

## OAKLAND MILLS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

The Other Barn  
5851 Robert Oliver Place  
Columbia, MD 21045  
www.oaklandmills.org  
April 25, 2017

Dear Oakland Mills Resident,

On the eve of Columbia's 50th birthday, the Oakland Mills Community Association's Board of Directors, Architectural Committee, and Resident Architectural Committee are pleased to present the revised Architectural Committee Guidelines.

Our village is just a few years shy of the 50-year mark, with much to be proud of. Yet we also realize that the years have taken their toll on some of our housing, making it more important than ever to renew our commitment to the original Covenants.

These Guidelines take into account some new elements (like satellite dish antennas and architectural shingles) that weren't around in 1969 when our Village was incorporated.

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

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

We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

*The Oakland Mills Architectural Committee*

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## STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY

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

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

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

The Architectural Guidelines spell out in greater detail the Covenant requirements to uphold high standards of design and maintenance. Since building materials, environmental considerations, and other factors change with time, the Architectural Guidelines are updated at least every 4 years.

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

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

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

If the AC Chair accepts the RAC recommendation and approves the application, it becomes final. If the AC Chair denies an application, the decision may be appealed to the full Architecture Committee, whose decision is final and binding.

The **Covenant Advisor for Property Concerns** administers the process for resolving complaints about Covenant violations. If a complaint is determined to be valid, the Covenant Advisor sends a letter to the property owner. The letter lists the violations that must be corrected in order for the property to become compliant. (See page 2 for details and timelines.)

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

### **LETTER OF COVENANT COMPLIANCE**

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

To obtain a Letter of Compliance, the owner of the property must ask the Covenant Advisor for Property Concerns to conduct an inspection. If the property is free from Covenant violations, a Letter of Compliance is issued. If the inspection reveals violations, the Covenant Advisor notifies the owner of the specific violations. Once these items have been corrected, the Covenant Advisor will re-inspect the property and issue a Letter of Compliance.

### **RECEIVING ARCHITECTURAL APPROVAL**

Application forms for exterior alterations and in-home businesses are available at the OMCA Office in The Other Barn or online at [oaklandmills.org](http://oaklandmills.org). (Click on Buying, Selling, and Maintaining Your Property.) The Covenant Advisor for Applications will be happy to answer questions and assist with any aspect of the process. See Useful Numbers at the end of this document for contact information.

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

Please note the following information:

- Maryland law requires homeowners to call Miss Utility before digging, excavating, or altering the surface of the ground in any way. (See Useful Numbers.)

- Townhouse owners should contact their townhouse association, which may have additional requirements or restrictions beyond what is required by the OMCA Covenants. When a property is subject to multiple Covenant agreements, the most restrictive criteria apply.
- No application is required to replace existing approved siding, roofing, windows, and doors of the house and outbuildings if the same color, materials, and style are used.
- No application is required to change from aluminum or wood siding to vinyl siding if the color, style, and orientation will remain the same.
- Generally, any permanent changes to your property (even if made by a previous owner) that have never received AC approval will require an application.

## **THE APPLICATION APPROVAL PROCESS**

Reviewing an application normally takes 16 to 30 days; however, the Covenants allow up to 60 days for review.

### **Step 1: Submission**

Submit a complete, detailed application for exterior alterations or in-home business to the Covenant Advisor for Applications. For OMCA to process an application, it should include the following information, as appropriate:

- Signature of applicant.
- Signatures of at least two neighbors, acknowledging that they have been notified of the proposed alteration or in-home business. (Signature does not imply agreement with the proposal.)
- Site plan or location survey if the alteration will change the footprint of the lot, e.g., a deck, shed, garage, or addition. A site plan or survey is not required for alterations that only change the outward appearance of existing structures, such as siding, windows, or doors.
- Elevation drawings that show the proposed alteration from all sides.
- Colors and samples of materials to be used for the alteration.

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

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

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

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

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

### **THE APPEAL PROCESS**

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

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



# ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES

## 1.0 AIR CONDITIONERS

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

## 2.0 ANTENNAS

### 2.1 Satellite Dish Antennas

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

### 2.2 Television Broadcast Service Antennas

- 2.2.1 No application is required for a television broadcast service antenna that is 12 feet in height or less from the roof of the house.
- 2.2.2 Antenna installations that are inside a structure are encouraged. Possible exterior locations for an antenna include but are not limited to an inconspicuous

corner formed by the junction of an exterior flue and wall, rear roof, or adjacent to a downspout.

