

VILLAGE OF HUNTING VALLEY

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

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INTRODUCTION

The Village of Hunting Valley is a unique residential community characterized by its pastoral setting and distinguished architectural heritage.

The modern history of the Village dates back to the early 20th century, when prominent Cleveland industrialists and business leaders sought a rural retreat from the growing city. These founding families constructed elegant homes, working farms, and sporting estates that reflected their appreciation for both architectural excellence and the natural beauty of the Chagrin River valley, setting standards that continue to influence the Village's character today. Original and repurposed dwellings, barns, and stables from these legacy estates can be found throughout the Village.

Since its incorporation in 1924, Hunting Valley has maintained a commitment to low-density residential development. The minimum five-acre lot requirement, established in its earliest property deeds and zoning ordinances, has preserved the rural character while allowing for additional residences. Environmental stewardship is a priority, with numerous residents placing

conservation easements on portions of their properties to ensure the permanent protection of natural features. This commitment to landscape preservation is fundamental to the Village's identity.

The architectural history of Hunting Valley includes notable work by renowned architects Philip Small and Munroe Copper, Jr., and landscape architect Ellen Biddle Shipman. Most residences reflect traditional styles, including Colonial Revival, Georgian, Tudor Revival, and French Country, executed with exceptional attention to detail and high-quality materials.

These Architectural Design Guidelines seek to perpetuate this tradition of architectural excellence. The guidelines have been developed to help property owners, architects, and builders understand the Village's design expectations, and they will assist the Architectural Board of Review (ABR) in evaluating proposed projects with consistent criteria.

The guidelines are not intended to dictate specific architectural styles or to discourage creative design. Rather, they establish a framework for design excellence that respects Hunting Valley's unique setting and architectural heritage.

ARCHITECTURAL BOARD OF REVIEW PROCESS

Overview

The Architectural Board of Review (ABR) operates under the mandate to preserve and protect the value and desirability of properties throughout the Village. Established by ordinance to evaluate all proposed exterior construction, alterations, or additions, the ABR assesses proposals based on their alignment with these guidelines, compliance with the Village's codified ordinances, and sensitivity to the character of the existing home and neighboring properties.

The Board consists of three licensed architect advisors, a Mayor's representative, a Village Council representative, and four resident at-large members. The ABR convenes at Village Hall at 5 p.m. on the second Monday of each month.

Submission Requirements

Applications to the ABR must include:

1. **Site Plan** showing:
 - Lot acreage, property boundaries, setbacks, and location of neighboring homes
 - Location and building ground coverage of proposed and existing structures
 - Topography and significant natural features

- Driveways, walkways, and other hardscape elements
- Landscaping & lighting concepts (separate final approval also required for both if not granted with the structure)

2. Architectural Drawings:

- Floor plans
- All exterior elevations showing height, materials, and architectural details
- Roof plan
- Building sections as necessary

3. Materials and Colors:

- Samples or detailed specifications of all exterior materials (for final approval)
- Photographs of existing conditions

4. 3D Visualizations (required for major projects):

- Renderings showing the visual massing and appearance of all sides of the proposed structure(s)

Review Process

1. Preliminary Review (required for new construction, recommended for large additions or significant renovations):

- Discussion of concept design before detailed construction drawings
- Feedback on general approach and compatibility with guidelines

2. Final Review:

- Presentation of all submittal requirements to the ABR
- Evaluation based on compliance with guidelines and ordinances
- Homeowner association approval, if required
- Public comment as appropriate

3. Review Outcomes:

- Preliminary approval, for satisfactory but incomplete submissions

- Approval
- Approval with conditions
- Request for restudy and resubmission
- Denial with reasons

Projects must receive ABR approval before applying for a building permit

GENERAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The following principles represent the essential design values of the Village of Hunting Valley:

Architectural Excellence

1. **Promote high-quality design** that demonstrates thoughtful consideration of proportion, scale, materials, and details.
2. **Encourage architectural integrity** through the consistent application of design principles throughout the project.
3. **Ensure that all facades** receive appropriate architectural treatment.
4. **Avoid trends and stylistic expressions** that may quickly become dated.

Contextual Compatibility

1. **Respect the scale and character** of neighboring properties.
2. **Consider the views** from public and private roadways and neighboring properties.
3. **Preserve the open, rural character** of the Village.
4. **Design accessory structures, additions, and renovations** to be complementary to the original structure.

Material Quality and Authenticity

1. **Use high-quality, durable materials** appropriate to the architectural style.
2. **Avoid low-quality** imitative products (such as vinyl & aluminum siding).
3. **Ensure consistent material quality** on all facades.

Respect for the Natural Environment

1. **Preserve the natural landscape** by minimizing site disturbance and respecting existing topography.
2. **Protect and maintain significant trees and vegetation** whenever possible.
3. **Minimize exterior illumination** to protect dark skies and prevent light trespass.

