

In July 2009, the HOA hosted a meeting for all homeowners who wished to discuss the functions of the architectural committee, as well as how the committee and board work to benefit the HOA and enforce the neighborhood restrictions. Eleven homeowners and board members attended the meeting. Several submitted questions prior to the meeting, which were addressed. Following is a recap of the meeting and responses to many questions posed at the meeting. This report has been edited for space.

Who is a valid member of the Architectural Committee?

The Declaration of Restrictions (Section 2A) indicates the committee is comprised of members of the Board of Directors. The board's voting members are eligible, along with others appointed by the board who do not have voting rights. Please check your current Amber Meadows Directory for this year's architectural chairperson.

Can we better define exactly how many people are needed to approve a project?

Prior to approving architectural improvements on behalf of the HOA, at least four voting members of the HOA board, (including men and women in equal measure) must vote to approve a home improvement project. This process was established by the HOA board at the June 2009 HOA board meeting, in response to complaints about the prior process. The new process was established to insure more elected members of the board are active in architectural approvals. Since establishing the process, many homeowners have indicated an appreciation for the new process.

What are the qualifications to be part of the Architectural Committee?

The only qualification needed is a willingness to serve and become familiar with the Declaration of Restrictions.

Will changes be made to the Bylaws to clarify the role of the Architectural Committee for future boards?

No. Changes can only be made to the By-laws every 10 years. However, this year's HOA board is making an effort to document processes which previously were not written down. By having a written policy and procedures manual, future boards will be more fully exposed to the "tribal knowledge" from past boards. It is our hope this will help insure greater continuity.

What is the role of the Architectural Committee—to approve paint colors and roofing or is it more?

The first and second phases of our neighborhood are about 20 years old, and some houses more than others are really starting to show their age. Many owners have put a lot of time and money into their houses, both inside and outside. Substantial changes to the exterior, such as additions, new windows, doors, and any structural improvements are to be approved by the board's Architectural Committee. The committee is making an effort to establish procedures for each of the new requests to help save time for the homeowner making the request. Procedures and forms are posted on the website.

The Architectural Committee responds to specific, formal complaints made to the HOA Board. Examples of complaints which have resulted in board action include: driveways in disrepair, tall grass, trees needing trimming, cars on blocks in driveways, paint chipping off houses, shake roofs with shingles and/or ridgelines missing, sheds and outbuildings which are not allowed, and weeds along the side of the house or in fences. Most homeowners realize these items should be addressed, but sometimes our role is to educate homeowners if they are new to the area and unaware. Some items are directed by OP city code and some are spelled out in our restrictions.



example of overgrown bushes and weeds

When a resident starts a project – painting, roofing, etc., can the HOA set a reasonable time limit for completion of the project?

This HOA board has asked for projects to be approved within two weeks, so homeowners can complete their project as quickly as possible. Some homeowners have taken much longer to complete projects, such as taking a year or more to complete a home repainting. The HOA board has the ability to set time limits and has done so on occasion.

Are there restrictions on basketball goals?

There are numerous goals in the neighborhood that hang over the street and have broken backboards, or simply look worn out. We have received complaints that these are eye sores. The HOA and/or Architectural Committee may ask that these be removed or repaired once complaints are received.



example of broken equipment

Can we put a limit on the percentage of rental properties we allow?

Several homeowners have commented on new rental properties showing up in our neighborhood as a result of the current housing market. The HOA does not restrict the number or percentage of rental properties. The board made a decision to welcome new residents, regardless of whether they rent or own, supporting an effort to fully engage all of our neighbors in neighborhood activities. Engaged neighbors generally invest more time in the care and maintenance of their properties. This board is very interested in our home values and realizes that sometimes a homeowner may need to lease rather than sell their home for a number of reasons. One suggestion is to take care of your own property and offer neighborly assistance. For example, if your neighbor's lawn is getting long, perhaps their mower is broken. You could offer to loan them your mower or suggest your favorite repair shop. If the weeds are getting out of control, suggest a weed control agent or lawn care service. Perhaps you could offer to trim trees while you are trimming your own. Honestly, some of our neighbors are new to home ownership and would benefit greatly from your experience and expertise.

Suggestions made and adopted by your HOA board:

- ✓ Set a minimum number of people needed to approve each architectural request with at least two, and equal gender representation if possible. (in place; minimum of four votes are required)
- ✓ Establish a time limit for approving a request, and ask that residents give notice in a reasonable amount of time before a project is to begin. (in place; used on an as-need basis)
- ✓ If a resident makes a request that is outside the declaration of restrictions, hold a special meeting where neighbors and residents can express their concerns or support, and have the entire board vote on the request. (in place)

- ✓ If a member of the committee is requesting approval, he or she should not be allowed to vote on/approve his or her own projects. (in place)
- ✓ Set up a form that is available on the web site, and provide more detailed instructions about the process, and how to submit a request. (in place)
- ✓ Inform residents how they can file a complaint if they see a violation. The process is to notify a member of the board. The matter will be confidentially discussed among the board with a determination of appropriate action. (in place)
- ✓ Establish an approved roof color list to help homeowners in color selection. (in place)
- ✓ Obtain best practices from other HOA's. (in process)
- ✓ Update the Amber Meadows documentation to reflect any changes made at the July meeting.

- Define appropriate materials/colors for garage doors. (currently under evaluation)
- Develop an approved house color list. (currently under evaluation)
- Set time limits on how long a resident has to complete an approved project after work is started. (currently under evaluation)