



# Architectural Guidelines

**Exterior Alterations**



**Property Maintenance**



**In-Home Businesses**

Effective March 1, 2019





**Columbia  
Town Center  
Residential  
Community Association**

Dear Town Center Residents:

The Town Center Village Board and Architectural Committee are pleased to present you with a detailed set of Guidelines for Exterior Alterations, Property Maintenance, and In-Home Businesses for all residential property in the Village of Town Center.

The Guidelines which follow are intended to specify criteria used to evaluate requests for making residential property alterations or for conducting professions and businesses in the home. They will also set forth concerns and expectations regarding the maintenance of one's property. These Guidelines do not modify any requirements of the Covenants and in the case of any inconsistency which may exist between Guideline and Covenant, the requirements of the Covenants prevail.

While architectural control is important in all of Columbia's villages, it is particularly true in Town Center which, when fully developed, will have the highest population density of Columbia's villages. As population density increases, so too does interdependence among residents in a community. Therefore, in order to preserve the harmony of design that was built into our community, it is essential that a reasonable, but firm, system of architectural control of exterior alterations, maintenance, and home businesses be adhered to in Town Center. We hope that these Guidelines will form an integral element in that system by better explaining how the architectural review process operates, and by assisting you with applications for architectural changes.

Questions concerning these Guidelines, or the Covenants should be directed to the Covenant Advisor at the Town Center office (410-730-4744) or to the Chairperson of the Architectural Committee.

Town Center Village Board  
Town Center Architectural Committee

[VillageManager@ColumbiaTownCenter.org](mailto:VillageManager@ColumbiaTownCenter.org)  
Phone: 410-730-4744 – Fax: 410-730-1823

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION	5
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW PROCESS	7
GUIDELINES FOR EXTERIOR ALTERATIONS	
1. ADDITIONS	12
2. ANIMAL CONTROL	13
3. ANTENNAS AND SATELLITE DISHES	14
4. APIARIES / BEEKEEPING	15
5. ATTIC FANS	16
6. ATTIC VENTILATORS	16
7. AWNINGS AND SUN TRELLISES	17
8. BASKETBALL BACKBOARDS	17
9. CHIMNEYS AND FLUES	18
10. CLOTHES DRYING RACKS (EXTERIOR)	19
11. COMPOST PILES	20
12. CONSERVATION / ENERGY-SAVING ALTERATIONS	20
13. DECKS	21
14. DECORATIVE OBJECTS (EXTERIOR)	22
15. DOG HOUSES AND DOG RUNS	23
16. DOORS AND WINDOWS (INCLUDING GARAGE DOORS)	24
17. DRIVEWAYS	24
18. FENCES	25
19. FLAGS AND BANNERS	26
20. GARDENS, VEGETABLE	27
21. GRILLS AND BARBEQUES (PERMANENT)	28
22. HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING UNITS (EXTERIOR)	28
23. HOT TUBS AND SPAS	29
24. LANDSCAPING AND PLANTING	30
25. LIGHTING (EXTERIOR)	31
26. PAINTING AND STAINING	32
27. PATIOS, WALKWAYS AND ACCESSIBILITY STRUCTURES	33
28. POOLS	34
29. PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	35
30. RADON UNITS	37
31. RAIN BARRELS	37
32. RECREATIONAL / PLAY EQUIPMENT	38
33. RENTAL PROPERTIES	38
34. RE-SIDING AND RE-STYLING	39
35. SIGNS	40
36. SKYLIGHTS	43
37. SOLAR COLLECTORS / PANELS	43
38. STORAGE SHEDS	44
39. STORM / SCREEN WINDOWS AND DOORS	44
40. TEARDOWNS / NEW CONSTRUCTION	45
41. TEMPORARY STORAGE UNITS ("PODS")	47
42. TRASH	47
43. TREE REMOVAL	48
44. VEHICLES	49
45. WOODPILES	49

OTHER GUIDELINES	
IN-HOME BUSINESS	50

APPLICATION FORMS

APPLICATION FOR EXTERIOR ALTERATION	53
APPLICATION FOR IN-HOME BUSINESS OR PROFESSION	55
REQUEST FOR LETTER OF COMPLIANCE	57

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### ANSWERS TO COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

#### **What are the Covenants?**

The Covenants are a set of legal documents which are part of your deed of ownership and "run with the land," i.e., transfer to future owners. The Covenants assure minimum standards for land use, architectural design, and property maintenance. The Covenants allow for the operation of the Town Center Community Association, Town Center Architectural Committee, and the Architectural Review Process (Section 7.01). You should have received these documents at settlement when you purchased your home, or from your landlord. Similar covenants exist for all of the other Columbia villages. Copies of the Covenants may be obtained from the Village office or the Columbia Association.

#### **Why do we have Architectural Guidelines?**

The Covenants empower the Town Center Architectural Committee to establish criteria for architectural changes and property maintenance through Architectural Guidelines (Section 7.05). These Guidelines are designed to prevent excesses or abuses, while allowing individuals flexibility in property use. Based upon the policies and previous decisions of the Architectural Committee, the Guidelines will tell you what is most likely to be approved in typical circumstances and also give you important information on how to prepare your application.

#### **What is the Town Center Architectural Committee?**

The Town Center Architectural Committee (Architectural Committee) is responsible for setting rules and procedures for architectural control, for the review and final approval of all exterior alterations to existing property, and for new construction. The Architectural Committee's composed of village resident volunteers, with the majority being appointed by the Columbia Association and the minority by the Village Board. They are the final appeal body for all architectural decisions in the Village.

#### **How does the Architectural Review Process work?**

Applications are received at the Village office, processed and forwarded for review by the Architectural Committee. Guidelines in effect at the time of the application are used to evaluate all proposed changes, and applications conforming to the Guidelines will be most readily approved. Special circumstances regarding your property may allow the approval of an application which might be denied at another location, or the denial of one which might be approved elsewhere. The approval of the Architectural Committee of any applications for any work done or proposed or in connection with any other matter requiring the approval and consent of the Architectural Committee shall not be deemed to constitute a waiver of any right to withhold approval or consent as to any similar proposals, applications, or matters subsequently or additionally submitted for approval or consent. The fact that a plan similar to yours has been approved for use at another location does not mean that it is automatically approved for you. The entire review process usually takes at most 3 to 4 weeks. The Village employs a Covenant Advisor to assist in preparation and filing of exterior alteration and in-home business applications, to receive inquiries and complaints, and to carry out other duties associated with Covenant enforcement.

**What if I don't wait for approval?**

Proceeding with an exterior alteration or in-home business prior to obtaining written approval is done at your own risk and puts your property in violation of the Covenants (Section 7.06). You could then face the cost of removing or modifying the alteration to comply with the Architectural Committee's decision. In considering applications, the Committee will not be influenced for or against the application if work is completed prior to approval. However, for the reasons stated above, residents are strongly urged not to undertake construction in advance.

**What if I have a complaint?**

Complaints, which remain anonymous, should be brought to the attention of the Covenant Advisor, who will investigate the situation. If a violation exists, the property owner is notified and is given a specific time to correct the violation either by removal, by submission of an acceptable application, or by repair in the case of a maintenance problem. Most problems are resolved at this stage. However, if no action is taken to correct the violation, a formal notice is sent to the owner stating that legal remedies may be initiated. If the problem still is not corrected by the owner, the Architectural Committee may then take further action itself or may submit the violation to the Columbia Association Architectural Resource Committee (ARC) which may recommend that the Columbia Association and the Village take further measures, including legal action, to enforce the Covenants.

**What is a Certificate of Compliance?**

A Certificate of Compliance is a document that certifies that all original builder construction is completed according to approved plans. An updated Letter of Compliance is issued only at the request of the owner (example: at resale of the property) and certifies that all subsequent alterations have been constructed according to terms of approval by the Architectural Committee and comply with the Covenants. An updated Letter of Compliance will not be issued if a violation exists, and this may delay property resale. All buyers should request that they be provided with a Letter of Compliance at settlement.

**Where do I call?**

Town Center Community Association	410-730-4744
Howard County Dept. of Inspections, Licenses & Permits	410-313-2455
Miss Utilities	800-257-7777
Columbia Association Land Management	410-381-0194

## **ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW PROCESS**

Property owners who are considering an exterior alteration to their house or property, or an in-home business or profession, should review the Town Center Village Covenants, particularly Sections 7.02 and 11.02, and the Town Center Architectural Guidelines. If there are any questions, please contact the Village Covenant Advisor .

A written application to the Town Center Architectural Committee is required for every new structure placed upon a lot, for most alterations made to existing structures, and for the conduct of in-home businesses and professions. The Guidelines were established: (1) to assist the resident in planning exterior alterations; (2) to indicate which types of alterations will be approved most expeditiously; (3) to ensure that an application will provide the Architectural Committee with all necessary information to thoroughly evaluate the application as quickly as possible, (4) to encourage residents to assess the impact of proposed alterations on their neighbors.

Howard County requires a building permit and inspection for many types of alterations. The applicant is responsible for obtaining all permits and approvals from any relevant agencies such as the county, homeowners' association, etc. Applications to said agencies may be submitted concurrently with the architectural application to save time on the project. Approval of the exterior alteration application by the Village does not authorize violation of any provisions of county, state, or homeowners' association codes. Although the Committee assumes no responsibility for monitoring Howard County Building Codes, a known violation may be grounds for application disapproval. Residents should call the County at 410-313-2455 for more information.

Information on preparation and review of applications, appeal of Architectural Committee decisions, completion of projects, obtaining an updated Letter of Compliance, and Covenant Enforcement is provided below.

### **I. APPLICATION PREPARATION**

A. Obtain a Village of Town Center Application for Exterior Alteration or Application for In-Home Business or Profession form from the Village office or download it from the Village website: [ColumbiaTownCenter.org](http://ColumbiaTownCenter.org).

B. Complete the application as follows:

1. **Identification of location.**

All applications must include name, address, condominium if any, home/work phone numbers, and email address of the applicant.

2. **Description of changes.**

a. **Exterior alterations.** Include the following information: a picture or detailed drawing of the proposed structural change including all dimensions; a site plan indicating the relationship of the structural or landscaping change to the applicant's house, property lines, and all adjacent houses; a description of materials including color samples for paints; types and locations of plants for landscaping; and any other information pertinent to the alteration.



- b. **In-home businesses and professions.** This requires written approval of the Architectural Committee. Refer to Section 11.02 of the Town Center Covenants and the Guideline on In-Home Businesses and give all information requested on the application, including vehicles to be used and parking and delivery requirements. Residents should be aware of County zoning regulations when considering a home business.

