

## ***Architectural Review Quick Reference Guide***

Last updated February 9, 2024 by the Architectural Committee

### **BACKGROUND**

Like most HOA's in the State, CHOA's CC&Rs require that owners obtain approval before making any change to their property. Over the years, CHOA has created many policies, guidelines, and standards for these types of modifications. We put this document together to help homeowners quickly determine whether a proposed modification, repair, or other project on their property requires approval from the Association, if an application can be approved by the GM upon receipt, and what restrictions/requirements some projects may have.

### **IMPORTANT NOTE**

This document is not all-inclusive of the Association's architectural standards or guidelines; it is simply meant to be a tool to assist homeowners. If you have any questions throughout this process, please contact the Business Office.

### **KEY TERMS**

- **Application Needed:** Indicates that an owner must submit an Architectural Application for the proposed modification or project. Note that for most pre-approved projects, applications are still required. A select few modifications do not require that an application be submitted.
- **Pre-Approval Policy:** Indicates if the Architectural Committee or Board has created a policy that allows the General Manager to approve an Architectural Application upon receipt, if it falls within the approved guidelines.
- **Architectural Committee:** A group of volunteer homeowners, appointed by the Board, who review Architectural Applications submitted by homeowners. They typically meet once per month on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday.

### **QUESTIONS**

We understand that just dealing with your project is already complicated enough, so we don't want the HOA approval process to be an inconvenience or annoyance. Please contact the General Manager if you have any questions at any point! We are happy to help.

**Phone:** 925-687-9961

**Email:** [businessoffice@walnutcountry.com](mailto:businessoffice@walnutcountry.com)

<b>PROPOSED MODIFICATION</b>	<b>APPLICATION NEEDED?</b>	<b>PRE-APPROVAL POLICY?</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
Like-for-Like Repair or Replacement	<b>NO</b>	<b>NO</b>	No application is required if you are repairing or replacing something and it will look identical or near identical in nature. Generally speaking, this Architectural review process is intended for visual or design changes to your property that are visible from the street, a neighboring home, or the Common Area.
Interior Modification	<b>NO</b>	<b>NO</b>	No application is required for any modification to the inside of your home (unless it impacts the exterior of the residence in some manner).
<b>LANDSCAPE</b>			
Landscaping (Plant Removal/Install, Trees, Mulch)	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	No application is required for any landscape modification on the property, including tree removal or addition. Please note that “landscape” is considered living material – hardscape (rocks, cobble, pavers, retaining walls, etc.) does not fall within this policy.
Tree Removal	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	No application is required for anything related to trees on the property, but the city of Concord has restrictions for some tree species; we recommend all owners check with the City prior to any work.
<b>HARDSCAPE</b>			
Front Yard Hardscape (retaining wall, decorative feature, etc)	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	Any change to the front yard that is not landscaping needs an application and Architectural Committee approval. This includes items like retaining walls, planter boxes, trellises, or any other decorative installation.
Artificial Turf (front yard)	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	Artificial turf needs Architectural Committee approval. No application is required for artificial turf in the backyard.

<i><b>PROPOSED MODIFICATION</b></i>	<i><b>APPLICATION NEEDED?</b></i>	<i><b>PRE-APPROVAL POLICY?</b></i>	<i><b>NOTES</b></i>
Driveway / Walkway Replacement or Repair	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	Pre-approval policy available for replacing the existing driveway footprint with new materials, such as pavers, or simply re-paving. The overall shape and dimensions must remain the same; <b>if making any changes to the size of the driveway, Architectural Committee approval is required.</b>
Driveway / Walkway Extension or Expansion	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	Any change to the size or shape of the driveway or walkway in the front yard requires Architectural Committee approval. The rules state that the ratio of landscape to hardscape in the front yard must be greater than 50/50.
<b><i>EXTERIOR</i></b>			
Fence Replacement	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	Unless an existing fence is being replaced with a new fence that is identical to what was originally installed, all fence replacement projects require Architectural Committee approval. Fencing must be redwood or cedar, with a natural wood color stain (either transparent or semi-transparent).
Mailboxes	<b>SEE NOTES</b>	<b>YES</b>	No application is needed for replacement mailboxes that fall within the pre-approved guidelines; they must comply with all USPS requirements, be of standard and customary shape and design, may be a locking-style mailbox, must be a shade of white, grey, black, or brown, must be made of a rust-proof metal, and must be attached to a standard sized post. Please see the full policy for all details and requirements. Anything outside of these guidelines requires Architectural Committee approval.
<b><i>BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS</i></b>			
Solar Panels	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	Policy allows GM to approve applications upon receipt for roof-mounted solar panels. Solar tiles/shingles require Architectural Committee approval.

