

# Oakland Mills Community Association



## ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES

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## OAKLAND MILLS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

The Other Barn  
5851 Robert Oliver Place  
Columbia, MD 21045  
www.oaklandmills.org

August 1, 2024

Dear Oakland Mills Resident,

Oakland Mills Community Association's Board of Directors, Architectural Committee, and Resident Architectural Committee are pleased to present the revised Architectural Committee Guidelines. Our village celebrated its 50-year mark in 2018, with much to be proud of. We realize that the years have taken their toll on some of our housing, making it more important to renew our commitment to the original Covenants.

These Guidelines take into account some new elements (like EV Charging Stations and Low Impact Landscaping) that weren't around in 1969 when our Village was incorporated.

Nevertheless, the intent remains the same: to maintain the character and improve the appearance of Oakland Mills. We hope these Guidelines will offer a clearer understanding of our Covenants and inspire our residents to maintain and renew the properties we call home.

If you have any questions about these Guidelines, please contact the Covenant Advisor for Applications or any member of the Architectural Committee. We are always happy to work with residents. You can reach us by phone at (410) 730-4610 or by sending an email to [applications@oaklandmills.org](mailto:applications@oaklandmills.org).

We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

***The Oakland Mills Architectural Committee***

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## STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY

The attached Architectural Guidelines supplement the Oakland Mills Community Association (OMCA) Covenants, which are legally binding on anyone who owns property in Oakland Mills. Owners receive a copy of the Covenants when they buy their property. Additional copies are available online at oaklandmills.org or at the OMCA Office in The Other Barn, 5851 Robert Oliver Place, Columbia, MD 21045.

The purpose of the Covenants is to ensure high standards of land use, architectural design, and property maintenance throughout the village. To achieve that goal, the Covenants state:

Anything that changes the exterior appearance of any lot and/or structure in Oakland Mills, any use other than the originally intended use of any lot or structure in Oakland Mills, and any matter which involves the maintenance of any lot or structure in Oakland Mills, is subject to the review of the Oakland Mills Architectural Committee.

Each Owner shall keep all Lots owned by him, and all improvements therein or thereon, in good order and repair, including but not limited to, the seeding, watering and mowing of all lawns, the pruning and cutting of all trees and shrubbery and the painting (or other appropriate external care) of all buildings and other improvements, all in a manner and with such frequency as is consistent with good property management.

The Architectural Guidelines spell out in greater detail the Covenant requirements to uphold high standards of design and maintenance. Since building materials, environmental considerations, and other factors change with time, the Architectural Guidelines are updated approximately every five years or as necessary.

The ultimate responsibility for application of the Covenants is vested in the OMCA **Architectural Committee (AC)**, which is composed of all voting members of the Village Board. Each newly elected Village Board selects one member to serve as the **Architectural Committee Chairperson (AC Chair)**, who convenes sessions of the Architectural Committee as needed.

Implementation of the Covenants is divided into three areas: (1) decisions on whether to approve applications for exterior alterations and in-home businesses, (2) resolution of Covenant violations, and (3) Covenant compliance.

The **Covenant Advisor for Applications** administers the process for seeking approval for exterior applications and in-home businesses. (See [page 2](#) for details on how the process works.) The applications are reviewed by the **Resident Architecture Committee (RAC)**, comprised of volunteers who meet twice a month. If the RAC decides that an application is consistent with the Architectural Guidelines, it formally recommends that the AC Chair approve the application.

An AC member will review the Application and the RAC recommendation and may approve as submitted, approve with stipulations, or deny the application. If the decision

is other than approved as submitted, then the applicant may appeal the decision to the full AC, whose decision is final and binding.

The **Covenant Advisor for Property Concerns** administers the process for resolving complaints about Covenant violations. If a complaint is determined to be valid, the Covenant Advisor sends a letter to the property owner. This letter lists the violations that must be corrected to close the violation case. (See **Covenant Violation Enforcement Policy** for details and timelines.)

If the violations are not corrected in a reasonable time, the full AC can vote to send the violation to the Columbia Association's Architectural Resource Committee (ARC) for possible legal action.

### **Letter of Covenant Compliance**

The **Covenant Advisor for Letters of Compliance** administers the process for issuing Letters of Compliance. Anyone buying property in Columbia assumes responsibility for any existing Covenant violations. Consequently, sellers of homes in Columbia are advised to request a Letter of Compliance when placing a house on the market. Likewise, prospective buyers are advised to ask the seller to obtain a Letter of Compliance well before the settlement date because any non-compliant items become the responsibility of the new owner. The obligation to correct violations transfers to the new owner along with the property.

To obtain a Letter of Compliance, the owner of the property must submit a Request for Letter of Compliance form to the Covenant Advisor for Letters of Compliance to conduct an inspection. If the property is free from compliance issues, a Letter of Compliance is issued. If the inspection reveals non-compliant issues, the Covenant Advisor notifies the owner of the specific violations. Once these items have been corrected, the Covenant Advisor will re-inspect the property and issue a Letter of Compliance.

## **RECEIVING ARCHITECTURAL APPROVAL**

Application forms for exterior alterations and in-home businesses are available at the OMCA Office in The Other Barn or online at oaklandmills.org (Changes to Property section of the Covenants page). The Covenant Advisor for Applications will be happy to answer questions and assist with any aspect of the process. (See **Appendix A: Useful Numbers** at the end of this document for contact information.)

Written approval is required before starting exterior alterations or initiating an in-home business. Otherwise, the owner risks the cost of removing the alteration or closing the business if approval of the application is denied.