3. **Acknowledgment of affected property owners.**

Signatures of the property owners most affected by the proposed alteration are requested. This is to ensure that, prior to the Architectural Committee's review, planned alterations are made known to affected residents. However, signatures do not indicate approval or disapproval and are not the deciding criteria used by the Committee.

4. **Owner signature.**

The owner(s) or the owner and tenant must sign and date the application following the "Owner Agreement" section.

- C. If you are subject to the regulations of a condominium or homeowners' association, forward the completed application to your association for initial review. If you do not belong to an association, send your application directly to the Town Center Architectural Committee at the address shown on the form for review.

**II. REVIEW PROCESS**

A. Condominium / Homeowners' Association Review

1. Since most of Town Center's housing is of the moderate-to-high density type, the condominium form of residential ownership is quite common, and the boards of condominium and homeowners' associations normally conduct their own review of applications in accordance with their by-laws. It should be noted, however, that review by a condominium or homeowners' association does not constitute approval under the Village Covenants. Once an application has been approved by a condominium or homeowners' association, the Town Center Architectural Committee is the sole reviewing authority at the Village level.
2. If you are a condominium or homeowners' association property owner, your association will conduct an initial review of your application. Once the association's officers have approved your application, they will then forward it to the Town Center Architectural Committee for final review. The application must be signed by a member of the condominium or townhouse association board. If the work is to be done in stages, a master plan must be submitted.
3. In the interests of community cooperation, the Architectural Committee will not accept any application of an association property owner until it has been reviewed and approved by the officers of the association.
4. If you wish to appeal an application which has been disapproved by your condominium or homeowners' association, make the appeal directly to the association, not to the Town Center Architectural Committee.

B. Mixed-Use Structure Review

1. A mixed-use structure combines commercial use and residential use. Because of the commingling of commercial and residential interests, EFFECTIVE AFTER ANNEXATION into the Town Center Community Association, Howard Hughes Corporation (and its successors) and the Town Center Community Association hold parallel review rights. Contact the Village Association for complete application procedures before beginning the application process.
2. If you are a condominium or homeowners' association property owner, your association will conduct an initial review of your application. The application must be signed by a member of the condominium association board of directors. Once the condominium or homeowners' association officers have approved your application, it must be approved by both Howard Hughes Corporation and the Town Center Architectural Committee.
3. The Town Center Architectural Committee and Howard Hughes Corporation must agree on and approve the final design.
4. If you wish to appeal an application which has been disapproved by your condominium or homeowners' association, or Howard Hughes Corporation, make the appeal directly to those entities, not to the Town Center Architectural Committee.

C. Condominium / Homeowners' Associations Review at all Lakefront, Crescent, and Warfield Neighborhood Developments

1. EFFECTIVE AFTER ANNEXATION into the Town Center Community Association, Howard Hughes Corporation (and its successors) and the Town Center Community Association hold parallel review rights. Contact the Village Association for complete application procedures before beginning the application process.
2. If you are a condominium or homeowners' association property owner, your association will conduct an initial review of your application. The application must be signed by a member of the condominium association board of directors. Once the condominium or homeowners' association officers have approved your application, it must be approved by both Howard Hughes Corporation and the Town Center Architectural Committee.
3. The Town Center Architectural Committee and Howard Hughes Corporation must agree on and approve the final design.
4. If you wish to appeal an application which has been disapproved by your condominium or homeowners' association, or Howard Hughes Corporation, make the appeal directly to those entities, not to the Town Center Architectural Committee.

D. Town Center Architectural Committee Review

1. When your application is received by the Town Center Village office, it will be assigned a log number and sent to members of the Town Center Architectural Committee. It will then be reviewed by the Committee in accordance with Section 7.01 of the Village Covenants, and a decision will be made based on your description of the proposed alteration in conjunction with the appropriate Guidelines. Decisions are usually rendered in one of three ways: approval, conditional approval, or disapproval. During this process, the Committee may elect to view the site, talk with the applicant and/or request additional information.
2. Once the Committee has made a decision, it will note the decision on the application and return a copy to you. Any disapproval or conditional approval will be accompanied by a written explanation of the reasons for the disapproval. Applications which are disapproved may not be resubmitted to the Committee unchanged before the lapse of six months.
3. In accordance with Section 7.03 of the Covenants, an application may be rejected on the basis of exterior design, appearance, materials, location, grading or landscaping plans, color scheme, finish, proportions, style of architecture, height, bulk or appropriateness, or any other matter which, in the judgment of the Architectural Committee, would render the proposed structure, structures, or uses inharmonious with the general plan of improvement of the property or with structures or uses located upon other lots in the vicinity.
4. In any case where the Architectural Committee shall disapprove an application, it shall, if requested, make reasonable efforts to assist and advise the applicant in order that an acceptable proposal can be prepared and submitted for approval.
5. In accordance with Section 7.05 of the Covenants, if the Town Center Architectural Committee fails to render a decision on any application within 60 days of receipt, the application will be considered approved as submitted and no further action is required.

**III. APPEAL PROCEDURE**

In accordance with Section 7.01 of the Village Covenants, if the applicant disagrees with the decision of the Architectural Committee, the following process should be followed for an appeal:

- A. File a written request for appeal to the Town Center Architectural Committee within 10 days after receipt of notice of their decision. The written request must be sent to:

The Town Center Architectural Committee  
5430 Vantage Point Road  
Columbia, MD 21044

- B. The Architectural Committee will set a date for review of the application acceptable to both resident and Committee and will notify the appellant. The applicant, the entire Architectural Committee, and the Covenant Advisor shall be present at the appeal.
- C. The Architectural Committee shall render a decision, in writing, usually within two weeks of the appeal. Their decision shall be final and binding on all parties.

#### **IV. COMPLETION OF PROJECTS**

- A. Work as expressed on the Exterior Alteration Application must be completed within six (6) months after approval by the Architectural Committee. Failure to complete the work within the prescribed period of time may cause the approval to be rescinded and resubmittal may be required. Extenuating circumstances should be brought to the attention of the Architectural Committee.
- B. Any variance from the original approval terms of the application and the completed project require that an amendment to the application be submitted and reviewed by the Architectural Committee. A major modification will require a new application and approval.

#### **V. LETTER OF COMPLIANCE (UPDATED)**

- A. Upon receiving a request for an updated Letter of Compliance, the Covenant Advisor will inspect the property to verify compliance with the Covenants and the Exterior Alteration Applications of record. If the property is found in conformance, the letter will be issued.
- B. An updated Letter of Compliance will not be issued if there are any unapproved, improperly constructed, or incomplete alterations on the property.

#### **VI. COVENANT ENFORCEMENT PROCESS**

- A. Failure to abide by the Town Center Covenants and Architectural Guidelines may result in enforcement action. The Architectural Committee may make periodic inspections of properties in the Village to ensure that all exterior alterations have been approved and are consistent with applications as submitted and to ensure compliance with the Covenants for maintenance (Article VI of the Town Center Residential Covenants). However, all residents of the community must share in the responsibility for reporting possible Covenant violations. The Architectural Committee will respond to complaints of alleged violations and complaints will remain anonymous.
- B. Alleged exterior alteration and maintenance violations will be processed as follows:
  - 1. Upon determination that a violation exists, the Architectural Committee will recommend that the Village Board send a violation notice to the resident as prescribed in Sections 6.01 and 7.06 of the Town Center Residential Covenants.
  - 2. Upon receipt of a 15-day violation notice from the Village Board, the resident will be allowed 15 days to correct the violation.
  - 3. If the resident refuses or fails to take corrective action within the 15-day time period, the Columbia Association and/or the Town Center Community Association may enter upon the property in question and correct the violation under the authority granted in Section 7.06 of the Town Center Covenants. The cost of this correction will be a binding, personal obligation of the owner as well as a lien upon the lot in question
  - 4. The Town Center Village Board may elect to refer a violation to the Columbia Association's Architectural Resource Committee to determine whether legal action by the Columbia Association and the Town Center Community Association should be taken to enforce the Covenants.

## GUIDELINES FOR EXTERIOR ALTERATIONS

### 1. ADDITIONS

Building additions include, but are not limited to, carports, garages, greenhouses, porches, rooms, and carport and deck enclosures. Any enclosed extension of the house is considered an addition. For building permit information, call Howard County at 410-313-2455. Before digging, call "Miss Utility" toll free at 800-257-7777 for existing utility and cable location.

- A. The design of additions should be consistent with the existing shape, style, and proportion of the dwelling as follows:
1. Siding, roofing, and trim materials shall match the existing house materials as to finish and color.
  2. New windows and doors shall match those existing as to style and color. They should also be located on walls at the same approximate height and vertical plane as the original units and be similarly trimmed.
  3. Roof eaves and fascias shall be the same depth, style, and approximate height and all roof slopes should be proportionate to the original.
- B. The following conditions should determine the acceptability of new addition locations:
1. Additions should not significantly impair the view, amount of sunlight, or ventilation of adjacent residences or the public's use and enjoyment of open space. New windows, doors, or viewing areas from the addition should not impinge upon existing internal or external private areas of adjacent residences.
  2. New additions should not create situations in which adjacent neighbors will have difficulty adding to, modifying, or maintaining existing dwellings.
  3. Additions should not adversely affect drainage conditions on adjacent properties through changes in grade or other significant runoff conditions.

#### Application Requirements:

- i. Site plan and key architectural drawings similar to those required for Howard County building permits.
- ii. Site plan should show relationship of new and existing construction to property lines and adjacent dwellings. Size and location of trees in affected areas on site should also be included.
- iii. Drawings to scale of new construction should include a plan and elevation views of each new exterior wall area. These should show dimensions and locations of such features as doors, windows, roof lines, trim, and new exterior lighting fixtures.
- iv. Description of materials, including type of siding materials, roof materials, trim materials, and their colors. Manufacturer specification sheets are acceptable.

## **2. ANIMAL CONTROL**

Animal control is a Howard County responsibility under the jurisdiction of the office of Animal Control. The Animal Control Laws (available from Howard County Animal Control at 410-313-2780) state:

"A domesticated animal (cats and dogs) must be on a leash and under the control of a responsible person when not on the owner's property." Other provisions state that owners are required to clean up after their pets and dispose of waste in a sanitary manner or face legal penalties. This applies to cats, dogs, and other domesticated animals on and off one's property, including all open space, condo open space and public lands. As of 1998, all dogs and cats in Howard County are required to be licensed. No wild, exotic or "game" type animals shall be maintained on any residential lot. Citizens having animal problems may use the following remedies:

- A. Personally bring the problem to the attention of the animal owner.
- B. Restrain the animal on property and contact Animal Control for pick-up.
- C. Write or call Animal Control about the problem.