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

### **3.0 ATTIC VENTS**

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

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

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

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

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

3.2 An application is required for all other vent installations.

### **4.0 AWNINGS AND TRELLISES**

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

4.2 The style, color, and materials should be compatible with the architectural character of the house. Cloth or wood is the preferred material.

4.3 Awnings and trellises should be free of decorative embellishment such as contrast trim, scallops, or fringe.

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

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

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

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

5.1.1 Poles are located close to the residence, within the building restriction lines when stored.

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

5.1.3 Basketball nets are maintained in good repair.

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

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

5.4 An application is required for a basketball court. The preferred location for a court is behind or beside the house, not facing the street.

## **6.0 CARPORTS**

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

## **7.0 CHIMNEYS AND SMOKESTACKS**

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

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

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

7.3.1 All sections of pipe are plumb.

7.3.2 The pipe is painted to blend with the structure.

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

7.4 The height of the exposed metal section or the boxed-in chimney shall be determined by the minimum permitted by County building and fire codes. The exposed section should be painted to match the roof.

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

7.6 Additional chimneys should use existing flue enclosures whenever possible.

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

## **8.0 CLOTHESLINES**

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

8.2 An application is required for all other clothesline configurations.

## **9.0 COMPOST BINS**

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

9.1.1 The bin should be in the backyard in an inconspicuous location.

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

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

9.2 An application is required for all other configurations.

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

10.1 An application is required for all decks, patios, and walkways and for changes to such existing structures.

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

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

10.4 All construction must comply with County code. (See Useful Numbers.)

## **11.0 PERMANENT OUTDOOR ART**

11.1 An application is required for permanent outdoor art, which includes, but is not limited to, statuary, sculptures, and fountains.

11.2 Applications will be evaluated on the object's location, setting, proportions, color, and materials in relation to the surrounding environment.

## **12.0 DOG HOUSES AND DOG RUNS**

12.1 An application is required for all dog houses and dog runs.

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

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

## **13.0 DOORS AND WINDOWS**

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

13.2 Generally, casement and slider windows are interchangeable.

13.3 New windows and doors should have the same style, size, and color trim as existing windows and doors.

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

## **14.0 DRIVEWAYS**

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

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

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

14.4 An application is required for construction of a new driveway. Contact Howard County Department of Licensing and Permits to determine if you also need an entrance permit for the new driveway. (See Useful Numbers.)

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

14.6 Loose driveway materials (e.g., crushed stone) are unlikely to be approved. Permeable driveways will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

14.7 Driveway aprons may be part of the county right-of-way; if so, the County may require that they remain concrete. Contact the County for clarification. (See Useful Numbers.)

## **15.0 FENCES**

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

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

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

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

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

15.6 General guidelines:

15.6.1 Chain-link fences will not be approved.

15.6.2 Hedge fences are typically not approved for property-line fencing.

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

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

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

## **16.0 FUEL STORAGE TANKS**

16.1 Exterior above-ground oil storage tanks are not allowed.

## **17.0 GARDENS**

17.1 No application is required for a garden provided that:

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

17.1.2 The garden is less than 200 square feet.

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

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

17.2 Vegetable gardens must be cleared after the growing and planting season.

17.3 An application is required for all other gardens and for permanent garden fencing.

## **18.0 GARAGE DOORS**

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

18.1.1 The style is traditional raised panel or flush.

18.1.2 The door is windowless or contains only standard, unembellished windows or door panels. (Embellished elements include stained glass, etched glass, colored glass, or decorative metal pieces.)

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

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

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

## **19.0 GAZEBOS**

19.1 An application is required for all gazebos.

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

19.3 The size of the gazebo should be proportioned appropriately to the size of the lot and house.

## **20.0 GRILLS AND FIREPITS**

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

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

## **21.0 GUTTERS AND DOWNSPOUTS**

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

21.2 An application is required for all other changes to gutters and downspouts.

## **22.0 HOT TUBS AND WHIRLPOOLS**

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

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

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

Note: Check Howard County for required safety measures, such as secure locking lids or fences for hot tubs and whirlpools.

## **23.0 IN-HOME BUSINESSES**

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

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

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

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

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

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

23.3.4 The business is conducted solely by telephone or computer.

23.4 To receive approval, the application must meet the following conditions:

23.4.1 The applicant for an in-home business must reside on the property.

23.4.2 The business may employ only one person in addition to those residing on the property.

23.4.3 The business must be clearly incidental or secondary to the residential use of the property.

23.4.4 The business must not require the use of a commercial vehicle or require one to be parked on the property, except when enclosed in a garage.

23.4.5 The business must not involve the sale of goods or merchandise from the property.

23.4.6 The business must not require the outdoor storage of materials, equipment, or supplies.

23.4.7 The business must not require the alteration of the dwelling unit in any way that would make it unsuitable for future use as a residence or require the construction of accessory buildings.

