

# Architectural Guidelines

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**Heron Bend Commons Homeowners Association, Inc.** · Adopted by the Board of Directors · Revised August 12, 2026

These guidelines keep Heron Bend Commons looking like one neighborhood along the canal while leaving owners room to make their homes their own. They explain what needs approval, how to apply, and the standards the Architectural Review Committee uses. They are adopted under Article VII of the Declaration of Covenants.

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*A quick rule of thumb: if anyone outside your home could see the change, check these guidelines first. Repainting in the exact same approved color, replacing plants with similar plants, and routine repairs do not need an application.*

## **§1 Purpose and authority**

### **§1.1 Why we review exterior changes**

Heron Bend Commons was designed as a coordinated community of 38 canal-front homes and three condominium buildings. Consistent rooflines, materials and a shared color palette protect property values and the look of the canal for everyone. Review is not meant to slow owners down; most complete applications are approved within a week.

### **§1.2 Authority**

The Declaration of Covenants (Article VII) gives the Board authority to adopt architectural standards and to appoint an Architectural Review Committee (the "committee") of three to five owners. The committee reviews applications and may approve, approve with conditions, or deny them. The Board hears appeals.

### **§1.3 What these guidelines cover**

These guidelines apply to the exterior of every single-family home and lot, and to anything an owner installs on the outside of a condominium home (doors, hurricane protection, balcony enclosures and lighting). Common elements of the condominium buildings are maintained by the association and are not changed by individual owners.

### **§1.4 Relationship to permits**

Approval from the committee is separate from building permits. Owners are responsible for obtaining any permits required by the City of Fort Lauderdale or Broward County, and the committee may ask for a copy of the permit before work begins.

### **§1.5 Updates**

The Board reviews these guidelines every year. Colors and materials under consideration for the next revision are listed where they apply; until they are adopted, they need an application like any other change.

## §2 How architectural review works

### §2.1 When you need approval

You need written approval before you start any of the following: additions, porches, screen enclosures, pools, docks, sheds and pergolas; new or replacement roofs in a different material or color; exterior paint in a color that is not already approved for your home; replacement front doors, garage doors and windows that change style or color; fences, walls and hedges used as fences; driveways and walkways; permanent hurricane shutters; solar panels; exterior lighting other than standard porch fixtures; and landscaping that changes more than a third of the front yard.

### §2.2 The Architectural Review Committee

The committee meets on the second Tuesday of each month and reviews applications by email between meetings. Its members are owners appointed by the Board for one-year terms. Members do not vote on applications from their own street.

### §2.3 How to apply

Complete the two-page **Architectural Review Application**, available in the Documents section of the resident app and on the community website. Attach what the committee needs to understand the change: a photo of the area today, a sketch or plan with dimensions, product names or brochures, and for paint, a photo of the paint chip or the manufacturer's color name and number. Submit the application through the resident app, by email to the board's shared inbox, or at the management office.

### §2.4 Review timeline

**The committee replies in writing within 10 days of receiving a complete application.** If the committee needs more information, the 10 days start again when it arrives. Applications for colors and materials already listed in these guidelines are usually approved within two or three business days.

**§2.5 Decisions and conditions**

The committee may approve an application as submitted, approve it with conditions (for example, a different trim color or added landscaping to screen equipment), or deny it with a written explanation. Approvals are valid for 12 months; if work has not started by then, apply again.

**§2.6 Appeals**

An owner may appeal a denial or a condition to the Board within 30 days of the decision by writing to the board's shared inbox. The Board hears the appeal at its next open meeting, and the owner may attend and speak.

**§2.7 Work started without approval**

If work that needs approval is started without it, the management office will ask the owner to stop and submit an application. If the work does not meet these guidelines, the owner may be asked to restore the original condition at their own expense under §11 of the Rules & Regulations.

**§2.8 Neighbor notice**

For additions, fences, docks and pools, the committee notifies the owners of the homes on either side and directly behind the applicant. Neighbors may send comments within seven days. Comments are considered, but neighbors do not have a veto.