### **3. ANTENNAS AND SATELLITE DISHES**

A. Satellite dishes meeting certain conditions do not require pre-approval from the Town Center Architectural Committee:

Satellite dish antennas that are one meter (39 inches) or less in diameter and television broadcast service antennas which are 12 feet or less in height are permitted without prior approval by the Architectural Committee, subject to the following conditions:

1. Location - The antenna must be installed in a location on the lot that minimizes its visibility from nearby streets, to the extent possible without substantially degrading reception.
2. Screening - Ground level antennas must be completely screened from view from adjoining properties, for example with landscaping and/or fencing materials, except to the extent that such complete screening cannot be accomplished without substantially degrading reception. In that event, partial screening may be sufficient. Refer to the landscaping guidelines.
3. Painting - Any antenna that is visible from any of the surrounding streets or properties must be painted in a color that blends into the background against which it is mounted.
4. Installation - Satellite dish antennas may not be installed on a pole exceeding 12 feet in height nor may television broadcast service antennas greater than 12 feet in height be installed, without prior written approval by the Architectural Committee. Cables and wires associated with the installation must be secure and placed in the least visible locations.

B. Satellite dishes that are more than one meter (39 inches) in diameter and other antennas requiring submission of an application for Architectural approval:

All satellite dish antennas that are more than one meter in diameter, all satellite dish antennas, regardless of size, that are mounted on a pole exceeding 12 feet in height, and all television broadcast antennas exceeding 12 feet in height require submission of an exterior alteration application and prior written approval by the Architectural Committee. Each home is limited to one satellite dish unless otherwise approved by the Architectural Committee. Inactive satellite dishes and antennae must be removed.

#### **Application Requirements:**

The application must include a photo showing the relation of the antenna or satellite dish to the existing structure. It must also show the exact location and a complete description and/or manufacturer's drawing or photograph of the proposed antenna/satellite dish.

#### **4. APIARIES (BEEKEEPING)**

An application is required for all apiaries, also known as bee hives. Apiaries will be allowed on a case-by-case basis, since not every property is suitable. Apiaries will not be allowed as an in-home business. Apiaries are governed by the Howard County zoning regulations and are regulated by the State of Maryland. Apiaries must meet all of the following conditions:

- A. The minimum front setback is 75 feet from the front property line.
- B. The minimum rear and side setbacks are 50 feet from the property line.
- C. A water supply shall be provided close to the apiary to minimize honeybees from seeking water off-site.
- D. The location and flight paths of the colony should be arranged carefully and should be located and oriented so that flyways are above head level when the honeybees cross adjacent property lines.
- E. In the State of Maryland, hives must be registered. Apiaries shall comply with Maryland Department of Agriculture regulations as they pertain to beekeeping and must be operated and maintained in accordance with best management practices.

#### **Application Requirements:**

- i. A site plan showing the proposed location of the apiary, the water source, and the flight path barrier (if applicable) in relation to the lot lines. Indicate the distance from the house and the property lines.
- ii. Picture or detailed drawing of the apiary, the structure on which the apiary sits, and the water source.
- iii. Dimensions, material description, and color of the apiary, the structure on which the apiary sits, the water source, and the flight path barrier (if applicable).
- iv. Landscaping plan for screening and flight path prevention.



## **5. ATTIC FANS**

An Exterior Alteration Application must be submitted for all attic fans. Attic fans that are of low profile and mounted on the least visible slope of the roof wall will most likely be approved. They must be painted to match the roof color.

### Application Requirements:

Submit a site plan, manufacturer's specification drawing, and photograph of the proposed fan, and show the exact location and amount of projection on the roof. The color of the unit and roof must be indicated.

## **6. ATTIC VENTILATORS**

An application is not required for attic ventilators on the exterior of a residence provided the following provisions are met:

- A. The ventilator is roof mounted and is located on the least visible side of the roof and does not extend above the ridge line.
- B. No part of the ventilator protrudes more than 12 inches above the roof surface.
- C. All exposed parts are painted to match the exterior color of the material they penetrate so as to conceal them.
- D. If it becomes necessary to block air flow through the ventilator, this should be done from the inside of the structure.

### Application Requirements:

All installations that do not meet the above provisions require an application describing the ventilator in detail and showing its location and elevation above the plane of the roof.

## **7. AWNINGS AND SUN TRELLISES**

- A. Sun control devices should be compatible with the architectural character of the house, in terms of style, color, and materials. Cloth and /or wood are the preferred materials.
- B. Awnings should be of straightforward design without decorative embellishments such as scallops, fringes, and contrasting colored stitches.
- C. Awnings and trellises should be consistent with the visual scale of the houses to which they are attached.
- D. The location of any awning or trellis should not adversely affect views, sunlight, or natural ventilation of adjacent properties. Due to the size of awnings and their potential obstruction of the view of contiguous units, the standard of review of applications from townhouses and multi-family units will be stricter than the standard of review for applications from detached units.
- E. Pipe frames for canvas awnings should be painted to match the trim or dominant color of the house. If awnings are removed for winter storage, pipe frames should also be removed.

### **Application Requirements:**

- i. Detailed drawings of the trellis or awning giving dimensions and a description of the method of support and attachment to the structure.
- ii. A description of the color and style of the sun control device and the materials to be used.
- iii. Explanation of the impact, if any, the sun control device will have on adjacent residences.

## **8. BASKETBALL BACKBOARDS**

Applications are required for all basketball backboards. It is strongly suggested that basketball backboards be limited to detached houses. Applications from condos will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

- A. Backboards should be firmly attached to the house or garage.
- B. Backboards should be white, graphite, clear, or painted to match the surface to which they are attached.
- C. Free-standing basketball backboards are allowed only at detached houses or on common condo property.
- D. The location should provide reasonable visual and acoustical privacy for neighbors. Screening, fencing, or planting may be required.

### **Application Requirements:**

Submit a site plan showing location of backboard in relation to house and lot boundaries and description and color of materials to be used. Include a detailed drawing or photo of the proposed basketball unit.

## 9. CHIMNEYS AND FLUES

The purpose of this guideline is to ensure that exterior chimney installations will be in harmony with the applicant's house and surrounding houses and to provide some indication as to what will be approved. Generally, these guidelines encourage the use of masonry or siding-enclosed construction as the most architecturally appropriate style for chimneys. It is recognized, however, that under certain circumstances it may be possible to use an unenclosed chimney pipe, and each case will be considered on its own merits.

For guidance of the applicant, the following information applies to chimneys and flues:

- A. Chimneys that exit through a wall or the foundation or which run vertically along a wall:
  - 1. The chimney should be of brick or stone masonry construction or should be boxed-in with materials which are compatible with the exterior wall finish in style, size, and color.
  - 2. An exposed metal pipe can be used if the applicant can show that an unenclosed metal pipe can be located in an inconspicuous manner.
  
- B. When an unenclosed pipe is proposed, it must meet the following criteria:
  - 1. All sections of the pipe are plumb, with no tilted or diagonal sections.
  - 2. The pipe is painted to blend with the structure; paint must be properly applied to avoid peeling.
  - 3. "Zero clearance" pipe is used and is mounted directly against the structure.
  
- C. The following guidelines apply to chimneys that exit through the roof:
  - 1. The chimney should be boxed-in if it is to be located on the front slope of the roof or the roof ridge, or any other location where it will be highly visible from the fronting street. Chimneys located on the rear slope and not highly visible from the fronting street need not be boxed-in. Exposed metal sections must be painted black or the roof color. Conspicuous locations on the front slope of the roof should be avoided.
  - 2. In all cases, the height of the exposed metal section or the boxed-in chimney shall be limited to the minimum required by the County building and fire codes.
  
- D. The following guidelines apply in addition to those above when there is no existing chimney on the house other than a builder-provided through-the-roof installation for the central heating system. Special care is needed to arrive at an architecturally suitable design when a second chimney is to be added. While each case must be considered separately, the following guides should be considered:
  - 1. Dissimilar chimneys should not be used unless it is impossible to see them both at the same time.
  - 2. When a second chimney is to be added on the same end of a house as an existing boxed-in chimney, both flues should be run through the same enclosure.
  - 3. When the second chimney is to be run along a different wall, it should normally be of the same design as the first chimney.

Application Requirements:

- i. A description of the applicant's house, such as apparent style, type of siding (horizontal or vertical), shutters, decorative embellishments, etc. As an alternative, a photograph of the front of the house and the proposed location of the chimney may be provided.
- ii. A site plan showing the location of the proposed chimney and its relationship to the house, property lines, and adjacent structures.
- iii. Detailed drawings showing exterior elevations and dimensions of the proposed chimney.
- iv. Complete description of the proposed chimney and proposed exterior construction materials. This should include the type and color of masonry or siding material to be used to enclose the chimney, or the paint color to be used on an unenclosed pipe. The relationship of these materials and colors to the present siding and trim materials and colors on the house should also be described.
- v. Where there is an existing chimney on the house (other than a builder-provided through-the-roof installation), provide details as in (i) through (iv) above for the existing chimney.

**10. CLOTHES DRYING RACKS (EXTERIOR)**

An application is required for all exterior clothes drying racks . Only umbrella or retractable types will be approved. These must be removed when not in use and daily by sunset. Section 11.04 of the Town Center Covenants states in part, "No clothing or any other household fabrics shall be hung in the open on any lot unless the same are hung from an umbrella or retractable clothes hanging device which is removed from view when not in use or unless the same are enclosed by a fence or other enclosure at least six inches higher than such hanging articles, providing such fence or other enclosure is approved by the Architectural Committee."

Application Requirements:

- i. Submit a site plan showing the proposed location of the dryer.
- ii. Provide a sketch of the clothes drying device showing style and operating technique.
- iii. Describe the color of the dryer and the materials used in its construction.
- iv. If screening is necessary, include a complete description of the screen height and construction.

**11. COMPOST PILES**

Applications must be submitted for all compost piles. A compost pile is defined as a properly maintained area for the decomposition of plant materials such as grass clippings, leaves, and small brush.

- A. Compost piles must be located at the rear of the house within 20 feet of the house or 2/3 of the distance between the rear of the house and the rear property line, whichever is greater.
- B. Compost piles must be screened from view of all neighboring houses and street.
- C. Compost piles must be maintained properly (turned regularly) and used only for plant materials. No kitchen scraps should be composted to avoid odors and pests.
- D. Compost piles on condo property will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

## **12. CONSERVATION / ENERGY-SAVING ALTERATIONS**

An application is required for all conservation or energy-saving exterior alterations. Because this technology is constantly evolving, the Architectural Committee will consider any exterior alteration application that supports conservation or saving energy on a case-by-case basis.

