

McLean Hunt Homeowners Association
Standards and Guidelines for Exterior Architectural Changes
Revised November 8, 2023

Introduction

Under the Restrictive Covenants recorded in the land records for McLean Hunt, the Board of Directors (BOD) 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.” This is obviously rather broad authority, and challenges arise in applying these requirements to a particular submission.

As a result, the Board has developed this set of fair and uniform guidelines to assist homeowners in their project. The Architectural Control Committee (ACC) is charged with reviewing and approving, or disapproving, changes to the exterior of any home in the subdivision, including structures and fences located on the property. This document is intended to do two things: (1) publicize the procedures that homeowners must follow when applying to the Association for permission to make an exterior change; and (2) to articulate specific architectural guidelines to assist homeowners in proposing acceptable changes to their property.

Homeowners are strongly encouraged to open a dialogue with the ACC as soon as they begin to contemplate renovations. The ACC can help guide the homeowner through the process and answer questions that may assist in having plans approved.

McLean Hunt Board
November 8, 2023

Part 1: Process for Requesting Exterior Architectural Changes

Part 2: General Design Criteria for Exterior Architectural Changes

Part 3: Miscellaneous

- Fences
- Sheds and Detached Structures
- Children’s Play Houses and Equipment
- Satellite Dishes
- Trash Cans
- Construction Projects
- Home and Landscaping Maintenance

Part 1: Process for Requesting Exterior Architectural Changes

Introduction

No building or home shall be erected, placed, or externally altered on any lot until the construction plans, specifications, and a plan showing the location of the structure have been approved by the ACC as to quality of workmanship and materials, harmony of exterior design with existing structure, location with respect to topography and finish grade elevation and overall compatibility with the McLean Hunt development viewed in its entirety. ACC approval or disapproval of proposed construction, modifications, or renovations will be in writing. Written notification that a submission is incomplete or requires additional information will be deemed a rejection, but the owners may resubmit the submission at any time. If the ACC fails to respond to the submission in writing within 30 days after a proper set of plans and specifications has been accepted for consideration, the submission shall be deemed approved. All appeals to decisions of the ACC shall be addressed to and by the BOD.

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 Architectural Guidelines regarding the feasibility of proposed work. These guidelines should be used for the purpose of understanding what is expected by the Architectural Control Committee (ACC). HOA members are strongly encouraged to submit preliminary designs and sketches to the ACC early in the design process to obtain preliminary guidance before incurring significant expense. Plans must reflect harmony of exterior design and overall compatibility with McLean Hunt development. Once formal design plans are developed, the homeowner must submit a formal and complete application to the ACC for approval. A formal and complete application must include floor plans and elevations showing the existing house and proposed work.

Plan Submission

The purpose of the plans is to supply adequate information for the ACC to make an informed and accurate judgment as to the appropriateness of the proposed project. A proper submission must include plans and elevations reasonably illustrating the existing house and proposed work. The plans should be submitted to the Chairman of the ACC, as well as to the Vice President of the Home Owners' Association at maoob@mcleanhunt.net, who will ensure they are communicated promptly to ACC members. Electronic submission is preferred for ease of sharing among the ACC, but if a paper submission is made, three (3) complete copies are requested, to facilitate an expeditious decision.

Review Process

After a proper submission is received, the ACC shall acknowledge receipt by email. The ACC shall respond to the Homeowner within thirty (30) days after a proper set of plans and specifications has been accepted for consideration. In the case of a complex design, the ACC may ask the homeowner to make a preliminary presentation to help understand details of the design. If a proposed plan is disapproved, the ACC shall provide a reasonably detailed explanation of the issue/problems with the proposal. Homeowner may appeal the decision and make a direct presentation to the Board. (*referenced in rev Covenants dated 2016, Article 2*).

Once plans have been approved, the homeowner has one year to begin; otherwise, the homeowner must resubmit for approval.

Variances

If the owner deviates from the approved plan in any substantive 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.

