

Westlake Heights Design Guidelines

The following guidelines (“Guidelines”) were approved by the Board of Westlake – Richmond Homeowners Association, Inc. on _____, 2023, pursuant to Article V, Section 1, of the Declaration of Covenant, Conditions and Restrictions for Westlake (“Declaration”). These Guidelines supersede all previously issued guidelines for the community. They are intended to provide guidance to homeowners and help ensure the consistent application of architectural standards in the community. Nonetheless, the Architectural Review Committee maintains discretion under the Declaration to deviate from these guidelines based on “aesthetic considerations.”

Unless otherwise noted, any changes to the exterior of a home or yard must be submitted for approval by the Architectural Review Committee, whether or not a particular change is described in these Guidelines. All inquiries regarding these Guidelines and the submission of architectural review requests should be directed to the community manager, Bekki Rice, at bekki@acswest.org. Items that do not require approval are non-permanent objects such as planters, porch furniture, etc.

These guidelines are meant to go hand in hand with the covenants (<file:///C:/Users/mcdah/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/WJTQQ65N/Covenants.pdf>); please refer to both for complete guidance on architectural and maintenance standards for the community.

Additions

1. Building additions include, but are not limited to, carports, garages, greenhouses, porches, rooms, and carport and deck enclosures. Any extension of the dwelling is to be considered an addition. A deck is not an addition; see **Decks** section for deck installation and modifications.
2. No addition shall extend beyond the setback limits established for the house.
3. In general, additions shall not create a breach of privacy between neighboring houses. Where this is unavoidable, the Architectural Review Committee may require screening of the view by the Applicant.
4. New windows or access created by the addition or modifications shall not create a breach of privacy between neighboring houses. The Architectural Review Committee reserves the right to reject certain openings or require screening by the applicant in situations where, in the opinion of the Architectural Review Committee, it is required.
5. To ensure consistency in the design of the house and minimize visual disruption of the neighborhood, additions must match the design characteristics of the house. The architectural style shall match the style of the house. The massing of the addition shall be similar in the use of shapes to that of the house, but proportionately smaller so as not to overpower the house. Roof styles and slopes shall be similar.
6. Openings shall be required in additions, including windows and doors, in a similar fashion and extent as in the original house. Windows and doors shall be of matching material as those in the house. In general, windows and doors should match the style of those in the existing house.

Exceptions may be granted at the discretion of the Architectural Review Committee for sunrooms or other specially glazed areas.

7. Architectural elements such as corner and rake boards, soffits, eaves, window and door trim, and shutters shall match the style of the same elements on the house.

8. All exterior finish materials and colors shall match the house. Matching colors on dissimilar materials is not acceptable.

9. The space beneath any structure constructed on piers higher than 2' above grade but less than one story above grade shall be enclosed with lattice or other approved screening material.

10. The following must be submitted with the completed application:

- A. A site plan and complete set of architectural drawings paralleling those required for City of Richmond permits. The site plan must show the relationship of proposed and existing construction to property lines and adjacent dwellings. The size and location of trees in affected areas are also to be included.
- B. Drawings to scale of proposed construction shall include elevation views of each proposed exterior wall including dimensions and locations of features as doors, windows, roof lines, trim and proposed exterior lighting fixture type.
- C. A complete description of materials including manufacturer and type of siding materials, roof materials, trim materials, colors, etc.

Antennas and Satellite Dishes

To the extent feasible, antennas should not be visible from the street. The following priorities shall be observed in determining antenna locations:

1. Mounted directly on the rear of the house, on a roof plane facing the rear, or on the backside of a chimney.

2. Mounted on the ground in the rear yard.

3. Mounted on a pole, an existing other structure, or a tree in the rear yard.

4. Insofar as possible, the visibility of the antennas should be minimized using one or both of the following methods:

- A. Screen the antenna from view from the street with natural plantings, trees, and shrubs; to the extent they do not comprise the signal reception.
- B. Use antennas with a dark or muted color or paint the antenna a muted color to blend with the background surface or with the surrounding landscape.
- C. Under Federal law, antennas that meet the requirements of this section may not be further regulated by the Association as to the type or placement. Residents are encouraged to take care in the selection and placement of antennas to preserve the appearance guidelines and character of Westlake Heights.

Attic Ventilators

Applications for attic ventilators on the exterior of a residence will require the following:

1. The ventilator is roof mounted and is located on the least visible side of the roof (from the public street view) and does not extend above the ridgeline.
2. No part of the ventilator protrudes more than 12 inches above the roof surface.
3. All exposed parts of the ventilator are painted to match the exterior color of the material they penetrate.
4. Should it become necessary to block the airflow, it shall be blocked from the inside of the structure.

