

Dear HOA and members of the ARC committee,

Firstly, I want to thank our community members who gave their time to working on this set of guidelines. Even though I feel that they overreach, I recognize the importance of community involvement in the maintenance of our wonderful neighborhood. Following are my thoughts in general about these guidelines and the direction our neighborhood should point itself in. I also provide some specific suggestions at the end of this letter.

### **Best Practice - Communication**

It is generally recognized that having a set of published and followed Architectural Guidelines is an HOA best practice. When this is examined though it is found to be part of an overall strategy of increasing, transparency, communication, and agreement amongst the homeowners in a neighborhood.

### **Silence is not Consent**

I feel (and this sentiment has been echoed by numerous other homeowners) that these guidelines overreach the level of discretion I am comfortable with giving up over my house. I know that 20 or so homeowners have published comments on the guidelines – I urge you to consider that this is NOT silence and even if it were – Silence does not equal consent.

### **A Tool, not A Bludgeon**

The sever \$1,000 fine, listed in the Change Application is designed as an instrument of blunt force to make homeowners SO AFRAID of failing to follow the guidelines that they apply for everything. This is not an appropriate way to encourage a neighborhood to act neighborly. Fines should be used as a tool to slowly move people off center if they have violated, and continue to violate without regard for their neighbors or the neighborhood.

### **I like my house the way it is!**

Many of us are not original owners and we purchased our houses for the manner that they looked at the time. Even original owners may have made changes to their houses over time that they like. We should not be forced to change the look of our house if we want or need to maintain it (e.g. a window breaks or the roof needs replacing)

### **The whole neighborhood benefits from maintenance and upgrades**

Having the houses well maintained and upgraded (better windows, new siding, upgraded decks, etc.) does more for our home values than ensuring a front door is a specific shade of grey. Our guidelines should ENCOURAGE homeowners to invest in their homes.

**Specific Suggestions:**

- 1) Remove the \$1,000 fine and keep the \$15 / day fine. This tool is still strong enough to effect change.
- 2) Make a provision that if you are replacing / maintaining you may always do so if it does not change the outward appearance (if you currently have it, you may keep it).
- 3) Don't force the neighborhood back towards a historic view of itself. Let it continue to grow and build its character.
- 4) Create a fast track process including: where the current look is maintained, pre approved lists, and emergency repairs.
- 5) Do not require one application per change – this just creates paperwork and takes the time and effort of both the homeowner and the ARB.

Thank you,

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