### **Application Requirements:**

- i. Submit a site plan showing the proposed location of the alteration.
- ii. Provide a picture or detailed drawing of the proposed alteration.
- iii. Describe the color, material, and dimensions of the proposed alteration.
- iv. Application must include a site photograph or drawing, including elevations, of the house showing the location and the appearance of the proposed conservation/energy-saving alteration.
- v. If plant screening is necessary, include a landscaping plan.

### 13. DECKS

Written approval is required for all decks, and Howard County requires a building permit for the installation of a deck. The following guidelines apply to the construction of decks:

- A. Decks should be constructed with durable materials such as pressure-treated wood or composite wood (such as Trex or TimberTech). All visible portions, excluding stairs, should be constructed of wood or composite wood. Stairs may be of metal or wood construction.
- B. The color of each deck should either match the primary color of the exterior of the unit, the trim of the unit, or be a natural wood color. If the color of the deck does not match either the primary exterior color or the trim color of the house, a color sample for the proposed deck, the house, and the trim must be submitted with the application.
- C. In addition to the above guidelines, decks will be judged on their individual merit which includes, but is not limited to, the location, size, conformity with design of the house, relationship to neighboring dwellings, and proposed use.

#### Application Requirements:

- i. A site plan with dimensions, showing relationship of the deck to the house, property lines, and adjacent properties.
- ii. Any changes in window or door locations should also be shown; this includes the conversion of a window opening to a door opening and vice versa.
- iii. A descriptive drawing to scale, including dimensions, height above grade, and details of railings and stairs.
- iv. Description of materials and color of the proposed deck and comparison with those of the house. If composite wood is to be used, submit a product sample.
- v. Description of any plantings to be removed for the construction of the deck, and any equipment such as meters, air conditioners, heat pumps, etc., which will be relocated.
- vi. Description of proposed changes to exterior lighting.

**14. DECORATIVE OBJECTS (EXTERIOR)**

- A. Applications will be required for all permanent exterior decorative objects, including natural and man-made, and for any conspicuous decorative object even if temporary. Because of the difficulty in clearly defining "conspicuous," residents should use common sense in determining if objects require approval. If there is any doubt, application should be made.
- B. Permanent exterior decorative objects include such representative items as bird baths and feeders, wagon wheels, sculptures, fountains, ornamental pools, sun dials, rocks, and items attached to approved structures such as weather vanes, etc.
- C. Objects will not be evaluated solely on aesthetics but also on siting, proportion, color, and appropriateness to surrounding environment.
- D. Holiday decorations do not require an application. However, they must not be installed prior to 28 days before the holiday and must be totally removed within 28 days after the holiday.

**Application Requirements:**

Application must include a site plan showing the proposed location of the object, its size, color, and a detailed drawing or picture of the object. Online mapping tools such as Google Maps are acceptable provided the objects are located and described clearly.

## 15. DOG HOUSES AND DOG RUNS

Written approval is required for construction and installation of all dog houses and dog runs. The following guidelines apply to these structures:

- A. It is preferable that dog houses be of the same material as the house; roof material should also match that of the house. The color of the dog house should match the primary color of the house or the color of the trim of the house, or be a natural wood color.
- B. Dog runs should be as close to the house as possible and in the rear of the house. Dog runs and dog houses should not be located near property lines. Screening is required.
- C. Due to the nature of apartment and townhouse living, applications for dog houses by apartment and townhouse residents will be reviewed very strictly and dog runs are discouraged. Condominium associations may have further restrictions on dog houses and dog runs. Please check with your local association.
- D. Residents are advised to review the Howard County Animal Control Laws regarding treatment of animals, leash laws, and noisy pets. Please visit [www.HowardCountyMD.gov](http://www.HowardCountyMD.gov) for more information.
- E. Approval of applications for dog houses and dog runs is contingent on the resident's commitment to keep the areas clean, to maintain the structure in good condition, and to control their dogs.

### Application Requirements:

- i. A site plan showing the relationship of the proposed dog run or dog house to the applicant's house, adjacent houses, and property lines.
- ii. Detailed drawings of the house or run to indicate dimensions, a list of materials to be used for construction, a color chip of the dog house and the resident's house, and pictures of the proposed area for the dog run in relation to the residence and adjacent properties.



**16. DOORS AND WINDOWS (INCLUDING GARAGE DOORS)**

- A. An application is required when the style, color, size, or location of a door or window will change. If there is no change in the style, color, size, and location of a replacement door or window (“like for like”), no application is required.
- B. All new doors or windows must be compatible with the color and style of the structure’s existing doors and windows.
- C. Condominium and townhouse associations, at their discretion, may choose door and/or window styles that serve as acceptable replacements for owners within their association. Such discretionary decisions by condominium and townhouse associations do not require the approval of the Town Center Architectural Committee. Further, no application is required for such replacement doors and/or windows.

**Application Requirements:**

- i. Submit a site plan showing the proposed location of the new door(s) or window(s).
- ii. Provide a manufacturer’s drawing, specification sheet or photograph of the proposed door(s) or window(s).
- iii. Provide complete details about the style, dimensions, and exterior color scheme of the proposed door(s) or window(s).

**17. DRIVEWAYS**

- A. An application is required for any new driveway construction, including expansion.
- B. In General, driveways are required to be constructed of Portland cement concrete or permeable asphalt for reasons of maintainability, appearance, and minimized environmental impact.
- C. No application is required for the replacement of an existing driveway as long as there is no change in materials, size, shape, or grade.

**Application Requirements:**

- i. A site plan with dimensions showing the relation to the existing structures, trees, and property lines.
- ii. Description of materials to be used, including color and texture.
- iii. Proposed changes in grade. Care must be exercised in any change in drainage.

## 18. FENCES

Fundamental to Columbia's plan is the concept of public open space. The preservation of green space and natural features, as well as a feeling of openness, contributes significantly to Columbia's difference from typical subdivisions. The purpose of this community open space is to provide each small residential lot with the atmosphere of a larger open area. The street side of every home is, visually, more or less public. In addition, many back yards are also public when they are directly related to the open space system. Fencing, if it is carelessly used or placed, encroaches on open space and can even destroy it.

- A. Written approval is required for construction or installation of all fencing.
- B. Front yard fencing is not allowed (except when builder-installed as part of the original design concept). Rear yard fencing which will, in effect, create front yard fencing for a neighbor will not be approved. The Committee will not approve chain link, wire, or wire- with-hedge type fences. Privacy fencing of the basketweave and stockade style will also not be approved.
- C. If fencing is already constructed on the property, the new fencing must be of the same material, color, and style as the existing fencing. Attached fences normally should be painted or stained to match the siding or dominant color of the house or be left in a natural wood color.
- D. Maximum height of solid fences is six feet. Transparent fences such as split rail have a maximum height of 36 inches for a two-rail fence and 42 inches for a three-rail fence. Gates should match the fence in material, color, style, and height. In condos fences shall match builder-installed fencing unless the condo and Architectural Committee have approved alternative styles.

### Application Requirements:

- i. Describe fence style, material, color, and dimensions. Also include the architectural style and color of the house and trim and types and colors of other fences in the immediate area.
- ii. Include a site plan showing the relationship of the proposed fence and gates to adjacent houses and open spaces and to property lines.

**19. FLAGS AND BANNERS**

- A. An application is not required for 3 feet x 5 feet or smaller flags or banners on poles attached to a house, garage, carport, or deck.
- B. An application is required for all other flags or banners.
- C. Permanent in-ground flagpoles are discouraged. Approval will be given for such flagpoles on a case-by-case basis, with consideration being given to such factors as the size, color, and location of the flagpole. At its discretion, the Town Center Architectural Committee may require some degree of plant screening around a flagpole.

**Application Requirements:**

- i. Submit a site plan showing the location of the flagpole on the property.
- ii. Provide a manufacturer's drawing or photograph of the proposed flagpole.
- iii. Provide details about the color and dimensions of the proposed flagpole.
- iv. If plant screening is contemplated, include a landscaping plan.

## 20. GARDENS, VEGETABLE

- A. No application is necessary if the garden is:
  - 1. Placed in the back yard.
  - 2. Smaller than 1/4 of the size of the back yard.
  - 3. Planted on a grade which does not cause drainage problems to other properties.
- B. An application must be submitted for all other situations.
- C. All gardens must be properly maintained. Dead vegetation and plant supports must be removed at the end of the growing season.
- D. Most vegetable garden plots require screening. Temporary wire fencing of welded wire mesh may be used to keep out small animals. Total height, including supports, should not exceed 18 inches. Temporary fencing may be installed after April 15 and must be removed by October 30.
- E. When having any bulk garden materials delivered, please have items placed on your own property, not on sidewalks, driveways, rights-of-way, etc.

### Application Requirements:

- i. If an application is required, submit a site plan with exact location of the garden in relation to the house and property lines and garden dimensions.
- ii. It is not necessary to submit renewal applications on an annual basis for small garden plots. However, any change in size or location requires reapplication.
- iii. Approval may be rescinded if the applicant has failed to adequately maintain his vegetable garden.

If you need advice on gardens, call the University of Maryland Cooperative Extension Service at 800-342-2507.

**21. GRILLS AND BARBECUES (PERMANENT)**

- A. Written approval is required for all permanent grills made of cast iron, aluminum, brick, masonry, or which are incorporated into any other permanent structure.
- B. Grills should be located at least 20 feet behind the rear line of the house and at least 10 feet from any property line. Residents are advised to ensure that the location of any grill does not violate the Howard County Fire Code.
- C. Due to the nature of apartment and townhouse living, applications for permanent grills will be reviewed very strictly.
- D. Condominium associations may have further restrictions on permanent grills and barbecues. Check with your local association.

NOTE: Portable grills, deep fryers should only be used in locations allowed by Howard County Codes. Please visit: [www.HowardCountyMD.gov](http://www.HowardCountyMD.gov) for more information.

**Application Requirements:**

- i. A site plan showing the relationship of the proposed grill's location to the residence, neighboring residences, and property lines.
- ii. A detailed drawing of the grill showing its design, dimensions, and a list of materials to be used in construction.

**22. HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING UNITS (EXTERIOR)**

- A. Written approval is required for the installation of any outdoor heat-exchange or air conditioning units except for replacement of existing units. Written approval is also required for the installation of wall or window-type air conditioners. Wall and window-type air conditioners will be limited to locations that are not prominently visible.
- B. Outdoor heat-exchange or air conditioning units should ideally be located in the rear of a home and as close to the house as possible. If it is necessary to locate the unit on the side of the house, the unit should be adequately screened from view. Screening material should be far enough away from the unit to ensure adequate air flow for full heating and/or cooling efficiency.

**Application Requirements:**

- i. A site plan showing the proposed location of the unit in relation to the house.
- ii. Description and drawing and/or picture of the unit including dimensions.
- iii. Description of screening material if necessary.

