



Chapter 5

Architecture, Landscaping, and Aesthetic Standards

The Community derives its unique character from a mix of compatible architectural styles and from the cooperation of all Builders and Owners in upholding minimum design, landscaping and aesthetic standards. This chapter explains how those standards are established and how they are applied and maintained through a process requiring prior approval for construction on and exterior modifications to improvements on Units.

5.1. General

All site work, landscaping, structures, improvements, and other items placed on a Unit in a manner or location visible from outside of any existing structure on the Unit ("Improvements") are subject to standards for design, landscaping and aesthetics adopted pursuant to this chapter ("Design Guidelines") and the approval procedures set forth in this chapter, except as this chapter or the Design Guidelines may otherwise specify.

No prior approval is necessary to repaint the exterior of existing structures using the most recently approved color scheme or to rebuild or restore any damaged structures in a manner consistent with the plans and specifications most recently approved for such structures. Generally, no approval is required for work done to the interior of a structure; however, modifications to the interior of screened porches, patios, and any other portions of a structure visible from outside of the structure do require prior approval.


Any dwelling constructed on a Unit shall be designed by and built in accordance with the plans and specifications of a licensed architect unless the Founder or its designee in its sole discretion otherwise approves.

Approval under this chapter is not a substitute for any approvals or reviews required by Yavapai County, Arizona or any municipality or gov-

ernmental agency or entity having jurisdiction over architectural or construction matters.

This chapter shall not apply to the Founder's or any Founder Affiliate's design and construction activities or to the Association's design and construction activities during the Founder Control Period.

5.2. Review Authority

 Initially, the Founder reviews applications for proposed Improvements. Thereafter, the Board of Directors will appoint a Design Review Committee to review applications for proposed improvements. The Founder or the Design Review Committee is referred to as the "Reviewer." The Reviewer sets fees for reviewing applications.

(a) **Founder.** The Founder shall have exclusive authority to review and act upon all applications for review of proposed Improvements until the later of: (i) the expiration of the Development and Sale Period; or (ii) such time as all Units planned for the property described in Exhibits "A" and "B" have been improved with dwellings for which a certificate of occupancy has been issued. Without delegating or assigning its rights under this chapter, the Founder may designate one or more Persons to act on its behalf in reviewing any application. In reviewing and acting upon any request for approval, the Founder and its designee act solely in the Founder's interest and owe no duty to any other Person.

From time to time, the Founder may delegate any or all of its rights under this chapter to other Persons or committees, including the committee appointed pursuant to Section 5.2(b). Any such delegation shall be in writing, shall specify the scope of responsibilities delegated, and shall be subject to: (i) the Founder's right to revoke such delegation at any time and reassume its prior control; and (ii) the Founder's right to veto any deci-



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sion which it determines, in its discretion, to be inappropriate or inadvisable. So long as the Founder has any rights under this chapter, the jurisdiction of others shall be limited to such matters as the Founder specifically delegates.

(b) *Design Review Committee.* Upon the Founder's delegation of authority pursuant to Section 5.2(a), or upon expiration or termination of the Founder's rights under this chapter, the Board shall appoint a Design Review Committee ("Design Review Committee" or "DRC") to assume jurisdiction over matters within the scope of the delegated authority or this chapter, respectively. The DRC shall consist of at least three, but not more than seven, persons, who shall serve and may be removed and replaced in the Board's discretion. DRC members need not be Owners or representatives of Owners. The DRC may, but need not, include architects, engineers, or similar professionals. The Association may compensate DRC members in such manner and amount, if any, as the Board may determine appropriate.

Until expiration of the Founder's rights under this chapter, the DRC shall notify the Founder in writing within three business days of any action (*i.e.*, approval, partial approval, or disapproval) it takes under this chapter. A copy of the application and any additional information the Founder may require shall accompany the notice. The Founder shall have 10 business days after receipt of such notice to veto any such action, in its sole discretion, by written notice to the DRC.

