or the opening in the wall does require approval.

9.



10. Front Doors: The front door style does not require approval but changing the size or the opening in the wall does require approval.
11. Garages: The maximum number of the garage spaces is two and the minimum is one car. Conversion of garages to living space will not be approved.

## **Part 2: Miscellaneous: Fences, Sheds, Children's play stuff, Satellite Dishes and Trash Can Enclosures**

### **Fences**

No fence or enclosure shall be built upon or around any lot nearer to the street or avenue upon which the lot fronts than the rear line of the residential structure situated on the said lot, which rear line shall be determined by extending to such side line of said lot a line parallel to and contiguous with the rear outline of said residential structure. Fences shall not exceed four feet in height and that portion of any fence which faces a street or avenue shall be constructed entirely of wood or masonry and shall be of at least 50% open design.

Because fences may be visible from the street and will affect the appearance of the home, homeowners must submit an application before constructing a new fence or replacing an existing fence.

The Board has made exceptions in the past for various reasons, including:

1. Swimming pools, spas and hot tubs: In situations where required by International Residential Code for One or Two Family Dwellings, the fence will conform to all Barrier Requirements as detailed in Appendix G: Swimming Pools, Spas and Hot Tubs Section AG105: Barrier Requirements or most recent version.
2. 7700 & 7701 are allowed to have three rail split-rail fence in front yard and side yard facing Lewinsville based on the fact that the original fences were installed by the builder in 1969.
3. The following houses are allowed to have a six foot high solid wood fence for noise abatement since they back up to busy roads (Swinks Mill and Lewinsville): 1215, 1217, 1219, 1225, 1227 and 1229 Old Stable Road.
4. Houses backing up to non-Hunt property (i.e., not owned by the HOA or an HOA member).
5. Irregular or Corner Lots on a case-by-case basis. 1201 SG is an example.
6. Side yards on houses located at 7724 and 7726 where the side yard is adjacent to the park easement.

### **Sheds and Detached Accessory Structures**

Fairfax County defines a "Shed" as (a.) 200 sq ft or less and (b.) less than 8' 6" tall. Once a structure is bigger than either criterion, it is defined as "Detached Accessory Structure".

One shed is permissible for each property. Detached Accessory Structures are not permitted. Sheds must be placed in the back yard defined as the area contained by allowable fence location.

### **Children's Play Houses and Equipment**

Children's play houses and equipment must be located in back yard.

### **Satellite Dishes**

Satellite Dishes should not be visible from the street if possible. If they need to be visible from the street for proper function, then they should be placed on a post as far back from the street as possible and screened with a planting.

### **Trash Cans**

Trash cans should not be visible from the front of the house. (They may be visible from the street as long as they are not visible when looking at the house straight-on.)

### **Part 3: A Photo Survey of Changed Houses with Board Comments Included.**

The following is a review of changed houses in the Hunt with the Board's views on acceptable and unacceptable changes. The addresses have been abbreviated. The following is a key:

BP = Bridle Path Lane  
HM = Huntmaster Lane  
SC = Stable Gate Court  
FR = Foxhound Road

OS = Old Stable Road  
SC = Stirrup Cup Lane  
FC = Foxhound Court

**7908 FR:** *Acceptable New Style:* The Board would vote “yes” for this project today. This house added a small front foyer. There are two precedents here: The front door was moved and there was a small vestibule added at front. In concept, this would seem difficult to get approval for this type of addition but in the clever use of the front porch and by matching the brick carefully, the new structure is tucked away in plain sight. All these changes are deemed an *Acceptable New Style* because it is seen as reinforcing the colonial motif of the neighborhood and harmonious with the existing house. Also of note, this house is set back on a 1 acre lot which also minimizes the impact into the neighborhood.





**1215 OS: *Acceptable New Style*:** : The Board would vote “yes” for this project today. There are several new features to this house. The style of the dormer structures is new although dormers are common. The exterior trim and siding details are new to the neighborhood and the overall effect is visually powerful. The shutters have been removed and the windows have a heavy muntin bar. It has a feeling of a period correct colonial style. All these changes are deemed an *Acceptable New Style* because it is seen as reinforcing the colonial motif of the neighborhood and harmonious with the existing houses. Notice the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor front walls over the garage are set back from the main central structure and there is roof structure that separates the 1st floor and the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Another positive factor is the cohesiveness of the finished product, the appearance of the renovated house is that it was completed at the same time.



**7721 BP: Acceptable New Style:** The Board would vote “yes” for this project today. There are several new features to this house. The style of the dormer structures is new although dormers in the Hunt are common. The shape of the awning windows in the dormers are new. This house also added overhangs on all the gables. All these changes are deemed an *Acceptable New Style* because they are viewed as reinforcing the colonial motif of the neighborhood and are harmonious with the existing houses. Notice the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor front walls are set back from the main central structure and there is roof structure that separates the 1st floor and the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Another positive factor is the cohesiveness of the finished product, the appearance of the renovated house is that it was completed at the same time.



(pre-construction)



**7705 BP:** *Acceptable New Style:* The Board would vote “yes” for this project today. . There are several new features to this house. This house creates the precedent of moving garage forward and enlarging it. The black standing seam metal roofing is a new material and a strong component. The 2<sup>nd</sup> story window farthest left is new and represents new space. The architect sets the new space back from the front wall of the main structure and lowers the roof to keep the original symmetry of the house. The porch roof breaks up the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. All these changes are deemed an *Acceptable New Style* because they are viewed as reinforcing the colonial motif of the neighborhood and are harmonious with the existing houses. Another positive factor is the cohesiveness of the finished product, the appearance of the renovated house is that it was completed at the same time.



(pre-construction)





**1175 OS: *Matching Existing Architecture:*** The Board would vote “yes” for this project today. This house has a 2<sup>nd</sup> floor addition over the garage. There are no forward facing windows but most importantly, the addition over the garage (left side) was designed to match to the right side. It looks as if the house was built at one time even though it was not. The house has a cohesive overall feeling in its design and construction. The side gable is plain and with little detailing.



**7726 BP: *Acceptable New Style*:** The Board would vote “yes” for this project today. This house is proposing a 2<sup>nd</sup> floor addition over the garage and a relocating of the front door with a gable façade on the roof centered over the front door. The gable façade is a new element for the Hunt although front facing gables are very common. The pattern of the front door with corresponding sidelights is mimicked on the windows of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor above. It adds a front porch consistent with existing Hunt houses. The overall design creates plenty of symmetry in the final product. The presence of the lower roof creates a visual break between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. The existing 2<sup>nd</sup> floor right side is modified to match the newly constructed left side creating a cohesive overall feeling in its design and construction. All these changes are deemed an *Acceptable New Style* because they are viewed as reinforcing the colonial motif of the neighborhood and are harmonious with the existing houses.





**Small change/big impact:** The following are houses where small changes make a big impact on the overall presentation of the house.

**1217 OS:** This house changed the wrought iron railing to wood. The change from the original style uses a typically colonial detailing. The Board would vote “yes” for this project today.



**1173 OS:** This house added some nice architectural detailing while maintaining the original form of the house. The front door was replaced with a glass door with glass sidelights, the shutters are architectural grade with operable functionality and a simple wood railing was added across the front porch. The house has a cohesive overall feeling in its design and construction.





**Part 4: A Photo Sampling of McLean Hunt**



7718 BP



1212 OS



1173 OS



7703 BP





7801 FR



7728 BP



7736 BP



7704 HM



1208 OS



7812 FR





7915 FR



1173 FC



1203 SG



7807 FR



1210 OS



7908 SC





1222 OS



7709 HM



7710 HM



7714 BP