## **§3 Additions and structures**

### **§3.1 Additions and porches**

Additions must match the existing home in roof pitch, roof material, exterior finish and trim. Additions may not extend into the side setbacks in the Declaration, and no addition may be closer than 25 feet to the seawall on canal lots. Submit a site plan drawn to scale with the application.

### **§3.2 Screen enclosures**

Screen enclosures over patios and pools must use bronze or white aluminum frames with charcoal screening. Mansard or gabled roofs are preferred over flat roofs on enclosures taller than 10 feet. Enclosures may not extend past the rear line of the home on corner lots.

### **§3.3 Sheds, pergolas and play equipment**

Sheds up to 80 square feet are allowed in rear yards when they match the home's body color and are screened from the canal and street with landscaping. Pergolas and arbors in natural wood tones, white or bronze are allowed in rear yards. Play equipment must be in the rear yard and at least 10 feet from property lines.

**§3.4 Pools and spas**

Private pools and spas on single-family lots must be in the rear yard, enclosed by a screen enclosure or a fence that meets the Florida pool barrier code, and have equipment screened from neighbors with landscaping or a wall that matches the home.

**§3.5 Docks, lifts and seawalls**

Docks and boat lifts behind canal homes follow the Declaration and require City and County permits. Dock decking may be natural wood, composite in gray or tan tones, or concrete. Lift canopies must be white, tan or Federal Blue. Seawall caps are repaired in their original concrete finish.

**§3.6 Solar panels**

Solar panels are welcome. Under Florida law the committee may set the location only when it does not reduce the system's expected output by more than 10 percent. Panels should be mounted flush with the roof, with black or dark frames and conduit painted to match the surface it runs across.

**§3.7 Driveways and walkways**

Driveways and front walkways may be brick or concrete pavers in the approved Coquina, Sand Dune or Gray Shell blends, or broom-finished concrete. Stamped concrete, painted driveways, and gravel are not approved. Driveway widenings may add up to four feet on one side.

**§3.8 Hurricane protection**

Removable panels and fabric screens need no approval; follow the installation and removal times in §7.3 of the Rules & Regulations. Permanent accordion, roll-down and colonial shutters need approval and must be white, bronze, or the home's trim color. Impact-rated windows and doors that keep the home's existing style may be approved by the management office without a committee meeting.

## §4 Exterior appearance

The look of Heron Bend Commons comes mostly from three things: tile roofs, light body colors with white trim, and front doors that add a single note of color to each home. This section covers all three, plus doors, windows and garage doors.

### §4.1 Roofs and gutters

Single-family roofs are concrete or clay barrel tile in the approved Terracotta Blend, Sandstone or Weathered White colors, or standing-seam metal in Galvalume or white. Flat sections over porches may use a white or light gray membrane that cannot be seen from the street.

Replacing a roof in the same material and color needs only a notice to the management office with the contractor's name and permit number. Changing the material or color needs an application with a sample or the manufacturer's color sheet.

Skylights and solar tubes are allowed on rear and side roof planes, and on front planes when they sit flush with the roof. Roof vents, flues and satellite dishes are painted to match the roof where the manufacturer allows.

Gutters and downspouts match the trim color. Rain barrels may be placed at rear downspouts and must have a lid.

## §4.2 Exterior colors

Every home has an approved body color, trim color and front-door color on file with the management office. Repainting in the colors already on file needs no application.

**Approved front-door palette.** Front doors on single-family homes and on the condominium homes in Buildings A, B and C may be painted in any of these colors without a committee review. Send the management office a note with the color you chose so the file stays current.

- White Dove (Benjamin Moore OC-17)
- Sea Salt (Sherwin-Williams SW 6204)
- Palladian Blue (Benjamin Moore HC-144)
- Tidewater (Sherwin-Williams SW 6477)
- Sandy Hook Gray (Benjamin Moore HC-108)
- Essex Green (Benjamin Moore HC-188)
- Rookwood Red (Sherwin-Williams SW 2802)
- Caliente (Benjamin Moore AF-290)
- Wrought Iron (Benjamin Moore 2124-10)

**Colors not on the palette.** Any front-door color that is not on the palette, including navy and other dark blues, needs the two-page Architectural Review Application with a photo of the paint chip. The committee replies within 10 days (§2.4). Dark blues are under consideration for the 2027 palette; until the Board adopts a revision, they are reviewed one home at a time.