**23. HOT TUBS AND SPAS**

- A. An application is required for all exterior hot tubs and spas. They shall be located to the rear and between side walls of the residence and generally not more than 20 feet from the rear wall.
- B. Generally, the hot tub or spa shall not protrude more than three feet above ground level and shall be of material that will blend with surrounding structures. A child-proof lid shall always be locked for safety purposes during periods of non-use.
- C. Waste water should drain into existing plumbing of the residence if possible. Adequate drainage of the facility will weigh heavily on-site selection approval.

**Application Requirements:**

- i. Site plan showing the location of the tub or spa and its relationship to existing structures and property lines.
- ii. Detailed drawing or photo of proposed unit showing dimensions, color, and type of materials.
- iii. Proposed screening and landscaping plan.
- iv. Arrangements for disposal of waste water.

## **24. LANDSCAPING AND PLANTING**

- A. A master plan for landscaping is recommended even if planting is to be done in stages. It is strongly recommended that plantings be arranged in clusters or groups rather than in straight lines to give a natural effect. Care should be taken not to over plant one's lot with random plants and trees. Unnatural materials such as plastic fencing, artificial flowers and painted rocks are not allowed. When having mulch or other bulk materials delivered, please have items placed on your own property, not sidewalks, parking areas, rights-of-way, etc.
- B. Application is required for, but not limited to, the following:
1. Removal of any tree whose trunk is over six inches in diameter when measured at a point two feet above the ground.
  2. Any plantings used as a hedge or windbreak or for screening purposes. Hedges will be considered on an individual basis under the guideline on Fences.
  3. Landscaping which involves a change of grading or slope, or installation of a retaining wall or other structures.
  4. Rock gardens; rocks should be left in their natural color. For exterior ornamentation or decorative objects, see guideline 14, Decorative Objects.
  5. Shrubs or trees which will be over two feet tall at maturity.
- C. Application is not required for the planting of individual shrubs which will be less than two feet tall at maturity, foundation plants, small annual or perennial beds, and ground covers.
- D. When an application is approved with a requirement for landscape screening, the following criteria are required at the time of planting:
1. Plants must be a fast-growing evergreen such as hemlock or white pine and of a density to provide immediate impact.
  2. Material must be 2/3 the height of the object to be screened.
- E. The following trees are not approved due to undesirable growth characteristics: Thorny Locust, Silver Maple, Standard Weeping Willow, Box Elder, Sycamore Maple, Tulip Poplar, Black Cherry, Black Locust, Osage Orange, Bradford Pear, and Poplars. Species considered invasive are not allowed. For species appropriate to the local environment, the following websites offer guidance on plant selection: The Maryland Department of Natural Resources, University of Maryland Extension Service, or Towson University Maryland Tree Collection.

### **Application Requirements:**

- i. Applications should include a description of the types and sizes of trees or shrubs to be planted and a site plan showing the relationship of plantings to the house and adjacent dwellings.
- ii. Description of any tree to be removed and an explanation for the removal. Trees to be removed should

have a highly visible ribbon tied to the trunk or major branch to indicate it will be removed.

- iii. Description of any retaining wall or structure.
- iv. Approval is contingent on reasonable care and maintenance of plant material and prompt removal of dead materials.

## **25. LIGHTING (EXTERIOR)**

- A. In general, the replacement of an existing light fixture, if accomplished with a realistic match to the old fixture, does not require approval from the Architectural Committee. If a change in style, size, shape, color, or positioning is desired or if additional light fixtures are to be installed on existing or new structures, an application is required.
- B. Applications for exterior additions, such as garages or carports, should include details of the lighting fixtures proposed. Fluorescent lights used outdoors or in carports will not be approved. Before digging to lay wiring or install light fixtures, call Miss Utility for the location of existing utilities.
- C. New permanent exterior lighting and wiring requires an application. All exterior lighting should be installed so that it will not shine on adjacent property or public space, and it should be aesthetically planned for each location. Flood lights and various types of high- output lights must be considered more carefully because of the impact on neighboring properties. Light fixtures of this type should be carefully aimed so that they illuminate only a specific area, such as a doorway. Some high-output light fixtures may have to be shielded in a manner similar to some street light installations to prevent unwanted or excessive intrusion of light from one property to another.
- D. Temporary holiday and festival lighting does not require approval. However, the operation of holiday and festival lighting should coincide with the holiday and be removed shortly thereafter. See guideline 14 on Decorative Objects. Temporary electrical lighting and wiring for street decorations on, over or across any public street, avenue or highway requires an application and a Howard County permit (call 410-313-2455) and may require evidence of adequate insurance coverage.

### **Application Requirements:**

- i. Detailed drawing of exterior light placement on site plan.
- ii. Drawing or picture of fixture to be installed and location when changing builder's installed fixture.
- iii. Statement of effect of proposed lighting on adjacent residences.



## 26. PAINING AND STAINING

- A. An application is required only when the siding or trim of a house is to be painted or stained a color that is different from its existing color. The new paint or stain is considered to be different if either the color or the shade differs from the original.
- B. Applications will be most readily approved when the following criteria are met:
1. The number of colors used should be limited to one for siding, one for trim, and a compatible accent color for the front door. Only "flat" finish paint or stain should be used, except semi-gloss may be used for the front door.
  2. Trim color should be compatible with the color of the siding, and selected colors should complement roof color. Foundations should be painted the same color as the siding, not the trim.
  3. Existing minor structures, such as attached or detached shared garages or carports, or sheds and dog houses should be repainted at the same time as the house and match the house color.
  4. When adjacent units, such as townhouses or duplexes, share an exterior material of the same color, only the original color may be reused unless adjacent neighbors agree to simultaneously repaint or re-stain in an approved color.
  5. Earth tone colors (muted tans, browns, greens, golds) are preferred for contemporary houses. Bright or exotic colors are discouraged. In cases in which the choice of color is out of the earth tone range, the prime consideration will be whether the house will continue to blend in a complementary way with its surroundings.
  6. Traditional houses generally have maintenance free-aluminum or vinyl siding and should not be repainted. Any changes in trim, foundation, or door color require an application.
  7. Multi-Unit Housing
    - a. When the exterior of a unit is owned by the individual resident, and different units in the development are painted different colors, an owner should restrict choice of color to one of those already in existence in the development. When all units are the same color, a color change for just one unit will not be approved.
    - b. When the exterior of a unit is owned not by the resident alone, but by a condominium as a whole, any changes in color will necessarily be chosen by the condominium and should be consistent with the overall design and color scheme of the other units.

### Application Requirements:

- i. Submit a sample of the specified paint or stain with your application.
- ii. When the unit to be painted is part of a condominium or multi-family development, a description of how the chosen color will fit in with other units in the development is required.
- iii. When a shared garage/carport or outbuildings are involved, complete details must be submitted showing how the exterior will be finished in relation to the remainder of the residence.

## **27. PATIOS, WALKWAYS AND ACCESSIBILITY STRUCTURES**

An application is required for all new patios and walkways and changes to existing patios and walkways and will be approved most readily when the following criteria are met:

- A. All materials should be of a neutral color, such as undyed concrete, stone, clay, brick or treated wood. Applications for colored stamped concrete will be considered on a case- by-case basis.
- B. The design, location and size of the patios and walkways should conform to the design and scale of the house and neighboring dwellings.
- C. Existing contours should be disturbed as little as possible. Terracing to follow existing land contours should be built in small increments, or a safety railing should be provided.
- D. The location should provide reasonable visual and acoustical privacy for the neighbors. Screening, fencing, or planting should be considered where it is necessary to preserve such privacy.
- E. When designing an accessibility structure, give consideration to creating a design that is harmonious, to the extent possible, with the style and color scheme of the residence. Approved ramps and other accessibility structures should be removed when they are no longer needed.

### **Application Requirements:**

- i. Site plan with dimensions showing the new walkway or patio in relation to existing houses, trees and lot boundaries.
- ii. Description or sample of the materials to be used.
- iii. Description of proposed lawn contour changes, plantings, screening, railings, benches, new exterior lighting, etc.

## 28. POOLS

Applications for private pools will be reviewed very strictly in Town Center because there are very few locations in urban residential areas where they can be placed without adversely affecting adjacent properties.

- A. Application is required for all permanent pools or others not taken inside daily. Above-ground pools are not allowed. Application is not required for portable children's wading pools not more than six feet in diameter and less than 24 inches deep which are located in a rear yard. A Howard County building permit is required for pools deeper than 24 inches or having a surface area of 250 square feet or more.
- B. An application will most likely be approved if the following criteria are met:
  - 1. The size of the pool should be based on the lot size, be of reasonable proportion to the house, and conform to Howard County building codes.
  - 2. Pools should be located at the rear of the house and not within 25 feet of a property line.
  - 3. A four-to six-foot solid safety fence compatible with the design of the house must enclose the pool and other related pool facilities. In addition, the homeowner should consider safety within the pool area as well as the impact of increased noise levels and lighting on adjacent properties. See guideline 18 on Fences.

### Application Requirements:

- i. Submit a site plan similar to those required by Howard County for building permits showing location and dimensions of the pool, other related equipment, fences, etc., in relation to the applicant's house, property lines, and adjacent dwellings.
- ii. Submit detailed drawings and plans of the pool, deck area, lighting arrangements, walkways, fence type, proposed grading and landscaping, and pertinent information concerning the water supply system, drainage, and water disposal system.
- iii. The application should include the signatures of all property owners surrounding the applicant's property indicating that they have been informed about the applicant's intention to build a pool and the plans for said pool.

## 29. PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

The Town Center Covenants (Article VI) provide that each owner shall keep the lot and all improvements in good order and repair. Maintenance shall be done in a manner consistent with good property management. The list below is not intended to be all-inclusive.

- A. **Bulk Items:** Bulk items are not to be stored or accumulated on any lot. Store bulk items out of sight or discard them. Do not cover items with tarps.
- B. **Driveways:** Deteriorating driveways need to be repaired or replaced.
- C. **Fences:** Fences should be in good repair, standing straight with no missing boards and no peeling paint.
- D. **Gardens:** Gardens should be kept free of weeds, dead plants, and overgrown plant material.
- E. **Grass:** Grass should be mowed and trimmed on a regular basis. Maintenance of the grass area between the sidewalk and the curb are the responsibility of the abutting property owner and should include appropriate mowing, trimming, and weeding in the same manner and frequency as regular lawn care.
- F. **Gutters and Downspouts:** Gutters and downspouts should be in place and secure, with no peeling paint. Gutters should be clear of tree debris and dirt. All drain extensions should be buried below ground.
- G. **Holiday Decorations:** Holiday decorations must not be installed prior to 28 days before the holiday and must be completely removed within 28 days after the holiday.
- H. **Lampposts and Exterior Light Fixtures:** Lampposts should stand straight and be free of rust. Light fixtures should not be crooked and should not have any broken or missing light bulbs.
- I. **Leaf and Tree Debris:** Yard, roof, and gutters should be cleared of leaves and debris on a continuing basis. Raking leaves and debris onto the street, surrounding properties, open space, or ravines is prohibited. Do not cover leaf piles or yard debris with a tarp.
- J. **Mold, Mildew, Algae:** Mold, mildew, and algae should be removed from the surface of all structures.
- K. **Paint:** There should be no peeling paint or rotted wood on structures. No application is required for re-painting or re-staining the exterior when the color remains the same. An application is required for any change in exterior paint color or stain color.
- L. **Patios and Walkways:** Patios and/or walkways that are crumbled or upheaved should be repaired or replaced.
- M. **Roof:** The roof should be in good repair and of a uniform color pattern. There should not be any accumulation of debris on the roof.