# COWELL HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

4498 Lawson Ct • 925-687-9961 • [businessoffice@walnutcountry.com](mailto:businessoffice@walnutcountry.com) • [www.walnutcountry.com](http://www.walnutcountry.com)

<b>PROPOSED MODIFICATION</b>	<b>APPLICATION NEEDED?</b>	<b>PRE-APPROVAL POLICY?</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
Exterior Painting	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	Policy allows GM to approve applications upon receipt if selecting a pre-approved paint color or a color similar in character. Colors not included on the policy require Architectural Committee approval.
Re-Roof / Roof Repair	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	Policy allows GM to approve any application using an approved material upon receipt. Material not included on the pre-approved policy requires Architectural Committee approval.
Garage Door	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	Unless you are replacing with the same style garage door, Architectural Committee approval is needed. Garage door can only be one color and <b>must</b> match either the base or trim color of the residence.
Front Door	<b>SEE NOTES</b>	<b>YES</b>	The HOA rule book states that owners do not need to submit an application when replacing or repainting their front door, but that the new door must be in keeping with the style of the home, exterior paint colors, and architectural character of the community. A screen door or security door requires Architectural Committee approval. If the frame or other part of the residence is being modified to fit a larger door than what was previously installed (for example, going from a single-door setup to a double-door entryway), Committee approval is required.
Deck or Balcony	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	Architectural Committee approval is required if any change is being made to the design or style of the front yard or backyard balcony or deck. No application is needed for a repair that will not impact exterior design.
Window Retrofit	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	Policy allows the GM to approve an application for a window retrofit that falls within pre-approved guidelines. Any change to the frame or surrounding decoration/shutters requires Architectural Committee approval.

# COWELL HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

4498 Lawson Ct • 925-687-9961 • [businessoffice@walnutcountry.com](mailto:businessoffice@walnutcountry.com) • [www.walnutcountry.com](http://www.walnutcountry.com)

<b>PROPOSED MODIFICATION</b>	<b>APPLICATION NEEDED?</b>	<b>PRE-APPROVAL POLICY?</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
House Additions / Remodels	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	Architectural Committee approval is required for any addition to the home, such as an expansion of the living room, the addition of a 2 <sup>nd</sup> story, etc.
<b>BACKYARD</b>			
Backyard Shed	<b>SEE NOTES</b>	<b>NO</b>	Sheds that are visible from the Common Area or the street that are taller than 7 feet or are more than 2 feet above the top of the fence require Architectural Committee approval. No application is required for a backyard shed that is not visible from the street or Common Areas, or shorter than 7 feet.
Backyard Patio Cover/Pergola	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	Architectural Committee approval is needed for any permanent backyard patio cover, pergola, or shade cover.
Backyard Hardscape, Pavers, or Patio	<b>NO</b>	<b>YES</b>	An application is <b>not</b> required for any concrete or paver work in the backyard, but it must adhere to all city or governmental requirements and guidelines.
Backyard or Junior ADU	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	Committee approval is required for any ADU or Junior ADU installation on the property. Generally speaking, the style of the proposed ADU must match the existing residence – same paint scheme, roof style, etc.
Backyard Spa or Hot Tub	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	Policy allows the GM to approve an application for a hot tub or spa that falls within city setback guidelines (typically 5' from the fence line), located in the backyard, and is no taller than 4' in height or dimensions 8' x 8'
Backyard Pool	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	Architectural Committee approval is needed for the installation of any permanent or above-ground pool. Small, temporary "kiddie" or wading pools do not require an application.

# COWELL HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

4498 Lawson Ct • 925-687-9961 • [businessoffice@walnutcountry.com](mailto:businessoffice@walnutcountry.com) • [www.walnutcountry.com](http://www.walnutcountry.com)

<i><b>PROPOSED MODIFICATION</b></i>	<i><b>APPLICATION NEEDED?</b></i>	<i><b>PRE-APPROVAL POLICY?</b></i>	<i><b>NOTES</b></i>
<i><b>OTHER</b></i>			
Not Listed Here / Other Projects or Modifications	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	Any proposed modification or project listed here likely requires approval from the Architectural Committee. Please reach out to the General Manager at the Business Office for assistance!