23.4.8 The business must not create safety hazards, noxious odors, or excessive noise, or increase pedestrian or vehicular traffic.

23.4.9 The business must not make unusual demands on community facilities or services.

23.4.10 The business must not use Columbia Association open space.

23.4.11 The business may not have signs or advertising devices of any nature anywhere on the lot, including advertisements on vehicles. Small nameplates on doors or adjacent to doorbells are permitted.



23.5 Conditions for maintaining an in-home business:

23.5.1 Approval of an in-home business is non-transferable.

23.5.2 Any architectural or operational variance from the terms of an approved application will require a new application.

23.6 No approval is required for occasional businesses, such as lemonade stands and yard sales, provided all evidence of the use is removed at night.

## **24.0 LANDSCAPING**

24.1 No application is required for individual shrubs, foundation plants, annual beds, perennial beds, or ground covers. Invasive plants should be avoided. (See Appendix for the current list posted by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.)

24.2 An application is required for:

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

24.2.2 Landscaping that involves a change of grade or slope.

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

24.2.4 Artificial features such as fences, landscaping rocks, railroad ties, birdbaths, ornaments, or any other permanent landscaping feature. (See 11.0 for Permanent Outdoor Art.)

24.2.5 Rain gardens require an application. (See Appendix for information on the Columbia Association's Cost Sharing Program for rain gardens.)

## **25.0 LIGHTING**

25.1 No application is required for replacing a light fixture with a similar color and style in the same location on the structure or property.

25.2 No application is required for new lighting that suits the style of the residence provided that the following conditions are met:

25.2.1 Lighting located on the front of the house is covered or enclosed in a fixture.

25.2.2 Lighting is not invasive or directed to adjacent properties.

25.2.3 Lighting is not harsh in color or intensity.

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

25.2.5 Light fixtures are designed for residential use.

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

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

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

## **26.0 MAINTENANCE**

26.1 Section 6.01 of the Oakland Mills Village Covenants states:

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

“Consistent with good property management” refers to the appearance of the lot in general, including, but not limited to, lawn, trees, shrubs, buildings, or improvements. Note: Howard County code makes property owners responsible for maintaining their sidewalk and driveway apron areas; this includes removing snow and ice.

26.2 The Covenants further state: “No lumber, metals, bulk materials, refuse, or trash shall be kept, stored, or allowed to accumulate on any lot...” This includes, but is not limited to, garbage, items no longer in use, vehicle parts, dead vegetation, and tree branches.

26.3 Seasonal items and tools may not be stored in the open. Ladders must be stored inconspicuously.

26.4 Trash Containers and Recyclables. Except on the scheduled trash day, containers should be stored out of sight. Trash should not be put out earlier than the afternoon before pickup day and should be out of sight by the end of trash collection day. No refuse, trash, or bulk items may be accumulated or stored on any lot.

Note: Information on the use of the Howard County landfill may be obtained by calling 410/313-5410. For other trash information call 410/313-SORT (7678).

26.5 Maintenance of each property shall be done in a manner and with such frequency as is consistent with good property management, including but not limited to:

26.5.1 Bulk Items. Bulk items are not to be stored or accumulated on any lot (including in carports). Store bulk items out of sight or discard them.

26.5.2 Cul-de-Sacs. Maintenance of the cul-de-sac islands is the responsibility of the residents.

Note: Trees within the cul-de-sac island are considered street trees and are the responsibility of Howard County (see 26.5.21).

26.5.3 Driveways. Driveways that are deteriorating need to be repaired or replaced.

26.5.4 Fences. Fences should be in good repair, standing straight with no broken or missing boards and no peeling paint.

26.5.5 Grass. Grass should be mowed and trimmed on a regular basis during the growing season. Tall weeds and overgrown vines should be trimmed or removed. Landscaped areas should also be kept free of weeds and overgrown plant material.

26.5.6 Gutter and Downspouts. Gutters and downspouts should be in place and secure, with no peeling paint. Gutters should be free of debris and dirt, and downspouts should not be clogged. All drain extensions must be buried below ground. Drainage runoff and overflow must be properly diverted.

26.5.7 Holiday Decorations. Holiday decorations should be removed within 30 days after the holiday.

26.5.8 House Numbers. Every house must display a number that is easily visible from the street. (Howard County prohibits painting house numbers on curbs.)

26.5.9 Lampposts and Exterior Lighting Fixtures. Lampposts should stand straight and be free of rust. Light fixtures should not be crooked or have missing or broken light bulb coverings. Globes to cover the light bulbs should always be in place.