Unless and until such time as the Founder delegates all or a portion of its reserved rights to the DRC or the Founder's rights under this chapter terminate, the Association shall have no jurisdiction over architectural matters. However, the Association may enforce the provisions of this chapter and the Design Guidelines.

(c) *Reviewer.* For purposes of this chapter, the entity having jurisdiction in a particular case shall be referred to as the "Reviewer."

(d) *Fees; Assistance.* The Reviewer may establish and charge reasonable fees for its review of applications and may require that such fees be paid in advance. Such fees may also include reasonable costs incurred in having professionals review any application. The Board may include the compensation of such Persons in the Association's annual operating budget.

5.3. Guidelines and Procedures

(a) *Design Guidelines.* The Founder may prepare the initial Design Guidelines, which may contain general provisions applicable to all of Mesquite Hills as well as specific provisions that vary among uses, housing types, or locations within the Community. The Design Guidelines are intended to provide guidance to Owners and contractors regarding matters of particular concern to the Reviewer. The Design Guidelines are not the exclusive basis for the Reviewer's decisions, and compliance with the Design Guidelines does not guarantee approval.

The Founder shall have sole and full authority to amend the Design Guidelines for so long as it has review authority under Section 5.2(a). The Founder's right to amend the Design Guidelines shall continue even if it delegates reviewing authority to the DRC, unless the Founder also delegates the power to amend to the DRC. Upon termination or delegation of the Founder's right to amend, the DRC may amend the Design Guidelines with the Board's consent.

Amendments to the Design Guidelines shall apply prospectively only. They shall not require modifications to or removal of any structures previously approved even though work on the approved construction or modification has not begun. However, any new work on such structures requiring further approval must comply with the Design Guidelines as amended. There shall be no limitation on the scope of amendments to the Design Guidelines, and such amendments may eliminate requirements previously imposed or otherwise make the Design Guidelines less restrictive.



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The Reviewer shall make the Design Guidelines available to Owners, Builders, and their contractors upon request and may charge a reasonable fee to cover costs of printing or reproduction. In the Founder's discretion, such Design Guidelines may be recorded, in which event the recorded version, as it may be amended from time to time, shall control in the event of any dispute as to which version of the Design Guidelines was in effect at any particular time.

(b) *Procedures.* Unless the Design Guidelines provide otherwise, no activities within the scope of this chapter (as described in Section 5.1) may begin on any portion of Mesquite Hills until a written application is submitted to and approved by the Reviewer. The application must be accompanied by plans and specifications and such other information as the Reviewer or the Design Guidelines require.

In reviewing each application, the Reviewer may consider any factors it deems relevant, including, without limitation, harmony of the proposed external design with surrounding structures and environment. Decisions may be based on purely aesthetic considerations. Each Owner acknowledges that such determinations are purely subjective and that opinions may vary as to the desirability and/or attractiveness of particular improvements.

The Reviewer shall have the sole discretion to make final, conclusive, and binding determinations on matters of aesthetic judgment, and such determinations shall not be subject to the procedures in Chapter 18 or judicial review so long as they are made in good faith and in accordance with required procedures.

The Reviewer shall make a determination on each application after receipt of a completed application with all required information. The Reviewer may permit or require that an application be submitted or considered in stages, in which case a final decision shall not be required until after the final, required submission. The Reviewer may: (i) approve the application with or

without conditions; (ii) approve a portion of the application and disapprove other portions; or (iii) disapprove the application.

The Reviewer shall notify the applicant in writing of the final determination on any application no later than 30 business days after its receipt of a completed application and all required submissions; however, with respect to any DRC determination subject to the Founder's veto right under Section 5.2(b), the Reviewer shall notify the applicant of the final determination within 40 business days after its receipt of the final determination and all required submissions. Notice shall be deemed given at the time the envelope containing the response is deposited in the U.S. mail. Hand delivery, facsimile, electronic mail, or similar delivery of such written notice also shall be sufficient and shall be deemed given at the time of confirmed delivery to the applicant.

