



Hunter's Ridge Homeowners Association
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July 6, 2012

Dear Hunter's Ridge residents:

The purpose of this letter is to inform our subdivision's residents of some actions of the Hunter's Ridge Homeowners Association's Executive Board relating to the By-Laws and Covenants of the Association. Those residents on the neighborhood e-mail distribution list have already received a summary in the May newsletter.

The By-Laws and Covenants of the neighborhood are, by law, intended to govern certain aspects of owning property among the 96 lots of Hunter's Ridge. Copies of these documents are offered to residents who move to the neighborhood and they are placed on the association's website: www.huntersridgeclinton.com. A sign at the entrance to the subdivision states that there are governing Covenants, and there are frequent references to them in e-mails to residents, as well as at annual meetings of the membership.

The Board was uncertain about some aspects of these documents. Were we free to "interpret" the Covenants, even to relax some requirements if we felt they were too stringent or confusing? This question would apply to any of the Covenants, but specifically we wondered about the item (#2) governing "ancillary buildings" on our lots which reads in part:

All porches, storage areas, garden houses, etc., must be attached to said dwelling house and be constructed so as to constitute one building only, except that one ancillary building in keeping with the overall architecture and scheme (including materials and colors) of the dwelling will be permitted provided it is on a poured concrete foundation and is not visible from any public street within the subdivision.

Item 20 in the Covenants specifies that all building plans must be submitted to the Architectural Control Committee for approval 30 days before construction begins.

We requested an opinion from a local attorney who confirmed our suspicion that the only way to change the Covenants is by a 65% positive vote in a well-publicized and attended public meeting of residents. We were also reminded that we have 3 different (although similarly worded) Covenants documents -- one for each of the 3 Parts of the development, that all changes would have to be worded in appropriate terminology, and that the revised documents would need to be filed with County property records and available to all current and future residents. "Grandfathering" was not advised.

Considering the difficulty of mounting a vote and the added expense and time of following through, we do not anticipate a vote. The Board has accepted this opinion and intends to abide by it.

Any ancillary building that has been constructed in the subdivision without receiving approval of the Architectural Control Committee is in violation of the Covenants. Any storage shed which does not fit the description above is non-compliant. Lot owners who are uncertain about the status of their storage shed should contact the Architectural Control Committee.

What remains is the question of enforcement. While the Board has discussed a system of fines and liens on non-compliant lot owners, we believe the greater obligation of maintaining the quality of this neighborhood rests with the residents. Whether Hunter's Ridge continues to be a vibrant, attractive, and welcoming neighborhood or drifts into a rapid decline as it ages depends on the people who live here. True, the Board will respond to complaints, but individual residents must accept a role in knowing about and applying the standards represented in our Covenants. This is true not only of the construction of storage sheds, but of the many other stipulations in the By-Laws and Covenants.

We welcome your comments and questions.

With best regards,

Executive Board
Hunter's Ridge Homeowners Association