Please note the following information:

- These guidelines do not supersede any provisions of the Howard County building and zoning codes. (See **APPENDIX A: Useful Numbers.**)

- Maryland law requires homeowners to call Miss Utility before digging, excavating, or altering the surface of the ground in any way. (See **APPENDIX A: Useful Numbers.**)
- Townhouse and condominium owners should also contact their townhouse association, which may have additional requirements or restrictions beyond what is required by the OMCA Covenants. When a property is subject to multiple Covenant agreements, the most restrictive criteria apply.
- No application is required to replace existing approved siding, roofing, windows, and doors of the house and outbuildings if the same color, materials, and style are used.
  - No application is required to change from aluminum or wood siding to vinyl siding if the color, style, and orientation will remain the same.
  - Generally, any permanent changes to your property (even if made by a previous owner) that have never received AC approval will require an application.

## **THE APPLICATION APPROVAL PROCESS**

Reviewing an application normally takes 16 to 30 days; however, the Covenants allow up to 60 days for review. While it is not required, we do recommend getting signatures of at least two neighbors, acknowledging that they have been notified of the proposed alteration or in-home business. (Signature does not imply agreement with the proposal.)

### **Step 1: Submission**

Submit a complete, detailed application for exterior alterations or in-home business to the Covenant Advisor for Applications. ***Delay in providing a complete application can result in the application being denied due to lack of information.*** For OMCA to process it, an application should include the following information, as appropriate:

- Signature of applicant.
- Site plan or location survey if the alteration will change the footprint of the lot (e.g. a deck, shed, garage, or addition). A site plan or survey is not required for alterations that only change the outward appearance of existing structures, such as siding, windows, or doors.
- Elevation drawings that show the proposed alteration from all sides.

- Colors and samples of materials to be used for the alteration.
- Photos of entire affected area.

### **Step 2: Review by the Resident Architectural Committee (RAC)**

At least one member of the RAC visits each proposed alteration site before presenting the application to the entire RAC at a scheduled meeting, which is open to the public. Applications are discussed in detail. Although the applicant is not required to attend the RAC meeting, it is highly advisable in order to answer questions or consider alternatives. The RAC evaluates each application for compliance with the OMCA Covenants and Architectural Guidelines.

The RAC members then vote on the application and recommend one of the following actions: approved as submitted, approved with specific stipulations, tabled for further study, or denied. The RAC recommendation is forwarded to a member of the Architectural Committee for decision and signature.

### **Step 3: Review by the Architectural Committee (AC)**

An AC member reviews each RAC recommendation and decides whether to accept, revise, or overturn the recommendation. Once the AC member signs the application, it becomes the official decision, which is emailed to the applicant. It is final and binding unless appealed to the full AC, as described below. An applicant who disagrees with an adverse decision may appeal to the full AC.

## **THE APPEAL PROCESS**

**Request for hearing.** An applicant who wants to appeal the decision must submit a request for a hearing within ten (10) business days of receiving the official decision by email. The request may be made by email to the Covenant Advisor for Applications or in a letter mailed to The Other Barn, 5851 Robert Oliver Place, Columbia, MD 21045. The Covenant Advisor for Applications will notify the applicant when and where the appeal will be held, at a mutually agreed-to time. The hearing is open to the public and generally occurs just prior to a Village Board meeting.

**Hearing.** The AC may call upon the Covenant Advisor for Applications and/or designated RAC members for information regarding the decision under appeal. The applicant, if present, may offer both written and oral information to support the appeal. Other residents may speak at the discretion of the AC Chairperson, who conducts the hearing. The decision of the full AC is final and may not be appealed again.

## ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES

### 1.0 AIR CONDITIONERS AND HEAT PUMPS

- 1.1 No application is required for ground-mounted air conditioners and heat pumps as long as they are placed at the rear of the structure or are replacing an existing air conditioner in any currently approved location.
- 1.2 No application is required for a window unit as long as it is at the rear of the structure, not in plain view, and is removed at the end of the cooling season.
- 1.3 An application is required for all other types of air-conditioning units.
- 1.4 Window or through-wall units should be installed so that they are not visible from the street.

### 2.0 ANTENNAS

#### 2.1 Satellite Dish Antennas

- 2.1.1 No application is required for a satellite dish or a Multichannel Multipoint Distribution Service (MMDS) antenna that is 3 feet 3 inches or less in diameter.
- 2.1.2 Satellite dishes or MMDS antennas that meet the size criteria should also meet the following provisions:
  - 2.1.2.1 Install the dish or antenna in as inconspicuous a location as possible without substantially degrading reception. Possible locations include but are not limited to: a rear deck surface, rear roof, or site adjacent to a chimney.
  - 2.1.2.2 Run and secure associated cables and wires in an inconspicuous location.
  - 2.1.2.3 If the dish or antenna will be in a location other than the roof and will be visible from nearby streets and/or adjoining properties, it should be screened.
- 2.1.3 An application is required for all satellite dishes or MMDS antennas that exceed 3 feet 3 inches in diameter.
- 2.1.4 An application is required for all dishes or antennas, regardless of size, that are mounted on a pole exceeding 12 feet in height from the ground.

#### 2.2 Television Broadcast Service Antennas

- 2.2.1 No application is required for a television broadcast service antenna that is 12 feet in height or less from the roof of the house.

2.2.2 Antenna installations that are inside a structure are encouraged. Possible exterior locations for an antenna include but are not limited to an inconspicuous corner formed by the junction of an exterior flue and wall, a rear roof, or adjacent to a downspout.

2.2.3 An application is required for all television broadcast service antenna poles exceeding 12 feet in height from the ground.

### **3.0 ATTIC VENTS**

3.1 No application is required for attic vents and exterior attic vents provided that they meet the following conditions:

3.1.1 No part of the vent protrudes more than 12 inches above the roof.

3.1.2 All exposed roof vent parts are painted to match the exterior color of the roof or surface from which they project.