- N. **Screens:** Screens should be in good repair and fit properly.
- O. **Shrubs:** Shrubs should not be overgrown in relation to the size of the structure. Dead shrubs should be removed and properly disposed of.
- P. **Siding:** Siding should be securely attached and free of discoloration, dirt, mold, mildew, and rotting wood trim.
- Q. **Snow Removal:** According to Howard County code, it is the responsibility of property owners to remove snow from sidewalks that abut their property within 48 hours after the end of a snowfall.
- R. **Street Trees:** Problems with street trees should be brought to the attention of the Howard County Bureau of Highways by calling 410-313-7450.
- S. **Tarps:** Tarps are not allowed in the open on any lot.
- T. **Trash:** Trash containers should have secure lids on them and must be stored out of view of surrounding properties.
- U. **Trees:** Dead trees or branches may not accumulate on any lot. It is the responsibility of the property owner to prune trees that abut walkways to allow pedestrian passage. An application is required for all tree removal.
- V. **Vehicles:** Boats, trailers, inoperable vehicles, commercial trucks, and vehicles without current registration or license plates are not allowed in the open on any lot.
- W. **Windows and Skylights:** Window frames and sills should be kept in good repair. Panes that are broken or fogged due to broken seals should be replaced.

### **30. RADON UNITS**

An application must be submitted for all exterior radon units.

- A. Exhaust pipes should preferably be located alongside a downspout and painted the color of the downspout or placed vertically on the side of the house and painted to match the siding and terminate 4 inches above the roof line to prevent exhaust from reentering the building.
- B. Screening may be required.

#### Application Requirements:

Submit a site plan including the exact location of the unit and a manufacturer's drawing or photograph if available and a description of screening if applicable.

### **31. RAIN BARRELS**

An application is required for all rain barrels. A "rain barrel" is defined as a container that collects and stores rainwater from downspouts and rooftops for future use in watering lawns and gardens.

- A. Rain barrels may only be located in the vicinity of downspouts.
- B. The size of rain barrels must not exceed 65 gallons.
- C. The exterior of rain barrels must be of an earth tone color.
- D. Rain barrels must be made of a durable material and maintained at all times.
- E. Rain barrels must be secured on a level, stable base.
- F. Rain barrel overflow must be properly diverted so as not to flow toward the applicant's house or onto neighboring properties.
- G. Because freezing water will damage rain barrels, they should be stored upside down during the winter, either in place or in a garage/carport. If a section of downspout was removed for installation, it must be reattached during this period.
- H. Rain barrels should be covered securely with fine screen to prevent creation of a breeding place for mosquitoes.
- I. Plant screening may be required.

#### Application Requirements:

- i. Submit a site plan showing the proposed location of the rain barrel(s).
- ii. Provide a picture of the proposed rain barrel(s).
- iii. Provide a sample of the color and provide dimensions of the proposed rain barrel(s).
- iv. If plant screening is necessary, include a landscaping plan.

### **32. RECREATIONAL / PLAY EQUIPMENT**

The specifications given below apply primarily to detached homes. Due to the concentrated nature of multi-unit dwellings and townhouses, the location of play or recreational equipment on these properties will be reviewed very strictly. Residents are urged to use CA recreational facilities and tot lots.

- A. Written approval is required for recreational equipment which is permanent. Permanent is defined as an item which remains in place for at least one season (e.g., swing set, large sandbox, picnic table, bench, etc.). See separate guideline on Basketball Backboards.
- B. The equipment should be located behind the house as inconspicuously as possible. It should be at least 10 feet from the rear and side property lines. Swing sets, sandboxes, and other equipment should be of natural wood color or, if painted, a natural earth tone such as dark green or brown.
- C. Condominium and homeowner associations may have further restrictions on recreational/ play equipment. Check with your local association.

#### **Application Requirements:**

- i. Color and type of materials.
- ii. Site plan with dimensions showing the location of the play or recreational equipment relative to the applicant's house, property lines, and neighboring houses.
- iii. Picture or detailed drawing of the proposed equipment showing dimensions.

### **33. RENTAL PROPERTIES**

Howard County requires the licensing of any rental unit and inspection of the premises. All rental units must be reported to the County. Property owners are held responsible for the property's covenant compliance and disclosure of requirements to tenants.

**34. RE-SIDING AND RE-STYLING**

- A. The choice of material to be used in re-siding is left to the discretion of the owner. It is the owner's responsibility to ascertain whether this material meets the Howard County building and fire codes which apply to exterior materials.
- B. If the proposed re-siding material differs in color or texture from existing siding on the residence, or if it results in a change in architectural style, it should be consistent or compatible with the style and color of siding materials on homes immediately surrounding it.
- C. The style of existing trim work at soffits, corners, eaves, windows, and doors and of accent panels, shutters, or other stylistic features should be retained in the re-siding design. This will be considered an important requirement where these elements contribute to the visual continuity of the neighborhood by evoking similarities in style among nearby houses.
- D. In those cases in which residents wish to alter the stylistic features of the existing facade (for example, by replacing rough, vertical groove paneling with smooth, horizontal clapboard siding or by adding shutters on accent panels) the Architectural Committee will render a decision based on the following considerations:
  - 1. Appearance of the residence in relation to existing and proposed materials.
  - 2. The variety of styles and siding materials of the homes immediately surrounding the residence.
  - 3. The overall visibility of the residence from nearby public and private properties.

**Application Requirements:**

- i. Photograph or detailed drawing of the house as it currently appears including the color and texture of existing siding materials. Include a description of the color and siding materials on immediately adjacent houses.
- ii. Description of the proposed re-siding material including its color, texture, and the manner in which it will be applied. Color and texture samples must be submitted with the application. Significant changes in present trim size and location and removal or addition of other stylistic features must also be noted.
- iii. Description of proposed treatment of outbuildings, such as sheds. Re-siding or repainting of such structures may be required to match that of the house.



## 35. **SIGNS**

### A. General

1. No temporary or permanent sign or other advertising device of any nature shall be placed upon any lot without the written approval of the Architectural Committee, with the exception of temporary signs advertising the sale or rental of residential property.
2. Garage sale signs may be put up on the day of the event and must be taken down within 24 hours following the sale.
3. The erection and placement of all signs in Town Center must be in compliance with the Howard County Sign Code along with the Village requirements. Contact the Department of Inspections, Licenses, and Permits, 3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043 (phone: 410-313-2455) for guidance.
4. No temporary signage shall be larger than 20 x 28 inches or stand more than 3 feet above the ground, measured from the top of the sign.
5. Signs shall not be erected on trees, street signs, light poles, official neighborhood identification signs, or community association common areas.
6. No signs shall be illuminated without written approval of the Architectural Committee.
7. Signs shall be neatly lettered, clean, and have a professional appearance.
8. Signs shall be maintained in good condition.
9. Signs should be of materials of sufficient strength to avoid bending or warping.
10. If a sign is erected without Architectural Committee approval or if a sign violates any portion of this guideline, then the owner of the sign shall be notified and must remove the offending sign within 24 hours of notification. If the sign's owner fails to remove the offending sign, then it may be removed by the Architectural Committee or the Covenant Advisor, who will not be responsible for any resulting loss or damage.

### B. Informational and Advisory Signs

An application is required for all informational and advisory signs.

1. One free-standing sign may be located for identification only at the entrance to a building or development and may not be treated as an advertising device. Signage text is limited to company/development name and/or logo.
2. Informational and advisory signs should reflect the graphic signature of the primary signage for the development and should establish a simple, consistent, identifiable theme of color and type face (font).
3. Individual signs should be no larger than necessary to accommodate the text.

4. Except where used as part of a logo, color for signs should be limited to one color for lettering and one color for the background. It may be required that a single color be used for all signage within a development.
5. Informational signs should be carefully located to maximize their effectiveness and minimize the overall number of such signs.
6. Pole-mounted signs should be set as low to the ground as possible.

C. Real Estate Signs

No Architectural Committee approval is required for temporary signs for sale or rental of residential property if the following conditions are met:

1. The sign is no larger than 20 x 28 inches and is mounted on a wooden crossbar post no higher than 5 feet above ground, or the sign is a two-pronged metal sign no higher than 3 feet above ground.
2. Only one sign per property is permitted, posted directly on the property. Additional signs posted at nearby intersections are strictly prohibited.
3. Realtors are permitted to use their logos, trademarks, and color schemes.
4. "Open House" signs may be erected only on the day of the open house, and they must be removed within an hour after the conclusion of the open house. Such signs shall be no more than 3 feet above ground. Only one directional "Open House" sign is permitted per intersection. "Sold" or "Under Contract" signs are prohibited in Town Center.

D. Political Signs

Political signs are defined as signs endorsing candidates for public office or signs promoting support or defeat of any proposition or amendment that will appear on the election ballot. Political signs do not need Architectural Committee approval if the following conditions are met:

1. The sign is no larger than 4 square feet.
2. The sign is erected no more than 30 days prior to an election and is removed within 7 days after the election. In cases where a final election follows within 75 days of a primary election, signs endorsing those candidates who won in the primary election may be displayed during the interim period and up to 7 days after the final election.

E. Home Security Signs

Home security signs do not need Architectural Committee approval if the following conditions are met:

1. Small, standard home security signs may be attached to the front or back of the house.
2. Free-standing home security signs up to 8 inches in diameter are permitted and must be mounted on a metal or wooden stake located no further than 10 feet from the house. Only one free-standing sign may be placed in the front yard of the house and only one such sign may be placed in the rear.