All installations which do not meet the above provisions require an application describing the ventilator in detail and showing its location and elevation above the plane of the roof.

Awnings and Sun Trellises

1. Sun control devices must be compatible with the architectural character of the dwelling.
2. Awnings and trellises shall be consistent with the visual scale of the dwellings to which they are attached.
3. The location of any awning or trellis shall not adversely affect views, sunlight or natural ventilation or adjacent properties.
4. Pipe frames for canvas awnings shall be painted to match the trim or dominant color of the house. When awnings are removed for winter storage, pipe frames shall also be removed.
5. The following must be submitted with the completed application:
 1. A detailed drawing of the trellis or awning showing dimensions and a description of the method of support and attachment to the structure.
 2. A description of the color and style of the sun control device and of the residence to which it is to be attached including a description of the materials to be used.
 3. An explanation of the impact, if any, the sun control device will have on adjacent residence.

Chimneys and Flues

Only gas fireplaces are allowed in Westlake Heights. The vent must be enclosed, and the siding and roofing enclosure materials must match similar materials on the house. Applications for new chimneys will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Clotheslines

No exterior clotheslines shall be erected or maintained at any time on any lot.

Decks

1. The color of each deck must match the primary color of the trim of the house or be a natural wood color.
2. In addition to the above, decks will be considered on their individual merits which include, but are not limited to: location, size, conformity with design of the house, relationship to neighboring dwellings and proposed usage.
3. The following must be submitted with the completed application:
 - A. A site plan with dimensions, showing the relationship of the deck to the house, property lines and adjacent properties.
 - B. Any changes in window or door locations must also be shown, including the conversion of a window opening to a door opening or vice versa if applicable.
 - C. A descriptive drawing including dimensions, height above grade, details of railings and stairs.
 - D. A description of materials and color of the proposed deck and comparisons with those of the house.
 - E. A description of any plantings to be removed for the construction of the deck, and any equipment such as meters, air conditioners, heat pumps, etc., which will be relocated.
 - F. A description of proposed changes in exterior lighting.

Decorative Objects

1. Applications and approval will be required for all permanent exterior decorative objects, natural or man-made, and for any conspicuous decorative object even if temporary, i.e., bird baths and feeders, wagon wheels, sculptures, fountains, ornamental pools, sun dials, rocks, and structures such as weathervanes, house numbers, etc.
2. Objects will not be evaluated solely on aesthetics but also on sitting, proportion, color, and appropriateness to surrounding properties and environment. They also need to be positioned so they won't be in the way of lawn maintenance workers.
3. Holiday and festival decorations do not require approval; however, the placement of conspicuous decorative objectives shall coincide with the holiday and be removed shortly thereafter.
4. A site plan should be included in the application showing the proposed location of the object, its size, color, and detailed drawing or picture of the object. In the case of temporary objects, state the length of time the object will be in place.

Dog Houses

1. Applications must be submitted for all doghouses.

Driveways

1. An application is required for any driveway construction. This includes expansion of existing driveways. Loose gravel is not allowed for any driveway.
2. Cars can only be parked on a driveway (not on patio or yard).

Fences

1. Fencing in Westlake Heights means any structure or planting designed to define or enclose land area, or screen view to an area of land, and requires an application and Architectural Review Committee approval. This may include, but is not limited to, picket fences, scalloped fences, wrought iron fences, lattice, trellises, solid walls not enclosing a structure, hedges, and shrubs or trees planted in a row. Maximum height to be 4 feet. Here are samples of approved vinyl fence styles (applications still required):





2. Front yard fencing is prohibited. Rear yard fencing that will create front yard fencing for a neighbor is prohibited. Chain link, electrified wire, metal post and barbed wire or split rails with wire fences are prohibited. Additionally, privacy fencing is not allowed. For permitted fence heights, refer to the specifications below. The Architectural Review Committee may approve higher fencing on a case-by-case basis in rare situations where extenuating circumstances are present.

3. All fencing shall be constructed entirely on the applicant's property.

4. Application Requirements for Fences - The following must be submitted with the completed application.

- A. A description of the fence style, material, color, and dimensions including architectural style, color of the house, trim types, and colors of other fences in the immediate area must accompany the application.
- B. A site plan showing the relationship of the proposed fence and gates to adjacent dwellings and properties.

Flagpoles

Detached flagpoles are not allowed. No application is required for flag holder brackets attached to a home if flag poles are removed when not in use.