3.1.2.1 Gable vents should match adjacent surface or color of trim.

3.1.3 Roof mounted vents must be located on the least visible side of the roof and below the ridgeline, so it is not visible from adjacent streets.

3.1.4 No application is required for ridgeline vents less than 3 inches in height and shingled to match the roof.

3.2 An application is required for all other vent installations.

### **4.0 AWNINGS AND TRELLISES**

4.1 An application is required for all new awnings and trellises.

4.2 The style, color, and materials should be compatible with the architectural character of the house. Wood or solid color cloth, free of embellishment, preferred.

4.3 Awnings and trellises should be proportional to the visual scale of the house to which they are attached.

4.4 Pipe frames for canvas awnings should match the trim or the dominant color of the house. If awnings are removed for winter storage, pipe frames must also be removed.

### **5.0 BASKETBALL BACKBOARDS AND POLES**

*In accordance with General Assembly of Maryland HB 1347, effective 10/1/2021*

5.1 No application is required for portable basketball poles that meet the following conditions:

5.1.1 Poles are located close to the residence.

5.1.2 The backboard is clear plastic, white, or a neutral color.

5.2 No application is required if a backboard is attached to the front of the house, carport, or garage and is either clear plastic, white, or a neutral color.

5.3 An application is required for a freestanding pole that is sunk in the ground.

5.4 An application is required for a basketball court. The preferred location for a court is behind the house.

## 6.0 CARPORTS

6.1 Open storage of equipment, trash, or building materials is not allowable unless fully screened.

6.2 Refer to [41.2: Vehicles, Boats, Trailers, And Campers](#).

## 7.0 CHIMNEYS, SMOKESTACKS, AND EXPOSED PIPES

7.1 An application is required for all new chimneys and smokestacks.

7.2 Brick, stone masonry, or boxing with materials matching the exterior wall are the most architecturally appropriate styles for chimneys.

7.3 Under certain circumstances it may be possible to use a non-enclosed chimney pipe. Exposed pipes will be considered only when placed in inconspicuous locations and when they meet the following criteria:

7.3.1 All sections of pipe are plumb.

7.3.2 The pipe is painted to blend with the structure.

7.3.3 Zero-clearance pipe is used and mounted directly against the structure.

7.4 The exposed section should be painted to match the roof.

7.5 Dissimilar chimneys on the same structure should not be used unless it is impossible to see both at the same time.

7.6 Additional chimneys should use existing flue enclosures whenever possible.

7.7 All chimney flashing should be painted to match the adjacent surfaces.

## **8.0 CLOTHESLINES**

8.1 No application is required for umbrella or retractable clothes-drying devices. The devices must be removed from view when not in use unless they are enclosed by a privacy fence or other enclosure which has been approved.

8.2 An application is required for all other clothesline configurations.

## **9.0 COMPOST BINS**

*In accordance with General Assembly of Maryland HB 248, effective 10/1/2021*

9.1 No application is required for compost bins provided that they meet the following conditions:

9.1.1 The bin should be kept in an inconspicuous location, screened from the street.

9.1.2 The bin should be no more than 16 square feet and no more than 3 feet tall.

9.1.3 The bin should be stirred regularly to speed decomposition and to avoid attracting pests and vermin.

9.2 An application is required for all other configurations.

## **10.0 DECKS, PATIOS, AND WALKWAYS**

10.1 An application is required for all decks, patios, and walkways and for changes to such existing structures. (See [Appendix B](#).)

10.2 Patio and walkway materials should be of a neutral color, such as unpainted concrete, stone, brick, pressure-treated wood, or composite material.

10.3 Decks should be constructed of pressure-treated wood or composite material. Railings should be compatible with the existing architectural style of the house. An application is required for colored stains, seals, or paints on all surfaces.

## **11.0 DOG HOUSES AND DOG RUNS**

11.1 An application is required for all dog houses, dog runs, and any other animal shelter.

11.2 Dog houses and dog runs should be located behind and as close to the house as possible. They should not be located near property lines.

11.3 The colors, materials, and style of dog houses or dog runs should match existing structures or fences as closely as possible. Wire mesh fencing will be considered only to fill the spaces between the rails in fences. (See **15.0: Fences.**)

11.4 Chain-link dog runs are generally not approvable.

## **12.0 DOORS AND WINDOWS**

12.1 No application is required for replacement doors and windows provided that the color, size, and style of the new windows or doors do not differ from the existing approved doors and windows. Changes in materials, such as from wood to vinyl, do not require approval.

12.2 All windows and glass doors should have trims of the same style, size, and color as existing windows and doors.

12.3 New windows should be located at the same “head” height as existing windows on the same floor.

## **13.0 DRIVEWAYS**

13.1 Maintenance, repair, or replacement of driveways is the responsibility of the owner or owners. In the case of flag lots or shared driveways, all owners typically share responsibility for maintenance of the shared areas.

13.2 Refer to **41.2: Vehicles, Boats, Trailers, and Campers.**

13.3 No application is required to replace a driveway provided that the materials, size, shape, and grade do not change from the previously approved driveway.

13.4 An application is required for resurfacing an existing approved driveway if the material, size, shape, or grade differs from the existing approved driveway. Changes in size, shape, or grade must be shown on a site plan.

13.5 An application (see **Appendix B**) is required for construction of a new driveway.

13.6 An application is required to expand an existing driveway. The expansion should use the same materials as the existing approved driveway.

13.7 Permeable driveways are encouraged and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. An application for loose driveway materials (e.g. crushed stone) must include specifications for edging materials that will contain the material.

13.8 Driveway aprons may be part of the county right-of-way; if so, the County may require that they remain concrete.

## 14.0 EV CHARGING STATIONS

14.1 An application is required for EV charging points that are visible from the exterior.

14.2 All units should be installed in an inconspicuous manner and location

14.2.1 Screening should be used when charging units or power access will be visible from the street or neighboring houses.