26.5.10 Leaf and Tree Debris. Fallen leaves, branches, and twigs should be cleared from the yard, roof, and gutters on a regular basis. Do not rake leaves and debris into the street, surrounding properties, open space, or ravines.

26.5.11 Mold, Mildew, and Algae. Mold, mildew, and algae should be removed from all structures.

26.5.12 Paint. There should be no peeling paint or rotted wood on structures.

26.5.13 Patios and Walkways. Patios and/or walkways that are crumbled or raised should be repaired or replaced.

26.5.14 Roof. The roof should be in good repair and of all one color. There should not be any accumulation of debris on the roof.

26.5.15 Screens. Screens must be in good repair and should fit properly.

26.5.16 Shrubs. Shrubbery should not be overgrown; for example, foundation plantings should not block windows. Dead shrubs should be removed and properly disposed of.

26.5.17 Sidewalks. Damaged sidewalks should be reported to the County for repair.

Note: Howard County code makes the property owner responsible for maintenance of adjacent sidewalks, including edging, weeding, and removal of snow and leaves. This means if your lot abuts any section of a sidewalk, you are responsible for that portion of the sidewalk. Maintenance of the grass areas between the sidewalk and curb are also the responsibility of the adjacent property owner; this includes mowing, trimming, and weeding.

26.5.18 Siding. Siding should be secure, intact, and free of rotting wood, dirt, plant growth, and mold.

26.5.19 Standing Water. Care should be taken to keep property free from standing water per Howard County Health Department recommendations.

26.5.20 Street Trees and Cul-de-Sac Island Trees. Problems with street trees should be brought to the attention of Howard County Bureau of Highways by phone at 410/313-7450 or online using SeeClickFix.com.

26.5.21 Windows. Window frames and sills must be kept in good repair, free of peeling or fading paint. Broken or fogged panes must be repaired or replaced.

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

27.1 An application is required for all new construction, including, but not limited to, teardowns done prior to building a new home on an existing lot, additions, and new outbuildings, such as garages, greenhouses, porches, and carports.

27.2 If new construction will begin with a teardown, the application must include an anticipated date for the teardown of the existing house or structure.

27.3 For all new construction, applications should include the following:

27.3.1 Elevation drawings (with dimensions) of all sides of the house showing style, siding or façade materials, window placement, door and garage door placement, roof lines, walkways, driveways, porches, decks, gutters, shutters, and skylights. Elevation drawings do not have to be done professionally but should be easy to read and understand.

27.3.2 Site plan showing full footprint of house and other structures as submitted to the County for a building permit.

27.3.3 Description and color samples of all exterior building materials.

27.3.4 Landscape plan.

27.3.5 Lighting plan.

27.3.6 Timeline of start date and completion date for the new construction.

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

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

27.6 New construction should not significantly impair the view of adjacent residences.

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

27.8 Consideration should be given to the scale and architectural style of the proposed construction as it relates to the lot and other properties in the neighborhood.

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

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

27.11 Any construction close to Columbia Association open space must not adversely affect that open space.

27.11.1 Contact the CA Open Space Management Division for permission to use open space prior to any construction. The owner is responsible for ensuring that contractors do not dump materials or damage open space. (See Useful Numbers.)

27.12 Any request for extensions of the timeline must be submitted in writing to the Covenant Advisor for Applications.

27.13 Work should be done in a professional manner. Trash, bulk materials, and general disruption of the work site should be kept to a minimum.

27.14 Any changes to the original application that occur during the planning or building phases of construction, including those made by the County or other authorities, will require a new application.

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

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

27.15.2 The Covenant Advisor must be notified of the arrival date of the dumpster. OMCA approval of the temporary use of the dumpster does not supersede Howard County Planning and Zoning regulations.

## **28.0 PAINTS AND STAINS**

28.1 No application is required for repainting or restaining if using the previously approved color.

28.2 An application is required for changes in color, saturation, or hue of any exterior surface. The applications should include a sample or swatch.

## **29.0 PLAY EQUIPMENT**

29.1 No application is required for play sets that are less than 10 feet high and 15 feet wide if they are located to the rear of the house.

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

29.3 An application is required for all other permanently installed play equipment, including play houses, regardless of size.

29.4 Play equipment should be located behind the house and at least 10 feet from the rear and side property lines.

### **30.0 PORTABLE STORAGE UNITS**

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

30.2 The Covenant Advisor must be notified of the arrival date of the container. OMCA approval of the temporary use of the portable storage container does not supersede Howard County Planning and Zoning regulations.