Gardens and Landscaping

1. Written approval is required for all vegetable gardens before initial planting. No vegetable gardens are permitted on any lot closer to the front of the street of the lot than the rear building line of the main dwelling, and any closer to a side street of the lot than the closest side building line of the main dwelling. Please provide a plot plan with the exact location of the garden in relation to the house and property lines with dimensions of the garden shown.
2. Vegetable gardens require extensive care and maintenance. Failure to adequately maintain these plots is a violation of the maintenance provisions of our covenants. Approval may be rescinded if the Architectural Review Committee determines, based upon complaints received or its own knowledge, the applicant has failed to comply with this section.
3. A detached greenhouse is considered a structure and requires approval prior to construction.
4. An application is required for the planting of new plants and trees in mulch beds unless they are replacing like for like of an existing plant or tree. Tree calipers need to be at least 1.5 inches in diameter when planted. Applications are not needed for flowers in existing mulch beds.
5. Renewal applications are not required on an annual basis for small garden plots. However, any change in size or location of previously approved garden plots requires reapplication.
6. The following must be submitted with the completed application:
 - A. A description of the type and size of plantings to be planted complete with plan showing the relationship of plantings to the dwelling and adjacent dwelling and properties.
 - B. A description of any live tree to be removed and an explanation for the removal.
 - C. A description of any retaining wall or similar structure complete with materials and construction method.

Grills and Barbecues (permanent)

1. Written approval is required for all permanent grills and barbecues and will be dependent on property size and city code.
2. Applications must include a site plan showing the placement of the grill in relation to the dwelling, adjacent dwellings, and properties. Please also provide a detailed drawing of the grill showing its design and dimensions, and a list of materials to be used in construction.

Heating and Air Conditioning Units

Written approval is required for the installation of any outdoor heat-exchange or air conditioning unit (including mini split systems) except for duplicate dimensional replacement of existing units. These items must be located on the side or rear of the house. If enclosed, it must be with

landscaping or white vinyl fencing consistent with fencing guidelines. Window air conditioning units are not permitted.

Hot Tubs

1. An application is required for all exterior hot tubs, whirlpools, and spas. They shall be located to the rear and between side walls of the residence and generally not more than twenty feet (20') from the rear of the dwelling. All such facilities shall be adequately screened from adjacent properties. The following must be submitted with the completed application:

- A. A site plan showing the location of the hot tub, whirlpool or spa and its relationship to existing structures and property lines.
- B. The dimensions, type, and color of proposed materials.
- C. Proposed screen and landscape plan.
- D. Arrangements for disposal of wastewater.

Lighting (exterior)

1. Proposed permanent exterior lighting and wiring requires written approval. All exterior lighting shall be installed in such a manner that it will not shine on adjacent property, open space, or public rights-of way, and shall be aesthetically planned for each location. Approval for floodlights and various types of high output lights shall be contingent upon impact on neighboring properties and roadways. Light fixtures of this type must be carefully positioned so that they illuminate only a specific area. High output light fixtures may have to be shielded in a manner similar to street light installations to prevent unwanted or excessive intrusion of light from one property to another.

2. "Standard" selection of post lamps is required to be controlled by a photocell mechanism.

3. The replacement of an existing light fixture, if accomplished with a realistic match to the old fixture, does not require approval from the Architectural Review Committee. Approval is required when a change in style, size, shape, color, or positioning is desired, or if additional light fixtures are to be installed on existing or proposed structures. Fluorescent lighting installed outdoors will not be approved.

4. The following items must be submitted with the completed application:

- A. A detailed drawing of exterior light placement on a site plan.
- B. A drawing or picture of fixture to be installed and its location.
- C. A statement defining the impact of proposed lighting on adjacent residences and public and/or common areas.

Mailboxes

Streetside mailboxes (for those who have them) shall be cleaned and maintained. Existing mailboxes are not permitted to be removed, and any alterations to mailboxes require an application.

Patios and Walkways

1. Approval is required for all proposed patios and walkways and changes to existing patios and walkways. All materials shall be of a neutral color, such as non-dyed concrete, exposed aggregate concrete, stone, brick or treated wood. All front walkways shall be brushed concrete, or exposed aggregate to match the driveway.
2. The design, location and size of patios and walkways shall conform to the design and scale of the house and neighboring structures. Existing grades should be disturbed as little as possible. Terracing must follow existing land contours and shall be constructed in small increments, and a safety railing installed as necessary.
3. The location shall provide reasonable visual and acoustical privacy for the neighbors. Screening, fencing, or planting shall be installed to preserve such privacy.
4. The following must be submitted with the completed application:
 - A. A site plan with dimensions showing the proposed walkway or patio in relation to existing dwellings, trees, and lot lines.
 - B. A description and/or samples of materials to be used.
 - C. A description of proposed lawn contour changes, plantings, screening, railings, benches, proposed exterior lighting, etc.