Application Requirements:

- i. Submit a site plan showing precisely the proposed location of the sign.
- ii. Provide a complete description of the proposed sign, including, but not limited to, dimensions, text, font, size and color of lettering, background color, and any graphics. Include a paper mock-up of the proposed sign that is a faithful rendering of the final product.
- iii. Provide a complete description of the materials to be used in the production of the sign. Indicate whether the proposed sign is to be monument style (flush with the ground) or mounted above ground.
- iv. Supply a landscaping plan that will soften the impact of the proposed sign.
- v. If illumination of the sign is contemplated, supply a lighting plan, taking into account any restrictions imposed by the Howard County Sign Code.
- vi. Include a copy of the sign application submitted to the Howard County Department of Inspections, Licenses, and Permits. Applications to Howard County and the Town Center Architectural Committee can be made concurrently.
- vii. It is the duty of the applicant to design and construct the proposed improvements according to applicable laws, codes, and sound practices.
- viii. For any temporary sign, indicate how long it will be displayed.

### **36. SKYLIGHTS**

An application must be submitted for all skylights, prior to beginning construction

#### Application Requirements:

A drawing showing each skylight's location on the roof, a picture or detailed drawing of the unit showing profile and dimensions, and a description of the materials used in its construction.

### **37. SOLAR COLLECTORS / PANELS**

- A. Solar collectors (also known as solar panels) can represent a large visual impact on a structure due to their size. Therefore, it is important to properly integrate the collector into the design of the house so as to properly conceal it. Collectors must be located to give maximum advantage to the user and minimum visibility.
- B. Large collectors on a sloping roof must appear to be flush with the roof and not laying on top. Collectors on a flat roof must be set back and concealed with a parapet unless integrated with the roof design of the structure. Smaller collectors may be laid on top of a sloping roof and finished to appear like a skylight.
- C. Collectors must be constructed of glass with wood or metal trim. All trim must be painted to match the background color of the roof or house trim to conceal it. Plexiglas is not acceptable as it sags and yields an unsatisfactory appearance. All pipe work must be concealed.
- D. Freestanding collectors should normally be located behind the structure and completely concealed from the road, neighboring properties, and open space or worked into another architectural element.

#### Application Requirements:

- i. Application must include a site photograph or drawing, including elevations, of the house showing the location and appearance of the proposed collector.
- ii. Details should describe the dimensions of, and the material used to construct the collector and how the edges of the collector meet the roof.

### **38. STORAGE SHEDS**

- A. Written approval is required for construction or installation of all sheds. Approval is contingent on the resident's commitment to build a sturdy, permanent structure.
- B. It is preferable that roofing, siding and trim of the shed be of the same material as the house; sheds of different materials, however, will also be considered. Prefabricated sheds must be on a permanent base.
- C. A shed should be the same color as the primary color of the home, the color of the trim of the home, or a natural wood color. If not, a color sample of the proposed shed should be submitted with a color sample of the home. Lustrous and shiny metallic surfaces are not acceptable.
- D. The shed should be located in the rear of the home and as close to the house as possible. Consideration will be given to other locations, however, provided that the shed is well hidden by natural or other covering or is inconspicuous by its size, color, material, etc.
- E. If the house is re-styled, re-sided or a paint color change is made, the existing shed should be altered to match the house.

#### **Application Requirements:**

- i. Site plan which shows the relationship of the shed to the adjacent house and property lines.
- ii. Picture and/or detailed drawing of the proposed shed to include dimensions.
- iii. Description of materials to be used.
- iv. Color samples of shed and house.

### **39. STORM / SCREEN WINDOWS AND DOORS**

Storm/screen windows and doors of straightforward design without decorative embellishments and which are compatible with the style and color of the house do not require an application. The storm/screen window or door should match the color of the house siding, exterior door, or trim. House trim constitutes two or more of the following in the same color: gutters and downspouts, shutters, corner molding, and wide front door molding.

#### **Application Requirements:**

Applications for storm/screen windows or doors other than those approved above must include a picture of the proposed window(s) or door and descriptions of material, color, style, and any decorative embellishments.

#### **40. TEARDOWNS / NEW CONSTRUCTION**

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 and the building of the new home on an existing lot.

- A. Before digging, call Miss Utility (800-257-7777) for the location of underground utilities. This service is provided free of charge and is required by law.
- B. Any construction close to the Columbia Association's Open Space could adversely affect that Open Space. Contact the Land Management Division of the Columbia Association (410-381-0194) for its permission to use Open Space prior to any use during construction. The lot managing agent is responsible for ensuring that contractors do not dump materials on or damage Open Space land.
- C. The applicant is responsible for obtaining all permits and approvals from any relevant agencies such as the County, homeowner's association, etc. The number for Howard County Department of Inspections, Licenses, and Permits is 410-313-2455.
- D. Construction should be completed in accordance with the timeline submitted by the applicant. Any request for extensions of this time frame must be submitted in writing to the Architectural Committee. Work should be done in a professional manner. Trash, bulk materials, and general disruption of the work site should be kept to a minimum.
- E. Any changes to the original application that take place during the planning or building phase of construction, including those made by the County or other authorities, will require a new application.
- F. Consideration should be given to the proportional scale and architectural style of the proposed construction as it relates to the lot and other properties in the neighborhood/street. Additions should be architecturally consistent with the existing shape, style, and size of the dwelling.
- G. New construction should not significantly impair the view, amount of sunlight, or ventilation of adjacent residences or the public's use of Open Space.
- H. New construction should not adversely affect drainage conditions on adjacent properties through changes in grade or other significant run-off conditions, including conditions during construction.
- I. New construction should not create situations in which neighbors will have difficulty modifying or maintaining their dwellings.

#### **Application Requirements:**

- i. A timeline with anticipated teardown date, start date, and completion date.
- ii. Elevation drawings of all sides of the house showing style, siding, or façade materials, window placement, door and garage door placement, roof lines, walkways, driveways, porches, deck, gutters, shutters, and skylights. Elevation drawings do not have to be done professionally, but they should be detailed, to scale, easy to read, and show good workmanship.
- iii. Dimensions of all sides of structure.

- iv. A site plan showing full footprint of house and other structures.
- v. If the corners of the proposed structure are different from the existing house, please stake out these corners to provide a visual reference.
- vi. Description and color samples of all exterior building materials.
- vii. Landscape design.
- viii. Lighting plan.
- ix. Signatures of all affected and adjacent residents.

**41. TEMPORARY STORAGE UNITS (“PODS”)**

No application is required if the following conditions are met:

- A. The temporary storage unit shall stay on the lot for no more than 14 days.
- B. The resident must contact the Town Center Covenant Advisor (410-730-4744) prior to having the unit delivered to the resident’s property.

**Application Requirements:**

- i. A site plan showing the proposed location of the temporary storage unit(s).
- ii. The number of storage units.
- iii. The dates and time frame in which the storage unit(s) will remain on the lot.
- iv. Reason(s) that necessitate(s) the temporary storage unit to remain on the lot for more than 14 days.
- v. Prior to delivery, notify the Covenant Advisor of the anticipated delivery and removal dates.

**42. TRASH**

- A. Trash or other refuse is to be disposed of on a regular basis and no refuse, trash, or bulk materials may be accumulated or stored on any lot.
- B. Containers shall be stored in such a manner so that they cannot be seen from adjacent and surrounding property except on a day that pick-up is to be made.
- C. Trash must be placed in covered containers or secured in plastic bags. Trash may be put out no earlier than sunset on the evening prior to the day of pick-up, and receptacles including recycling containers must be collected as soon as possible after pick-up.



**43. TREE REMOVAL**

- A. An application is required for the removal of any live tree whose trunk is over six inches in diameter when measured at a point two feet above ground level. The Town Center Architectural Committee may, at its discretion, require that the removed tree be replaced.
- B. An application is also required for the removal of any dead tree whose trunk is more than six inches in diameter when measured at a point two feet above ground level. At its discretion, the Town Center Architectural Committee may require that the dead tree be replaced.
- C. In an emergency situation, wherein a tree has fallen down or is in imminent danger of falling down with the possibility of causing damage to property or injury to people, a tree may be removed without the prior written approval of the Town Center Architectural Committee. However, the property owner must first consult with the Covenant Advisor before undertaking such a removal. An Application for Exterior Alteration must subsequently be submitted as soon as practicable after removal. This application must include photographs depicting the emergency situation.
- D. For condominium and townhouse associations, contact the Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning to learn if county approval is also needed for the removal of any tree that was on common element of the final site development plan for that community.

**Application Requirements:**

- i. Submit a site plan showing the location of the tree to be removed.
- ii. Provide photographs of the subject tree.
- iii. Provide details about the condition of the tree and the reasons for removal. Include any report from an arborist regarding the tree's health.
- iv. If applicable, indicate what type of tree will be planted in place of the tree that was or will be removed. If the tree will not be replaced, stump and roots should be grinded level to surrounding grade.

#### **44. VEHICLES**

- A. Boats, trailers, campers, recreational vehicles, trucks larger than a pick-up truck, any vehicle with commercial lettering or signage, commercial vehicles as defined in the Howard County Code, Section 21.913 (more than 3/4 of a ton manufacturer's rating capacity used for commercial purposes), inoperable vehicles, unregistered vehicles, or any similar items shall not be parked or stored in the open on any lot without the prior written approval of the Town Center Architectural Committee.
- B. All vehicles, regardless of condition, must be parked in garages, on driveways or parking pads/spaces unless otherwise approved by the Architectural Committee.
- C. Major vehicle renovation or repair may not be undertaken except in enclosed garages. Only minor emergency repairs such as battery charging or changing or replacing tires are permitted in the open on any lot.

Note: Columbia Association operates a security-gated recreational vehicle storage facility. Please call 410-381-1488 or email [RV.Park@ColumbiaAssociation.org](mailto:RV.Park@ColumbiaAssociation.org) to receive rates or check availability.

#### **Application Requirements:**

Submit to the Covenant Advisor a complete description of the recreational or commercial vehicle and where it is to be parked.

#### **45. WOODPILES**

- A. Written approval is not required for the following woodpiles:
  - 1. Woodpiles which are neatly stacked wholly within an enclosed or semi-enclosed area or immediately adjacent to a permanent wall and are not readily visible from the street or a neighbor's view. For protection against termites, residents are cautioned against stacking firewood too close to wood-frame dwellings.
  - 2. Woodpiles contained in a woodbin or ring at the front or rear of the home.
- B. All other woodpiles require written approval. Stacking of wood on sidewalks, driveways, rights-of-way, or CA Open Space is not permitted.

#### **Application Requirements:**

Submit location, dimensions, and screening details for woodpiles that do not meet the above requirements.