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

Architectural Style

While these guidelines do not mandate specific architectural styles, the following traditions have historically been well-represented in Hunting Valley and are generally compatible with the Village's character:

- Colonial Revival, and its predominant local variant, Western Reserve Greek Revival
- Georgian
- Tudor
- French and English Country
- Shingle Style

Contemporary interpretations of traditional styles and modern designs may be considered when they demonstrate exceptional design quality and sensitivity to site and context.

Site Planning

1. Building Placement:

- Locate buildings to minimize disturbance to the natural landscape
- Preserve existing topography and minimize grading
- Respect required property line, road, and riparian setbacks
- Position buildings to maximize privacy between neighboring properties

2. Natural Features:

- Protect and preserve significant trees

- Maintain natural drainage patterns where possible
- Protect wetlands, streams, and other environmentally sensitive areas

3. Views and Vistas:

- Consider views to and from the property
- Preserve significant viewsheds from public and private roadways, especially in the Chagrin River Road Scenic Corridor

4. Driveways and Approaches

- Design driveways to follow natural contours where possible
- Provide adequate turning radius for vehicles while minimizing paved area
- Consider the approach sequence and visitor experience

Building Massing and Scale

1. Scale and Proportion:

- Design buildings with a scale appropriate to their setting
- Break down large volumes into smaller, articulated components
- Maintain proportional relationships between building elements
- Consider the visual impact from all viewpoints

2. Roof Forms:

- Design roof forms that are integral to the architectural style
- Use varied roof forms to reduce the apparent mass of large buildings

3. Height and Visual Impact:

- Respect the maximum building height established by Village code
- Consider the building's silhouette against the landscape

Articulation and Detail

1. Facade Composition:

- Create well-composed facades with a clear organizational logic
- Provide appropriate fenestration patterns and proportions for the architectural style
- Avoid large, blank wall surfaces

2. Entrances and Transitions:

- Clearly articulate main and secondary entrances
- Scale entrances appropriately to the building
- Orient garage openings away from public view

3. Details and Features:

- Include architectural details and trim elements consistent with the overall design
- Integrate chimneys, dormers, porches, and other features as appropriate
- Use ornamental elements judiciously and with purpose

Preferred Building Materials

1. Exterior Walls:

- Natural stone
- Brick
- Wood siding (clapboard, shingle, or board and batten)
- Stucco

2. Roofs:

- Natural slate
- Clay tile
- Wood shingle or shake
- Copper and other high-quality metal roofing for appropriate applications

3. Windows and Doors

- Wood or wood-clad

- High-quality aluminum or steel
- Include appropriate trim, muntins, and moldings consistent with the historical character and style of the home

Note: Architectural asphalt shingles and other high-quality synthetic building materials may be considered.

Accessory Structures, Additions, and Renovations

- Respect the scale, proportion, and materials of the existing building
- Designs should appear as an integral part of the overall composition, subordinate to or in balance with the original structure
- Minimize the impact on neighboring properties and public and private roadways by maintaining appropriate setbacks and utilizing landscape screening

Landscape Design

1. Planting Design:

- Create and maintain multi-layered landscapes with trees, shrubs, and groundcovers
- Design landscaping to enhance architectural features
- Prioritize native and naturalized plant species

2. Screening and Buffers:

- Use landscape elements to screen utilities, pools, and sport courts
- Create natural transitions between maintained lawns and natural areas
- Install year-round landscape screening where needed for privacy

3. Lighting:

- Use minimal, low-level lighting to maintain the rural character
- Direct lighting downward to minimize light pollution
- Select fixtures appropriate to the architectural style
- Adhere to permitted lumen counts and color limits

Note: The broad illumination of buildings (i.e., wall-washing) and landscaping (i.e., floodlighting) is expressly prohibited.

4. Decorative Features and Fences:

- Design ornamental fencing and walls to complement the architectural character of the home
- Consider split rail, post and rail, and wrought iron fencing. Natural stone and brick are preferred for entry feature walls and piers.
- Adhere to permitted fence, wall, and entry pier height limitations
- Adequately screen deer fencing where allowed
- Prioritize natural landscape barriers for property line definition
- Locate statues, sculptures, and fountains away from view of any public or private road

APPENDICES

A. [Architectural Board of Review Submittal Checklist](#)

B. Reference Resources

Cusato, Marilyn. *Get Your House Right: Architectural Elements to Use and Avoid*, 2011

[Codified Ordinances of Hunting Valley](#)

Tuttle, Diana, and Mark Gottlieb. *Hunting Valley, A History*, 1999

Mavec, Bruce, and Brian Coughlin. *Hunting Valley, A History Revisited*, 2024

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