Playhouses, Forts, Recreational Equipment

1. Approval is required for any detached playhouse or “fort,” and any recreational equipment which is permanent. Permanent is defined as an item which remains in place for at least three months (i.e., swing set, large sandbox, picnic table, bench, basketball backboard, etc.).
2. The equipment should be located behind the house as inconspicuously as possible. Swing sets, sandboxes, and other equipment shall be of a natural wood color, or, if painted, a natural earth tone color such as dark green or brown. Plastic accessories (i.e., toddler swing seats, slides, and chain hand guards) in other colors may be permitted provided all such play accessories are adequately screened from neighboring lots and road frontage.
3. The design shall be consistent with the existing shape, style, and proportion of the dwelling. Siding, roofing, and trim materials shall match the existing house materials as to finish and color. No metal structures are allowed.
4. Additions shall not impair the view, amount of sunlight, or ventilation of adjacent residences or the public’s use or enjoyment of open space.
5. The following must be submitted with the completed application:
 - A. A site plan and architectural drawings. The site plan must depict the relationship of proposed and existing construction to property lines and adjacent dwellings. The size and location of trees in affected areas are also to be included.

- B. Drawings of proposed construction to scale shall include elevation views of each proposed exterior wall, including dimensions and locations of features as doors, windows, rooflines, trim and proposed exterior lighting, including fixture type.
- C. A complete description of materials including manufacturer and type of siding materials, roof materials, trim materials, colors, etc.

6. No basketball backboards shall be erected on the street. Portable or moveable backboards must be relocated off the street when not in use. No backboard shall be attached to the front of a home.

7. Skateboard and/or bike ramps are discouraged and in no instance allowed in the front of any residence.

Pools

Portable swimming pools, which may be dismantled and moved and have sides or walls, must be no more than 24" in height. Portable pools must be at the rear of the house and out of sight from the front, not on the driveway. When draining, homeowners must be sure water does not go into adjacent properties.

In ground swimming pools are not permitted.

Rain Barrels

1. Rain barrels must be a brand specifically for the purpose of catching rain, and they must be in a neutral color to blend with the house siding. The number of rain barrels must not exceed the number of downspouts and must be in the rear yard.

2. Application must show that runoff will be properly diverted and not flow into neighboring properties.

Residing and Restyling

1. Approved exterior sidings are vinyl, stone, and brick. It is the owner's responsibility to ascertain whether this material meets the City of Richmond building and fire codes, which apply to exterior materials.

2. When the proposed residing material differs in color or texture from existing siding on the residence, or if it results in a change in architectural style, it shall be consistent or compatible with the style and color of siding materials on homes immediately surrounding it.

3. The style of existing trim work at soffits, corners, eaves, windows, and doors, and of accent panels, shutters, or other stylistic features shall be retained in the residing design. This will be considered an important requirement where these elements contribute to the visual continuity of the neighborhood by evoking similarities in style among nearby houses.

4. In those cases in which residents wish to alter the stylistic features of the existing façade (for example, by adding shutters on accent panels) the Architectural Review Committee will render a decision based on the following criteria:

- A. The appearance of the residence in relation to existing and proposed materials.
- B. The variety of styles and siding materials of the homes immediately surrounding the residence.
- C. The overall visibility of the residence from nearby public and private properties.

5. The following must be submitted with the completed application:

- A. A photograph or sketch of the house as it currently appears including the color and texture of existing siding materials; also, a description of the color and siding materials on immediately adjacent houses or structures.
- B. A description of the proposed residing material including its color, texture, and the way it will be applied. Color and texture samples must be submitted with the application. Changes in present trim size and location, and removal or addition of other stylistic features, must be noted.
- C. A description of proposed treatment of outbuildings, such as a storage building. Residing or repainting such structures may be required to match that of the house.

Roofing

1. Roofing materials and colors shall be consistent with those generally used on other houses in Westlake Heights.

2. Composition shingle colors are recommended to be in the medium-to-deep brown or grey ranges. Very light colors or strong colors may be subject to disapproval by the Architectural Review Committee.

3. Gutters and downspouts shall be white. Gutter covers require approval and must match the roof color.

4. Visible roof flashing shall be pre-finished to match the adjacent building material color. Painting is acceptable for less visible flashing; however, no exposed mill finished flashing is permitted.

5. Ventilators and other roof penetrations shall be low profile designs and shall be prefinished or painted to match or blend with the roof color.