## 15.0 FENCES

15.1 An application is required for all new fences and changes in configurations of existing approved fences. (See [Appendix C.](#)) Open space is a concept that is fundamental to Columbia's plan. The preservation of green space and natural features, as well as a feeling of openness, is a significant difference between Columbia and typical subdivisions. Community open space gives small residential lots a sense of spaciousness. The street sides and many backyards of homes are visually part of the open spaces of our neighborhoods.

15.2 Three- or four-board split-rail or paddock-style fences, 48 inches in height, are commonly approved for property-line fencing. Other types of fences will be considered based on their appearance in relation to the house and compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood.

15.3 Privacy fencing (board on board, solid, and opaque fences) is approvable only if located near the structure or on a townhouse yard and should not exceed 6 feet in height from the ground.

15.4 Fencing should not extend forward of the rear lines of the house. On corner lots, fences should not extend past the sight line of the house on the street-facing sides or the rear lines of the adjoining houses.

15.5 Fencing should be compatible with any preexisting adjacent fences in height and style. The application to the RAC should include color selection for stain or paint if applicable.

15.6 General guidelines:

15.6.1 Vinyl and chain-link fences are typically not approvable.

15.6.2 Iron and hedge fences are typically not approvable for property-line fencing.

15.6.3 Property-line fences should not exceed 48 inches in height.

15.6.4 An application is required for the addition of wire mesh to a new or existing fence. Wire mesh may be attached to the interior of an approved fence. It should be a flat, dark color and rustproof. Chicken wire is not an acceptable material.

15.7 Gates should be the same material, height, color, and style as the fences to which they are attached.

## **16.0 FUEL STORAGE TANKS**

16.1 An application is required for any refillable cylinder exceeding 30-pound capacity.

## **17.0 GARDENS**

17.1 See [24.0: Landscaping and Gardens](#).

## **18.0 GARAGE DOORS**

18.1 No application is required for a replacement garage door if the following conditions are met:

18.1.1 The style is traditional raised panel or flush.

18.1.2 The door is windowless or contains only standard, unembellished windows or door panels. (Embellished elements include but are not limited to stained glass, etched glass, colored glass, or decorative metal pieces.)

18.1.3 The door matches the color of the house siding, shutters, or trim.

18.1.4 The door is constructed of metal, wood, or composite.

18.1.5 All garage doors match if the house has multiple garage doors.

18.2 For garage access doors see [12.0: Doors and Windows](#).

## **19.0 GAZEBOS**

19.1 An application is required for all gazebos.

19.2 Gazebos should be designed and constructed with materials that harmonize with the house.

19.3 The size and location of the gazebo should be appropriate to the size of the lot and house.

## **20.0 GRILLS AND FIREPITS**

20.1 An application is required for all permanent grills, firepits, and heating and cooling equipment and should include location, materials, dimensions, and style.

20.2 An application is required for any refillable propane cylinder exceeding 30-pound capacity.

## **21.0 GUTTERS AND DOWNSPOUTS**

21.1 No application is required for adding gutter guards or replacing gutters or downspouts provided that the color matches the house or trim.

21.2 An application is required for all other changes to gutters and downspouts. (Residents should ensure that any repositioning of downspouts does not create drainage problems for neighbors or drain onto a driveway or sidewalk).

## **22.0 HOT TUBS AND WHIRLPOOLS**

22.1 An application is required for all outdoor hot tubs and whirlpools.

22.2 Hot tubs and whirlpools should be located behind the house.

22.3 Screening, fencing, and landscaping are encouraged to provide privacy.

## **23.0 IN-HOME BUSINESSES**

23.1 An in-home business is any business or commercial enterprise conducted on a residential lot, except for licensed in-home day care, as provided in the Maryland Real Property Code. It is neither the intent nor the desire of the AC to regulate the lifestyle of village residents; however, the AC is responsible for ensuring that in-home businesses do not adversely affect the character of the neighborhood.

23.2 Under this guideline, assisted living is considered an in-home business.

23.3 An application is required for all in-home businesses, unless all of the following are true:

23.3.1 The business has no clients, salespeople, or others visiting the house in connection with the business.

23.3.2 The business has no employees other than the property owner.

23.3.3 The business has no sign or other advertising device posted on the property.

- 23.3.4 The business is conducted solely by telephone or computer.
- 23.4 To receive approval, the application must meet the following conditions:
  - 23.4.1 The applicant for an in-home business must reside on the property.
  - 23.4.2 The business may employ only one person in addition to those residing on the property.
  - 23.4.3 The business must be clearly incidental or secondary to the residential use of the property.
  - 23.4.4 The business must not require a commercial vehicle that must be parked on the property, except when enclosed in a garage.
  - 23.4.5 The business must not involve the in-person sale of goods or merchandise from the property.
  - 23.4.6 The business must not require the outdoor storage of materials, equipment, or supplies.
  - 23.4.7 The business must not require the exterior alteration of the dwelling unit in any way that would make it unsuitable for future use as a residence or require the construction of accessory buildings.
  - 23.4.8 The business must not create safety hazards, noxious odors, or excessive noise, or increase/impede pedestrian or increase/impede vehicular traffic.
  - 23.4.9 The business must not use Columbia Association open space.
  - 23.4.10 The business may not have signs or advertising devices of any nature anywhere on the lot, including advertisements on vehicles. Small nameplates on doors or adjacent to doorbells are permitted.
- 23.5 Conditions for maintaining an in-home business:
  - 23.5.1 Approval of an in-home business is non-transferable and must be re-applied for each year.
  - 23.5.2 Any architectural or operational variance from the terms of an approved application will require a new application.
- 23.6 No approval is required for occasional businesses, such as lemonade stands and yard sales, provided all evidence of the use is removed when not actively is use.