If the Board does not commence a lawsuit to enjoin nonconforming construction prior to the completion thereof, approval shall not be required and the relevant portions of the Restrictive Covenants shall be deemed to have been complied with. (*Referenced in By Laws Article VI, Section d.*)

Enforcement:

The Board shall have the right to enforce these ACC Guidelines as well as the Covenants and By-Laws, or duly adopted rules and regulations by any remedy available at law or equity, including the assessment of violation charges as provided by §55.1-1800 and following sections, including §55.1-1805 of the Virginia Property Owners' Association Act. The Association shall be entitled to seek to recover its attorney's fees, court costs, costs of collection, interest or any other charges it is entitled to should such enforcement action become necessary, even if such action is non-judicial or resolved prior to judgment. (*Referenced in Covenants, Section 18*)

Part 2: General Design Criteria for Exterior Architectural Changes

General Design Criteria

A. Remodeling and Renovating Existing Homes:

1. **Style:** The Board recognizes a *colonial or neocolonial motif* present in the original design intent of the neighborhood. Changes to houses that can be seen from the street should be seen as reinforcing that original intent. Any renovation of a two-story house can be larger than existing homes; however, design must be harmonious with existing structures and neighboring homes. First floor square footage should be no less than 1,300 sq. ft. and no greater than 2,250 sq. ft. of living space (not including garage), and the total living space, above-grade square footage of the house should be no less than 2,000 sq. ft. and no greater than 5,000 sq. ft. The ACC may require less square footage depending upon the house design, lot size, and topography. The ratio of footprint (including the garage and porches) to the lot size should be no greater than 16%. No house shall exceed three stories (i.e., the basement plus two floors).

2. **For a one-story home,** the first floor square footage should be no greater than 3,000 square feet of living space

The Board will review renovation plans to determine harmony of the exterior design with the existing structure, location with respect to topography and finish grade elevation and overall compatibility with the McLean Hunt development viewed in its entirety. Any proposed changes to an existing house must be such that when the project is finished, the renovated house, as a whole, when viewed from the street, is a cohesive unit and looks as though it was designed and constructed at the same time.

3. Changes must include:

- a. High-quality materials must be used. This includes siding such as brick, Hardie Board, vinyl siding, exterior doors, windows, roofing material, soffits and trim. Stone and rock can be used on the front of a house as long as neither are synthetic or artificially made, and so long as it comprises no more than 1/3 of the front. The front wall of the house must generally consist of no more than two different types of materials;
- b. Stucco is not an acceptable material;
- c. Design that is harmonious and compatible with the portion of the existing structure that is not renovated;
- d. Siting that fits the topography, with appropriate finish grade elevation; Size, mass and design compatibility with homes in neighborhoods of McLean Hunt when viewed in their entirety. Larger additions are more acceptable in the rear of the house than in the front or sides; and
- e. Standard paint and roof/shingles colors, harmonious and compatible with other houses in the Hunt.

4. **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. If present, homeowner must maintain them.
Changing the size of windows or the openings in walls on the side of the house does not require approval by the ACC. Changing the size of windows or openings in the walls at the front of the house, however, requires approval.
5. **Front Doors:** The front door style does not require approval but changing the size or the opening in the wall requires approval.
6. **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.

B. Knockdowns:

- 1) All the above Guidelines pertaining to remodeled and renovated homes also apply when knocking down and building a new home. In addition, the following guidelines apply:
- 2) **Must have overall compatibility with McLean Hunt development viewed in its entirety.** The Board recognizes that the economics of the building industry is making removal and replacement of houses more prevalent in our area. Any construction of a replacement house (even when larger than the house that is being replaced) must have overall compatibility with McLean Hunt development viewed in its entirety. The Board has discretion to find a proposed house to be compatible when built on one HOA lot while not being acceptable on another lot due to topography or other reasons.
- 3) **Plans Must Include:**
 - a. Colonial or neo-colonial style;
 - b. Height of the new home can be no greater than permitted by County code, and in no event greater than 33 feet to the top ridge line from the top of the front basement wall. Where homeowner is raising the elevation of the lot to avoid a downward slope to the garage the ACC may impose a lower height limit on the new house.
 - c. Square footage of the first floor of the house, excluding the garage, can generally be no greater than 2,250 sq. ft., and the total living space, above-grade square footage of the house should be no less than 2,000 sq. ft. and no greater than 5,000 sq. ft., but the ACC may require less square footage depending upon the house design, the lot size and the location and size of neighboring houses. The ratio of footprint (including the garage and porches) to the lot size should generally be no greater than 16%;