If the Reviewer fails to respond in a timely manner, approval shall be deemed given. However, no approval, whether expressly granted or deemed granted, shall be inconsistent with the Design Guidelines unless a written variance has been granted pursuant to Section 5.5.

As part of any approval, the Reviewer may require that construction commence within a specified time period; provided, if no time period is specified in the approval, construction shall commence within 12 months of the date of the approval. If construction does not commence within the required period, the approval shall expire, and the Owner must reapply for approval before commencing any activities unless the Reviewer, in its discretion, grants an extension in writing. Once construction is commenced, it shall be diligently pursued to completion. All work shall be completed within 12 months of commencement unless otherwise specified in the notice of approval or unless the Reviewer, in its discretion, grants an extension in writing. If approved work is not completed within the required time, it shall be considered nonconforming and shall be subject to enforcement action by



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the Association, the Founder, or any aggrieved Owner.

The Reviewer may exempt certain activities from the application and approval requirements of this chapter, if such activities are undertaken in compliance with the Design Guidelines and the Community-Wide Standard.

5.4. No Waiver of Future Approvals

The people reviewing applications under this chapter will change from time to time, and opinions on aesthetic matters, as well as interpretation and application of the Design Guidelines, may vary accordingly. The Reviewer may refuse to approve similar proposals in the future. Approval of applications or plans shall not constitute a waiver of the right to withhold approval as to any similar applications, plans, or other matters subsequently or additionally submitted for approval.

5.5. Variances



When unusual circumstances exist that make it difficult to comply with a particular requirement of the Design Guidelines, the Owner may file a request with the Reviewer to be excused from complying with such requirement. The Reviewer has the discretion to determine when a variance is appropriate.

The Reviewer may authorize variances from compliance with any of the Design Guidelines and any procedures when circumstances such as topography, natural obstructions, hardship, or aesthetic or environmental considerations require, but only in accordance with duly adopted rules. No variance shall: (a) be effective unless in writing; (b) be contrary to this Charter; or (c) prevent the Reviewer from denying a variance in other circumstances. A variance requires the Founder's written consent during the Development and Sale Period and, thereafter, requires the Board's written consent.

5.6. Limitation of Liability

This chapter establishes standards and procedures as a mechanism for maintaining and enhancing the overall aesthetics of Mesquite Hills; they do not create any duty to any Person. Review and approval of any application pursuant to this chapter may be based purely on aesthetic considerations. The Reviewer is not responsible for the structural integrity or soundness of approved construction or modifications, for compliance with building codes and other governmental requirements, or for ensuring that all dwellings are of comparable quality, value, size, or design, or are aesthetically pleasing or otherwise acceptable to other Owners.

The Founder, Founder Affiliates, the Association, its officers, the Board, any committee, and any member of any of the foregoing, shall not be liable for (a) soil conditions, drainage, or other general site work; (b) any defects in plans revised or approved hereunder; (c) any loss or damage arising out of the action, inaction, integrity, financial condition, or quality of work of any contractor or its subcontractors, employees, or agents, whether or not the Founder has approved or featured such contractor as a Builder; or (d) any injury, damages, or loss arising out of the manner or quality or other circumstances of approved construction on or modifications to any Unit. In all matters, the Association shall defend and indemnify the Board, the DRC, and the members of each, as provided in the By-Laws.

5.7. Certificate of Compliance

Any Owner may request in writing that the Reviewer issue a certificate of compliance certifying that there are no known violations of this chapter or the Design Guidelines. The Association shall either grant or deny such written request within 30 days after receipt and may charge a reasonable administrative fee. Issuance of such a certificate shall prevent the Association from taking enforcement action against an Owner for any condition known to the Association on the date of such certificate.