## **24.0 LANDSCAPING AND GARDENS**

- 24.1 No application is required for individual shrubs, foundation plants, or living ground covers. Invasive plants should be avoided. (See [Appendix A](#) for the current list posted by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.)

24.2 No application is required for individual garden beds, including but not limited to vegetable, flower, pollinator, and low-impact gardens provided that:

24.2.1 The garden is within 15 feet from the rear of the house.

24.2.2 The garden is less than 200 square feet.

24.2.3 The garden is planted on a grade that does not cause drainage problems to other properties.

24.2.4 Temporary garden fences are removed at the end of the growing season.

24.2.5 They are not raised and have no structures, retaining walls, or hardscaping

24.3 An application is required for (See [Appendix D](#)):

24.3.1 Any plantings used as a hedge, windbreak, or screen.

24.3.2 Landscaping that involves a change of grade or slope.

24.3.3 Landscaping that involves the installation of a retaining wall or any other structure.

24.3.4 Artificial features such as fences, landscaping rocks, railroad ties, birdbaths, ornaments, or any other permanent landscaping feature. (See [29.0: Permanent Outdoor Art](#).)

24.3.5 Rain gardens (See [Appendix A](#)) for information on Howard County Cleanscapes program for rain gardens.)

24.3.6 Permanent garden fencing.

## 25.0 LIGHTING

25.1 An application is required to install a post light in a new location.

25.2 No application is required for new lighting that meets all of the below conditions:

25.2.1 Lighting is covered or enclosed in a fixture.

25.2.2 Lighting and fixtures suit the style of the house and are designed for residential use.

25.2.3 Lighting is not invasive or directed at adjacent properties.

25.2.4 Lighting is not harsh in color or intensity.

25.2.5 Post lights do not exceed 6 feet in height from the ground.

25.2.6 Light fixture is consistent with other fixtures on the structure.

25.3 No application is required for replacing approved lighting with a similar color and style in the same location on the structure or property.

25.4 No application is required for temporary lighting for seasonal decoration, holidays, and festival use; however, such lighting should be removed within 30 days after the holiday or event.

## **26.0 NEW CONSTRUCTION, RENOVATION, AND DUMPSTERS**

26.1 An application is required for all new construction, including, but not limited to, teardowns done prior to building a new home on an existing lot, additions, and new outbuildings, such as garages, greenhouses, porches, carports, and sheds. (See **33.0: Re-Siding, Reroofing, And Restyling.**)

26.2 If new construction will begin with a teardown, the application must include an anticipated date for the teardown of the existing house or structure. (See **Appendix H.**)

26.3 New construction should not adversely affect drainage conditions on adjacent properties through changes in grade or other significant runoff conditions, including conditions during construction.

26.4 If the corners of the proposed structure are different from the existing house, residents should stake out these corners prior to submission of the application to provide a visual reference.

26.5 New construction should not significantly impair the viewscape, accessibility, or light quality of adjacent residences.

26.6 New construction should not create situations in which neighbors will have difficulty adding to, modifying, or maintaining their dwellings.

26.7 Incorporating changes in color, materials, and architectural style reflecting innovation and updated designs is acceptable; however, consideration should be given to the scale and architectural style of the proposed construction as it relates to the lot and other properties in the neighborhood.

26.8 Additions should be architecturally consistent with the existing shape, style, color, and size of the dwelling, including siding, windows, doors, roofing, etc.

26.9 Roof eaves and fascia should be the same depth, style, and approximate height as existing eaves and fascia; new roofs should have the same slope as the existing roof.

26.10 Any construction close to Columbia Association Open Space must not adversely affect that open space.

26.10.1 Contact the CA Open Space Management Division (see **Appendix A** for contact information) for permission to use open space prior to any construction. The owner is responsible for ensuring that contractors do not dump materials or damage open space.

26.11 Dumpsters. When renovation or construction requires the use of a dumpster, the following restrictions apply:

26.11.1 One dumpster is permitted on residential property for no longer than 30 days without an application. Containers that remain beyond 30 days require an application.

## **27.0 PAINTS AND STAINS**

27.1 No application is required for repainting or re-staining if using the previously approved color.

27.2 An application is required for changes in color, saturation, or hue of any exterior surface. The applications should include a sample or swatch. (See [Appendix F.](#))

## **28.0 PLAY EQUIPMENT**

28.1 No application is required for play sets that are less than 10 feet high, 15 feet wide, and 15 feet long and that are located within the rear sight lines of the house.

28.2 No application is required for sandboxes that are less than 10 feet wide, 10 feet long, and 1 foot high.

28.3 An application is required for all other permanently installed play equipment, including playhouses, regardless of size. (See [Appendix E.](#))

## **29.0 PERMANENT OUTDOOR ART**

29.1 An application is required for permanent outdoor art, which includes, but is not limited to, statuary, sculptures, fountains, and items attached to the house.

29.2 Applications will be evaluated on the object's location, setting, proportions, color, and materials in relation to the surrounding environment, including the number of pre-existing artwork pieces on the property.

## **30.0 PORTABLE STORAGE UNITS**

30.1 One portable storage container is permitted on residential property for up to 30 days without an application. Containers that remain beyond 30 days require an application.

## **31.0 RADON REMEDIATION EQUIPMENT**

31.1 No application is required for radon remediation equipment.

31.2 Radon remediation pipes should be placed in an inconspicuous location and should be painted to be consistent with either the surface to which it is attached or the downspout.