6. No roof penetrations or accessories shall be visible above the ridge line of the roof (from a perspective of 10' in front of the house) nor shall they be located on the front roof plane of the house. Fireplace chimneys are not regulated by this provision.

7. Skylights will not be approved for the front roof plane of traditional houses. They may be approved for other styles. Specific requests for such will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Sheds/Storage Buildings

1. Please include property survey and sketch of shed with application.

2. Sheds must be no larger than 10' x 12' but will be reviewed on an individual basis by the Architectural Review Committee. Not all lots are suitable for installation of sheds.

3. Materials must match the home and all sheds must have a pad or foundation. Please provide images of materials with the application.

Shutters

Approval is required for removal of shutters.

Signs

Homeowners may exhibit only one sign (a "For Sale" or "For Rent" sign) in a window, and the sign shall not be larger than 18" x 24". Lead-in signs are not permitted. Any request for an exception must be submitted in writing to, and approved by, the Architectural Review Committee. Only security signs may be displayed in the front yards.

Solar Panels

1. Written approval from the Architectural Review Committee is required in advance and should include a complete description (photos/drawings) of the construction design, materials (types and sizes) and color/finish.

2. Only commercially manufactured solar energy collection devices are permitted, and solar panels must be installed on the roof, not on the ground. Solar panels are only permitted on an owner's lot or structure; they may not be installed in or on common elements.

Storm/Screen Windows and Doors

1. Applications for storm and screen windows and doors must include descriptions of material, color, style, and any decorative embellishments.

Tree Removal

1. It is the responsibility of the property owner to promptly remove any dead, diseased and storm damaged trees.

Woodpiles

1. Written approval is not required for woodpiles that are neatly stacked wholly within an enclosed or semi-enclosed area or immediately adjacent to a permanent wall and are not visible from the street or adjacent properties.
2. All other woodpiles require written approval. Applications should include the location, dimensions, and screening details for woodpiles.
3. Stacking of wood on sidewalks, driveways, rights of-way or in open space is not permitted.

Vehicles

1. Campers; house, horse, and utility trailers; recreational vehicles; boats; motorcycles; school buses or commercial vehicles over 6,000 pounds having dual wheels; inoperable vehicles; any vehicle without current registration plates; or any similar items, shall not be stored or parked on any lot, common area or street. These types of vehicles and items can only be parked in an area identified by the Association. If the Association does not identify such an area, they must be parked outside the development.
2. Car covers must be those fitted to the specific model it is covering with an approved color. Tarps or sheet plastic are not allowed.
3. Major vehicle repairs may not be undertaken except in enclosed garages. Minor emergency repairs such as battery charging or changing, replacing a flat tire, and jumpstarting are permitted in the open on any lot.
4. Boats, campers, and recreational vehicles are permitted on residents' driveways for a twenty-four (24) hour period for preparation and cleaning purposes.

In addition to our Westlake Heights Design Guidelines, property owners must follow the property maintenance codes set by the City of Richmond. Some of the most common codes include:

- Remove any accumulated trash or refuse from your yard, sidewalk area and alley. **Trash may not be stored on front or back porches or patios.**
- Trash and recycling containers may not be put at the curb until after 4 pm the day before pickup and put away by evening on the day of pickup.
- Trash and recycling containers must be stored where they cannot be seen from the street or any adjacent property.
- Pet waste must be disposed of properly to prevent access to rodents. Pet owners are responsible for keeping private and public property free of pet waste.
- The HOA provides landscaping services; if you decline these services, you are responsible for the upkeep.

- Maintain the area from your yard to the center of the alley.
- Cut grass and weeds to less than 12 inches in height. Prune and take care of all trees and shrubbery and remove all dead trees promptly.
- Trim any vegetation that protrudes into the alley, sidewalk, or public right-of-way.
- Ensure that all vehicles on your property are in operating condition and display current license plates or a current state inspection sticker unless the vehicle is fully enclosed in a garage.
- Ensure that all structures including houses, garages, sheds, walls, and fences are structurally sound and in good repair. Paint trim and doors when needed.
- Secure vacant buildings against unauthorized entry.
- Stairways, porches, decks, handrails, and guard rails must be properly anchored and able to safely support a normal weight load.
- Snow must be removed from sidewalks and paths six hours after snowfall stops or by 11 am the next day.
- No wild, exotic or “game” type animals shall be kept on residential lots. No birds, animals or insects shall be kept or maintained on any lots except for domestic purposes relating to a family or household.

[Here](#) is the link to the complete set of codes for the City of Richmond. Please review them and keep them in mind when submitting applications to the Architectural Review Committee.