### **31.0 RADON REMEDIATION EQUIPMENT**

31.1 No application is required for radon remediation equipment.

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

### **32.0 RAIN BARRELS**

32.1 An application is required for all rain barrels.

32.2 Applications should contain the following:

32.2.1 Height, diameter, and capacity of the rain barrel.

32.2.2 Style, color, and material of barrel and supporting structures.

32.2.3 A screening plan.

32.2.4 Sample of pavers and dimensions of pad, if applicable. To be sure that the rain barrel does not pose a safety hazard, place it on a secure level surface. Pavers or a concrete pad should be used to keep the rain barrel level.

32.2.5 Location of rain barrel.

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

32.4 Rain barrels should be screened to prevent mosquito larva.

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

### **33.0 RENTAL PROPERTIES, BOARDERS, AND SHARED LIVING**

33.1 Property owners are held responsible for Covenant compliance of the property and for disclosure of Covenant requirements to tenants.

Note: Howard County requires that rental units be licensed. The Department of Inspections, Licensing and Permits inspects and regulates rental units. (See Useful Numbers.)

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

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

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

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

34.2 Garages, carports, and attached sheds must be resided and/or reroofed at the same time as the house and must match the house siding/roof shingles exactly.

34.3 A complete application is required for all other siding and roofing and for all restyling.

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

34.5 Mixing window styles such as casements and/or sliders with double-hung windows is discouraged. Choose a window style that is appropriate for the style of house.

### **35.0 SHEDS**

35.1 An application is required for all sheds.

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

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

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

35.5 Freestanding sheds must not be located on a common property line with adjacent residences.

35.6 More than one shed per property is discouraged.

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

35.8 Metal sheds should be rust proof.

35.9 Sheds should be placed behind the front sight lines of the house when possible.

## **36.0 SIGNS**

36.1 For purposes of this guideline, the Village of Oakland Mills follows the Howard County Sign Code.

36.2 No application is required for:

36.2.1 Temporary signs advertising the sale or rental of residential property. No temporary sign shall be larger than 20 by 28 inches or stand more than 3 feet above the ground measured from the top of the sign.

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

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

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

36.3 An application is required for all other temporary signs, permanent signs, or other advertising devices.

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

36.4 Signs must be maintained in good condition.

## **37.0 SKYLIGHTS**

37.1 An application is required for all skylights.

37.2 The frame should blend with the roof.

## **38.0 SOLAR PANELS**

38.1 An application is required for all solar panels.

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

38.3 All wiring, accessories, and structures must be inconspicuous and match the adjacent element of the house.

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



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

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

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

39.3 An application is required for all other types of door and window alterations. (See Doors and Windows.)

## **40.0 SWIMMING POOLS**

40.1 No application is required for portable children's wading pools less than 8 feet in diameter and 24 inches in depth.

40.2 An application is required for all other swimming pools. Above-ground pools, with the exception of children's wading pools, will not be approved.

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

40.4 A fence compatible with the design and style of the house is required to enclose the pool, pool deck, and related equipment.

40.4.1 The fence must meet the fencing guidelines and may be subject to County requirements.

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

40.6 Pools should be located behind the house.

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

## **41.0 TREES**

41.1 An application is required for removing any tree, living or dead, whose trunk is over 6 inches in diameter when measured at a point 2 feet above the ground.

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

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

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

41.4.1.1 In the case of a single-family house, there are fewer than three trees on a single-family lot, excluding street trees planted in the County right-of-way.

41.4.1.2 In the case of a townhouse, there are no trees in the front yard.

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

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

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

42.3 Discreet business lettering on vehicles requires AC approval. Vehicles with prominent commercial lettering may not be stored or parked in the open.

42.4 No vehicle may be parked on the grass.

## **43.0 WOODPILES**

43.1 No application is required for woodpiles.

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

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

43.4 Woodpiles should be stacked and maintained in good order.

## APPENDIX

### USEFUL NUMBERS

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

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

Columbia Association Open Space Management: 410-381-0194

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

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

Howard County Department of Highways: 410-313-7450

Howard County Landfill and Trash: 410-313-6444

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

Howard County Animal Control: 410-313-2780

Non-Emergency Police: 410-313-2200

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

Maryland Department of Natural Resources List of Common Invasive Plants:

<http://dnr2.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/habitat/wabadplants.aspx>

University of Maryland Extension/Howard County Master Gardeners:

<http://mastergardener.umd.edu/local/howard/index.cfm>

Note: The Columbia Association sponsors a Rain Garden Cost Share Program. Their brochure contains detailed designs and plant suggestions for three different styles of rain gardens. You may view it online or pick up copies at The Other Barn.