## **32.0 RAIN BARRELS**

32.1 An application is required for all rain barrels. (See [Appendix I.](#))

32.3 Number of rain barrels should not exceed the number of downspouts.

32.4 Rain barrel openings should have dunks, screens, or other mosquito remediation in place.

32.5 Drainage, overflow, and runoff must be properly diverted and cannot flow onto neighboring properties.

## **33.0 RE-SIDING, REROOFING, AND RESTYLING**

33.1 Incorporating changes in color, materials, and architectural style reflecting innovation and updated designs is acceptable with the approved application.

33.2 No application is required when replacing siding or roofing when the same color, material, and style of the most recently approved roof or siding are used.

33.2.1 No application is required when changing from wood to other siding material provided that the color, width, style, placement, and orientation remain the same as was previously approved.

33.2.2 No application is required when replacing the roofing with an architectural shingle (or vice versa), if the color remains the approved color.

33.3 Garages, carports, and attached sheds must be re-sided and/or reroofed at the same time as the house and must match the house siding/roof shingles exactly.

33.4 A complete application is required for all changes to siding and roofing and for all re-styling. (See [Appendix F.](#))

33.5 Changes in color or materials or changes in architectural style should be compatible with the styles, colors, and construction of neighboring houses.

33.6 Mixing window styles such as casements and/or sliders with double-hung windows is commonly not allowed. Choose a window style that is appropriate for the style of house.

## **34.0 SHEDS**

34.1 An application is required for all sheds. (See [Appendix E.](#))

34.2 A site plan showing the shed location must be submitted with the application.

34.3 Sheds designed to match the house should be located as close to the house as possible, preferably attached to the house. Roofing, siding, and trim materials should be of the same type and color as the house.

34.4 Sheds that are placed away from the house should blend into the background and be painted neutral colors such as dark brown, dark green, or tan.

34.5 Freestanding sheds should not be located on a property line.

34.6 More than one shed per property is discouraged.

34.7 Sheds should be proportional to the house and lot and should be no bigger than 10 feet wide by 12 feet long.

34.8 Metal sheds should be rustproof.

34.9 Sheds should be placed within the rear sight lines of the house when possible.

## **35.0 SIGNS**

35.1 No application is required for:

35.1.1 Temporary signs advertising the sale or rental of residential property. No temporary sign shall be larger than 20 by 28 inches or stand more than 5 feet above the ground measured from the top of the cross bar.

35.1.2 Political signs associated with official elections. Enforcement of any restrictions on political signs are referred to the Howard County Sign Officer.

35.1.3 Garage sale signs, provided they are removed at the end of the day of the sale.

35.1.4 House number signs should display the number in a size and color that can easily be seen from the street.

35.2 Commercial advertising signs on residential property are not approvable.

35.3 Applications for all other signs should include detailed drawings of the sign, including lettering, size, color, materials, and exact location on a plat/survey of your property.

## **36.0 SKYLIGHTS**

36.1 An application is required for all skylights.

36.2 The frame should blend with the roof.

## **37.0 SOLAR PANELS**

37.1 An application is required for all solar panels.

37.2 Solar panels on a sloping roof should be parallel to the roof surface; solar panels on a flat roof should be set back from the edge of the roof as long as the placement does not interfere with the functioning of the panels.

37.3 All wiring, accessories, and structures should be inconspicuous and match the adjacent element of the house.

37.4 To the extent possible, freestanding collectors should be located behind the structure and installed inconspicuously.

## **38.0 STORM WINDOWS, STORM DOORS, AND SCREENS**

38.1 No application is required for new screens or storm windows provided that the color and style match the existing windows.

38.2 No application is required for screen or storm doors as long as color and style match the existing approved door or window trim, without embellishment.

38.3 An application is required for all other types of door and window alterations. (See [12.0: Doors and Windows](#).)

## **39.0 SWIMMING POOLS**

39.1 No application is required for portable children's wading pools less than 5 feet in diameter and 18 inches in depth and of a style to be emptied regularly.

39.1.1 Wading pools may not have or require any of the following: filters, pumps, chlorine or frames of any kind.

39.2 An application is required for all other in-ground swimming pools. Above-ground pools, with the exception of children's wading pools, are not approvable.

39.3 The effect of noise and lighting on neighboring properties will be a primary consideration when deliberating on applications for pools.

39.4 A fence compatible with the design and style of the house is required to enclose the pool, pool deck, and related equipment. (See **15.0: Fences.**)

39.5 Landscape buffers such as shrubs and planting beds are encouraged to soften the visual impact of the pool and fencing.

39.6 Pools should be located behind the house.

39.7 Pool covers should be kept in good condition, free of debris and standing water.

## **40.0 TREES**

40.1 An application is required for removing any tree, living or dead, whose trunk is over 6 inches in diameter when measured at a point 2 feet above the ground. (See **Appendix G.**)

40.2 Stumps must be cut flush with or below ground level or ground out of the land.

40.2.1 An application is required for tree snags.

40.3 New planting of trees should take into consideration both proximity to structures and to a neighbor's property and the size of the tree when fully grown.

40.4 Applications for tree removal should include a plan for replacement if:

40.4.1 There are fewer than three trees on a single-family lot, including one tree in the front yard, excluding street trees planted in the County right-of-way.

40.4.2 In the case of a townhouse, there are no trees on the property.

40.5 In the case of small lots, replacing removed trees with small, ornamental trees is encouraged. (See **Appendix G.**)

## **41.0 VEHICLES, BOATS, TRAILERS, AND CAMPERS**

41.1 Major repair or renovation of vehicles, including, but not limited to, automobiles, vans, SUVs, trucks, tractors, boats, trailers, and campers is prohibited on the property, except in enclosed garages.

41.2 The following shall not be parked or stored in the open: boats, trailers, campers, recreational vehicles, inoperable vehicles, unregistered vehicles, commercial vehicles, and any vehicle larger than a standard parking space.