## OTHER GUIDELINES

### IN-HOME BUSINESS

- A. In accordance with Section 11.02 of the Town Center Covenants, no profession or home business shall be conducted in or on any part of a lot or in any improvement thereon without the specific written approval of the Architectural Committee who shall deem said business to be compatible with a high-quality neighborhood. The following activities may be permitted at the discretion of the Committee, subject to all applicable County and other restrictions: arts and crafts, medical and dental offices, fraternal or club meetings, seamstress service, private tutoring, mail-order business, the keeping of not more than two roomers or boarders. Licensed in-home day care as provided by the Maryland Real Property Code is exempt from this guideline because Maryland state regulation of this activity supersedes the covenants and architectural guidelines.
- B. An application is required for all in-home professions and businesses except for occasional casual use, such as children's ventures, garage sales, or yard sales, provided that all evidence of the use is removed at night and that such use is not conducted on more than six days in any six-month period. Applications for approval of in-home businesses must be made on the specific form provided for that purpose. If necessary, attach additional sheets of paper to the form in order to provide a full and complete description of the proposed business.
- C. To be considered for approval, the home business must fulfill the following requirements:
1. Be clearly secondary to the use of the home; occupy not more than 25 percent of the total floor area of the home, and in no event more than 500 square feet, and be confined to one floor; not require the alteration of the home in any way which would make it unsuitable for future use as a residence, or require the construction of accessory buildings or building additions not suitable for normal residential uses.
  2. Be of a type which is customarily and traditionally carried on within a home by one or more occupants of the dwelling, except that in connection with the practice of a profession, one person not residing in the dwelling may be employed; not involve the sale of goods or merchandise on the premises.
  3. Not be of a type which will create unpleasant odors, undue noise, pedestrian or vehicular traffic, or which will make unusual demands on community facilities or services. Not contemplate the use of village land or Open Space by persons not living in the village, as part of a business for profit.
  4. Not require the use of a commercial-type vehicle or require one to be parked on the property; provide off-street parking facilities in the quantities required by county laws for residents and the business. The Architectural Committee will not normally permit the construction of commercial parking lots on residential lots.

D. Conditions on approved businesses:

1. All approved applications shall be valid for one year only, after which reapplication must be made. The Architectural Committee may, at its option, waive this requirement on a case-by-case basis.
2. An in-home business approval is not transferable to a new owner or a new location.
3. Any variance from the terms of an approved application will be considered a violation.
4. No sign or other advertising device of any nature shall be placed on any lot. This restriction does not prohibit the use of professional titles such as M.D., Attorney- at-Law, etc., on small (2" x 4") nameplates located on doors or adjacent to doorbell buttons.

Application Requirements:

- i. Use special application form for in-home business or profession.
- ii. Type of profession or home business desired (complete description) and hours of operation.
- iii. Where business-related materials and equipment will be stored and how products, services, or materials will be distributed and advertised.
- iv. Impact of traffic and parking required on the community. Number and type of deliveries required, type and number of vehicles to be used to conduct the business, and where vehicles are to be parked.

## **APPLICATION FORMS**

The following are samples of Town Center's Application for Exterior Alteration, Application for In-Home Business or Profession, and Request for Letter of Compliance. These forms are available at the Village office, at [www.columbiatowncenter.org](http://www.columbiatowncenter.org), or by calling 410-730-4744.



## Application for Exterior Alteration

TCCA Log # \_\_\_\_\_  
TCAC DOR: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Owner/Applicant \_\_\_\_\_ (Owner must sign on 2<sup>nd</sup> page)

\*Address \_\_\_\_\_ \*Condominium \_\_\_\_\_

\*Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_ \*Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail, email, or deliver application to:**

Town Center Architectural Committee  
5430 Vantage Point Road  
Columbia, MD 21044  
Telephone: (410) 730-4744  
Fax: (410) 730-1823  
Email: [Covenants@ColumbiaTownCenter.org](mailto:Covenants@ColumbiaTownCenter.org)

**\*Type of Residence:**

- Single Family
- Townhouse Condo
- Apartment Condo
- Other

**Description of Alteration**

Please describe briefly, but completely, the changes you propose in accordance with the Town Center Architectural Guidelines and Village Covenants. Also submit with this application the following items as appropriate: site plan, drawing to scale of proposed construction, color/material samples or description, landscape design, or lighting design. Providing the name of the contractor, landscaper, or other party to perform the work is helpful for the Architectural Committee. Be advised that certain types of alterations require a Howard County Building Permit.

**Acknowledgement of Neighbors**

Signatures of **two** property owners most affected by the proposed alteration are required.

**Neighbors:** Your signature below shows only that you are aware of this application. It does not mean that you approve of the proposal. If you have questions regarding this application, contact the Covenant Advisor at (410) 730-4744 or [Covenants@ColumbiaTownCenter.org](mailto:Covenants@ColumbiaTownCenter.org).

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_



**Owner/Tenant Agreement**

- A. I have completed this application in good faith and it accurately represents the exterior alteration I propose to make. I understand that approval of this application does not authorize me to violate any provisions of the Town Center Covenants or the building and zoning codes of Howard County, Maryland.
- B. I understand that any construction or exterior alteration undertaken before the Architectural Committee approval of this application is strictly at my own risk, and that I may be required to return the property to its former condition at my own expense if the application is disapproved wholly or in part.
- C. I understand that representatives of the Town Center Architectural Committees or the Covenant Advisor are permitted to enter my property at any reasonable time for the purpose of inspecting the area for the proposed project, the project in progress, or the completed project and that such entry does not constitute trespass.
- D. I understand that work must be completed in a workmanlike manner within six months of approval of this application. This approval expires at the end of six months and reapplication may be required.
- E. I understand that I am authorized to construct only what has been approved. Any construction that deviates is unauthorized construction.
- F. I understand that if this application involves the placement of a structure on a portion of my property adjacent to Columbia Association (CA) property and any portion of the structure on CA property, I disclaim for myself and my successors any interest in CA's property, agree to indemnify CA against any costs it incurs to protect its property rights, and agree to remove the structure from CA's property.

\*Owner's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Tenant's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*(If renting, owner's signature is also required)*

**NOTE: IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO OBTAIN APPROVAL FROM YOUR CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION. THEY MAY HAVE MORE RESTRICTIVE REQUIREMENTS AND THEIR OWN ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW PROCESS. IN ALL CASES, THE MORE RESTRICTIVE CRITERIA SHALL APPLY. IT IS THE APPLICANT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH ALL GUIDELINES AND/OR RESTRICTIONS.**

**Town Center Architectural Committee Review**

- A. Processing of this application by the Town Center Architectural Committee will normally take no longer than 30 days, although the Covenants allow up to 60 days. The architectural review process is described in the Town Center Architectural Guidelines. You will receive a letter from the Covenant Advisor with the Committee's decision.
- B. If you wish to discuss your application with the Committee, contact the Village office at (410) 730-4744. If you disagree with the decision of the Committee, a written appeal may be made within 10 days of receipt of the Committee decision.

Committee Action \_\_\_\_\_

Remarks \_\_\_\_\_

\*Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*On Behalf of the Architectural Committee*



Village of Town Center Application for In-Home Business or Profession

Log TC#: \_\_\_\_\_  
TCAC DOR \_\_\_\_\_

Owner/Applicant \_\_\_\_\_ (Owner must sign on reverse)

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Condo \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
(home/work)

Mail or deliver application to:  
Town Center Architectural Committee  
5430 Vantage Point Road  
Columbia, MD 21044  
Phone: (410) 730-4744  
Fax: (410) 730-1823  
Email: [Covenants@ColumbiaTownCenter.org](mailto:Covenants@ColumbiaTownCenter.org)

Type of residence:  
 Single family  
 Townhouse Condo  
 Apartment Condo  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIPTION OF HOME BUSINESS OR PROFESSION

Describe briefly but completely the in-home business or profession you propose to conduct, any changes to the dwelling or lot which this activity may entail, and its impact on surrounding neighbors, in accordance with the Town Center Architectural Guidelines and Village Covenants. Also provide the specific information requested below. Residents should be aware of County zoning regulations when considering an in-home business.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Type of advertising: Sign \_\_\_\_\_ Website \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Explain kind of materials to be stored on the property and storage requirements. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Number and type of vehicle(s) to be used in the business \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parking requirements \_\_\_\_\_

Nature and frequency of deliveries \_\_\_\_\_

Number of people involved \_\_\_\_\_ Hours of operation \_\_\_\_\_

Date proposed for start up of business \_\_\_\_\_



ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF NEIGHBORS

Signatures of **two** property owners most affected by the proposed alteration are required.

**NEIGHBORS:** Your signature below shows only that you are aware of this application. It does not mean that you approve of the proposal. If you disapprove, or if you wish to discuss it with the Architectural Committee, contact the Covenant Advisor at (410) 730-4744 or [Covenants@ColumbiaTownCenter.org](mailto:Covenants@ColumbiaTownCenter.org).

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

OWNER / TENANT AGREEMENT

A. I have completed this application in good faith and it accurately describes the in-home business or profession I propose to conduct. I understand that approval of this application does not authorize me to violate any provisions of State or Howard County ordinances and regulations.

B. I understand and agree that the profession or home business will not be conducted until specific written approval of the Architectural Committee is given. **This approval is not transferable and is valid for one year only and must be reapplied for annually unless otherwise determined by the Architectural Committee.**

Owner's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Tenant's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

TOWN CENTER ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE REVIEW

A. Processing of this application by the Town Center Architectural Committee will normally take no longer than 30 days, although the Covenants allow up to 60 days. The In-Home Business review process is described in the Town Center Architectural Guidelines. You will receive a letter from the Covenant Advisor with the Committee's decision.

B. If you wish to discuss your application with the Committee, contact the Village office, (410) 730-4744. If you disagree with the decision of the Committee, a written appeal may be made within 10 days of receipt of the Committee decision.

Committee action \_\_\_\_\_

Remarks \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

For the Architectural Committee

4/12/19



Town Center Community Association  
5430 Vantage Point Road, Columbia, Maryland 21044

**REQUEST FOR LETTER OF COMPLIANCE  
VILLAGE OF TOWN CENTER**

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

TO: COVENANT ADVISOR

PROPERTY ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CONDO ASSOCIATION: \_\_\_\_\_

SETTLEMENT DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

The undersigned property owner requests that the Covenant Advisor inspect the above-referenced property for compliance with the Village Covenants and understands that it may take several weeks for the request to be processed.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(SIGNATURE OF (OWNER))

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PRINTED NAME OF OWNER)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(OWNER'S MAILING ADDRESS)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(OWNER'S CELL PHONE #)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(OWNER'S EMAIL ADDRESS)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(REAL ESTATE AGENT'S NAME & COMPANY)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(AGENT'S PHONE #)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(AGENT'S FAX #)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(AGENT'S EMAIL ADDRESS)

**NOTE: FORM MUST BE COMPLETE**



Phone 410-730-4744 ■ [Covenants@ColumbiaTownCenter.org](mailto:Covenants@ColumbiaTownCenter.org) ■ Fax 410-730-4744

11/14/2018