- d. Design compatibility with McLean Hunt neighborhood;
- e. Roofline of primary roof no less than a six/twelve (6/12) pitch and no greater than ten/twelve (10/12) pitch;
- f. A two-car garage unless not practical due to width of lot;
- g. Set back from the street consistent with other homes in McLean Hunt;
- h. Topography: where the driveway originally sloped downhill, the lot elevation may generally be raised so that the garage door is level or close to level with the street curb in front of it. The front door of the new home may generally be no greater than 2 feet higher than the garage door when the garage faces the street, but this is somewhat dependent upon the topography of the lot and placement of garage. If the slope is raised significantly, however, the ACC reserves the right to impose a lower building height restriction in order to avoid the house towering over its next door neighbor;
- i. Standard colors of siding and shingles harmonious and compatible with the McLean Hunt neighborhood; and
- j. The BOD reserves the right to impose reasonable, additional conditions on approval that protect aesthetics of the neighborhood.

Part 3: Miscellaneous: Fences, Sheds, Children’s Play Apparatus, Satellite Dishes and Trash Can Enclosures

Fences

Homeowners must submit an application before constructing a new fence or replacing an existing fence. The intent of fencing restrictions is to maintain a visually open aesthetic as a key aspect of the neighborhoods character and value.

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. Chain link fences are not acceptable.

Fences shall generally not exceed (4) four feet in height. That portion of any fence which faces a street or avenue shall be constructed entirely of wood, masonry, or galvanized aluminum or wrought iron so long as black in color. That portion of any fence that faces a street or avenue must be at least 50% open. The ACC may, upon request prior to construction, grant exceptions to the fence requirements.

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

1. Swimming pools, spas and hot tubs: Fences will be required to comply with all applicable code requirements.
2. 7700 & 7701 Bridle Path Lane 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 Stable Gate Court is an example. As are side yards on houses located at 7724 and 7726 Bridle Path Lane where the side yard is adjacent to the trail to McLean Hunt Bridle Path Park on the HOA easement.

Sheds and Detached Structures

No temporary or permanent structure such as a trailer, shack, garage, barn or other outbuilding may be erected without prior approval of the ACC, which may approve one (1) shed, no larger than 200 sq. ft. and no taller than 8 ½ feet, to be placed in the back yard. (*Referenced in Covenants, Article 4*).

Children's Play Houses and Equipment

Children's playhouses, playground sets, and other play equipment must generally be located in back yard. No permanent children's play structures may be constructed in front yards.

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 in as inconspicuous a location as possible. Ground installations should be as far back from the street as possible and screened with cultivars. Intent is not to ban installation, only to minimize appearance from the street.

Trash Cans

Trash cans should generally not be visible from the front of the house. If they are kept in the yard, reasonable effort should be made to screen or enclose them to avoid visibility from the street and neighboring homes.

Construction Projects

- Storage Pods and dumpsters are not to be used for more than three (3) months without ACC approval.
- Streets and sidewalks in front and to the side of the house must be cleaned up after each day's activities
- Vehicles cannot obstruct access to neighboring homes per Virginia State Law 46.2-1211

Home and Landscaping Maintenance

- Homeowners are required to maintain their properties in a state of good repair;
- Homes with wood must be maintained so they do not have peeling paint;
- Grass must not be allowed to grow taller than eight (8) inches;
- Shrubs, trees and garden areas must be maintained so that they are not dead, overgrown or infested with weeds
- Vines must not be allowed to grow up the sides of houses onto rooftops.
- Mulch and other landscaping materials must not be allowed to sit on driveways for longer than 30 days.