41.3 Vehicles with prominent commercial lettering may not be stored or parked in the open.

41.4 Motor vehicles should only be parked on approved parking areas.

## **42.0 WOODPILES**

42.1 No application is required for an uncovered wood storage rack smaller than 8ft x 2 ft, up to 6 ft tall.

42.2 Woodpiles should be located behind the house or in an inconspicuous location.

42.3 Any material used to cover the woodpile should be neutral in color.

42.4 No application is required for woodpiles that meet the above criteria.

## GLOSSARY

**Architecture Committee:** all voting members of the Oakland Mills Village Board.

**Architectural Guidelines:** a “cheat sheet” to help property owners understand their responsibilities for the maintenance and general upkeep of the exterior of their property.

**Covenants:** a legally binding document signed by all property owners in Oakland Mills when they purchase their property. This document outlines how a property must be maintained.

**Exterior Alteration Application (EAA):** a form that must be completed and approved prior to an owner making any changes to the exterior appearance of their property.

**Foundation Plants:** plants used to hide the foundation of the structure and improve curb appeal.

**Growing Season:** the time of year in which a plant(s) can grow based on temperature and rainfall.

**Letter of Covenant Compliance (LOC):** a letter that outlines if a property meets the covenants of Oakland Mills.

**Resident Architecture Committee:** a recommending body made up of volunteer Oakland Mills residents that decides if an Exterior Alteration Application is consistent with the Architectural Guidelines.

**Street:** when a guideline states that something should or should not be visible from the street, this refers to the viewpoint of a person standing on the sidewalk at the middle point of the house, facing the front of the house.

**Structures:** any device or thing that may (1) affect the appearance of the property, (2) change the grade of the Lot more than six inches or (3) change the flow of water on the property. (See the Oakland Mills Village Covenants, section 1.19.)

## APPENDIX/USEFUL NUMBERS

### **Appendix A: Useful numbers and links**

Covenant Advisor for Applications: [applications@oaklandmills.org](mailto:applications@oaklandmills.org) 410-730-4610

Covenant Advisor for Property Concerns: [propertyconcerns@oaklandmills.org](mailto:propertyconcerns@oaklandmills.org)

Covenant Advisor for Letters of Compliance: [loc@oaklandmills.org](mailto:loc@oaklandmills.org)

Columbia Association Open Space Management: 410-381-0194

Howard County Cleanscapes Program

<https://www.cleanwaterhoward.com/what-your-role/residential-properties/cleanscapes>

Howard County Department of Inspections, Licenses and Permits: 410-313-2455

Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning: 410-313-2350

Howard County Department of Highways: 410-313-7450

Howard County Landfill and Trash: 410-313-6444

To report a problem that is the responsibility of Howard County, such as damaged street signs or dead trees in the median strip, cul-de-sac, or strip between the street and sidewalk, go online to the following website: <https://seeclickfix.com/report>

Howard County Animal Control: 410-313-2780

Non-Emergency Police: 410-313-2200

Miss Utility: Online at [missutility.net](http://missutility.net) or by phone at 800-257-7777

Maryland Department of Natural Resources List of Common Invasive Plants:

<https://dnr.maryland.gov/Invasives/Pages/default.aspx>

University of Maryland Extension/Howard County Master Gardeners:

<https://extension.umd.edu/locations/howard-county/environment-and-natural-resources/master-gardener/>

## **Appendix B: Decks, patios, walkways, and driveways/parking pads**

All Exterior Alteration Applications need the following:

1. Site plan showing property lines and all structures, existing and proposed
2. Dimensions, including height, or indicate flush with ground
3. Material description
4. Material color
5. Photographs of the property and affected area

Decks and patios also include:

1. Height above ground measured at house connection point
2. Railing style, include sample image
3. Step/stair location and orientation

Driveways are usually concrete or asphalt. Bricks, pavers, and permeable surfaces are also allowed. Color needs to be provided for brick, paver, and other stone-type surfaces.

Wood may be pressure treated “left natural,” or wood may be stained or painted. Color must be included in the application. Include a sample swatch of the color, including the brand and code when possible. Manufactured wood products must include the color.

## **Appendix C: Fences and screening**

All Exterior Alteration Applications need the following:

1. Site plan showing property lines, location of fence, and location of all other structures
2. Style of fence
3. Height of fence
4. Number, size, and location of gate(s)
5. Material description
6. Material color
7. Photographs of the property and affected areas

Generally, fencing should be in the rear of the house. The least visually obstructive style should be chosen; split rail and paddock are the preferred styles.

Fences are usually made of pressure-treated wood left natural in color. Any other color must be included in the application. Include a color sample swatch with the brand and code if possible.

Screening is used to hide things like trash cans, air conditioning units, and hot tubs. Wood lattice is commonly used for screening. Additionally, plantings, such as trees or shrubs may be used as screening. Allow for growth and maintenance when planning screening materials and location.

## **Appendix D: Landscaping**

### **Including gardens, hardscaping, Xeriscaping, pollinator, low impact landscaping, etc.**

All Exterior Alteration Applications need the following:

1. Site plan showing property lines and all structures, existing and proposed
2. Landscaping design plan to include layout of structures, materials, and plants
3. Description of materials to be used
4. Irrigation plan, if applicable
5. Photographs of the property and affected areas

If you are interested in including Watershed-friendly Landscaping options to your property the following information may be helpful:

- Use Maryland Native Plants for your landscapes whenever possible. Once established, these plants require little maintenance, establish deep root systems that hold soil in place, decrease the amount of water needed for landscape maintenance, and provide food and habitat for native wildlife. Many Maryland native plants also produce beautiful foliage and flowers. A list of native plants for Maryland's Piedmont region, where Columbia is located, can be found at: <https://extension.umd.edu/resource/recommended-native-plants-maryland/>
- Avoid planting invasive species including commonly seen Bradford Pear (*Pyrus calleryana* species), Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides*), Butterfly Bush (*Buddleia davidii*), Japanese Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*), Daylilies (*Hemerocallis* species), English Ivy (*Hedera* species), Burning Bush (*Euonymus alatus*), Bamboo (any kind), Nandina (*Nandina domestica*), Wintercreeper (*Euonymus fortunei*), Japanese Pachysandra (*Pachysandra terminalis*), Periwinkle (*Vinca minor*), and Yellow Archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*). Invasive plants are easily spread by wind, seed, and rhizome and stolon (underground and above-ground stems, respectively) expansion, and often choke out native plants, kill trees, and can damage buildings. For a complete list of Maryland invasive plants, see <https://extension.umd.edu/resource/invasive-species/>.
- Keep your grassy areas neatly trimmed but avoid giving them a "buzz cut." It is recommended that you mow your grass to a 3-4" height. This height will allow your grass to grow a strong root system and control erosion of your soil. Consider replacing grassy areas with deeper-rooted native shrubs, trees, perennial plants, or groundcover.

As a fertilizing alternative, let your grass clippings lie on the lawn, where they provide nutrients to the growing grass and can reduce fertilizer costs. Maryland provides guidance on fertilizing at

[http://mda.maryland.gov/resource\\_conservation/Documents/fertilizerwebpage.pdf](http://mda.maryland.gov/resource_conservation/Documents/fertilizerwebpage.pdf).

Landscaping layouts should consider the need to properly maintain plantings. Space should be allocated to keep walkways, home access, and public sidewalks free of obstruction and allow for visibility of house numbers.

Landscaping must be maintained to ensure that public accessways remain unobstructed.

### **Appendix E: Sheds, playsets, and trampolines**

All Exterior Alteration Applications need the following:

1. Site plan showing property lines and all structures, existing and proposed
2. Dimensions
3. Drawing or image showing what finished unit looks like
4. Material description
5. Material colors
6. Photographs of the property and affected area

Units should be located behind the house and at least 5 feet from the property lines, where possible.

Safety should be taken into account when placing playsets and trampolines.

### **Appendix F: Painting, re-siding, re-styling**

Houses have many surfaces other than just the walls. The “Painting Checklist” (see [Appendix F.1](#)) helps to ensure that your Exterior Alteration Application addresses all surfaces.

All Exterior Alterations Applications need the following:

1. Identification of all surfaces that will be changed in color, material, or style. The “Painting Checklist” may be used.
2. A sample swatch of the colors, including the brand and code when possible
3. Description of style and color of siding, windows, and doors
4. Photographs of the property and affected areas

All architectural features should work together cohesively.

Window and glass doors style and color should be consistent. Grids or divided panes are a style in windows and glass doors (sliding or French doors)

Façades are often brick or stone.

Foundation refers to all the wall space below the siding, usually consisting of stucco or cement block and painted to complement the rest of the structure.

## Appendix F.1

Painting Checklist							
Please include Color name or code information on the detail lines below the Table. In the Table you may use the number or a simple name, like 1 or Tan. If you are keeping a surface the same color, a Y or check in the Keep Same column is appropriate. Any area that does not apply to your home can be left blank.							
Surface	Color	Keep Same Y	Material- Wood, Brick, Metal...	Surface	Color	Keep Same Y	Material- Wood, Brick, Metal...
Door Trim				Chimney/ Stove Pipe			
Door, Front							
Door, Garage				Deck			
Door, Glass				Underdeck (enclose?)			
Door, Side				Underdeck (supports)			
Door, Sidelights				Railings			
Door,				Steps			
Façade				Patio			
Foundation				Shed			
Downspouts							
Gutters				<b>Accents:</b>			
Rake boards				Over/Under Windows			
Roof Trim - Fascia				Over/Under Doors			
Siding				Other			
Soffits/Eaves				Shutters			
Supports Carport							
Supports Porch							
Window Trim				<b>Current (for general information):</b>			
Windows				Deck			
				Gutter/Downspouts			
				Roof and Trim			
				Siding			
Example:		4	Wood	Windows and Doors			
Color 1 Detail:							
Color 2 Detail:							
Color 3 Detail:							
Color 4 Detail Example SW 6086 Sand Dune - Tan							

## **Appendix G: Tree Removal**

All Exterior Alteration Applications need the following:

1. Site plan showing property lines, all trees on the property, and all structures.
2. Identification of tree(s) being removed.
3. Replanting plan, if any.

If applying for a tree that has already been removed, such as during a storm, indicate the approximate location where it stood.

Replanting or replacing should always be considered. Always consider the full growth of any new planting.

Please visit the Maryland Department of Natural Resources for recommended native trees. <https://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/pages/marylandersplanttrees/recommended-tree-list.aspx>

## **Appendix H: Construction Applications**

All construction applications should include the following:

1. Elevation drawings (with dimensions) of all sides of the house showing style, siding or façade materials, window placement, door and garage door placement, roof lines, walkways, driveways, porches, decks, gutters, shutters, and skylights. Elevation drawings do not have to be done professionally but should be easy to read and understand.
2. Site plan showing full footprint of house and other structures as submitted to the County for a building permit.
3. Description and color samples of all exterior building materials.
4. Landscape plan.
5. Lighting plan.
6. Timeline of start date and completion date for the new construction.

## **Appendix I: Rain Barrel Applications**

Rain barrel applications should contain the following:

1. Height, diameter, and capacity of the rain barrel.
2. Style, color, and material of barrel and supporting structures.
3. A screening plan if visible from the street.
4. Sample of pavers and dimensions of pad, if applicable. To be sure that the rain barrel does not pose a safety hazard, place it on a secure, level surface. Pavers or a concrete pad should be used to keep the rain barrel level.
5. Location of rain barrel.