**Body and trim colors.** Body colors are chosen from the Heron Bend body palette of whites, sands and soft grays on file with the management office. Trim is white or the approved trim color for the home. Changing a body or trim color always needs an application.

## §4.3 Doors, windows and garage doors

Replacement front doors may be solid, half-glass or full-glass in a style that suits the home. Garage doors are white, sand, or the home's body color, with or without a single row of windows. Window frames are white or bronze, and impact-rated glass may be clear or lightly tinted, but not reflective.

## **§5 Landscaping**

### **§5.1 Front yards**

Front yards keep a mix of lawn, shrubs and at least one canopy or palm tree. Florida-friendly plantings that need little water are encouraged. Changes to more than a third of a front yard, or removal of any tree taller than 15 feet, need an application.

### **§5.2 Approved and prohibited plants**

Recommended plants include sabal and royal palms, live oaks, gumbo limbo, coontie, firebush, muhly grass and dwarf Fakahatchee grass. Invasive species listed by the Florida Invasive Species Council, including Brazilian pepper and carrotwood, may not be planted.

### **§5.3 Rock, mulch and artificial turf**

Mulch beds in natural brown or red tones, and river rock in beds edged with stone or pavers, are approved. Artificial turf is allowed only in rear yards that are not visible from the canal or street.

### **§5.4 Irrigation and canal setbacks**

Irrigation follows South Florida Water Management District watering days. Within 10 feet of the seawall, plantings must be low-growing and may not use fertilizer during the summer rainy season, to protect the canal.

## §6 Fences, walls and screening

### §6.1 Fences

Fences need approval before installation. The maximum height is **six feet in rear yards** and **four feet in front yards**, measured from the ground at the fence line. Front-yard fences must be decorative and at least 50 percent open.

Approved materials are aluminum picket in black, bronze or white, and white or tan vinyl. Wood privacy fences are allowed in rear yards when the finished side faces neighbors and the street. Chain-link fencing is not approved anywhere it can be seen from a street or the canal.

On canal lots, fences may not extend past the rear building line toward the seawall, and any fence within 25 feet of the seawall is limited to four feet so canal views stay open for neighbors.

### §6.2 Walls

Garden walls up to three feet tall may be built in stucco finished to match the home. Retaining walls along the canal are part of the seawall and are covered in §3.5.

### §6.3 Hedges

Hedges used as fences follow the same height limits as fences. Hedges along a sidewalk are kept trimmed back at least one foot from the walk.

### §6.4 Equipment screening

Air-conditioning units, pool equipment, generators and trash carts are screened from the street with landscaping or a wall or fence that meets §6.1. Permanent standby generators also need an application showing the location and the screening.

## **§7 Lighting, signs and flags**

### **§7.1 Exterior lighting**

Porch and garage fixtures may be replaced with fixtures in black, bronze or white. Landscape and security lighting must be aimed down and shielded so light does not shine into neighboring homes or across the canal. Floodlights may not stay on all night.

### **§7.2 Signs**

One "for sale" or "for rent" sign no larger than 18 by 24 inches may be placed inside a front window. Security company signs no larger than 12 by 12 inches are allowed near the front door. Political and event signs follow Florida law and the posting periods set by the Board.

### **§7.3 Flags**

Owners may display one portable, removable United States flag and one official flag of the State of Florida, the armed forces, or a POW-MIA flag, as Florida law allows. Flagpoles up to 20 feet tall in front yards need an application showing the location.

### **§7.4 Holiday decorations**

Holiday decorations do not need approval. They follow the display periods in §7.2 of the Rules & Regulations.

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*Questions about these guidelines go to the board's shared inbox or the management office. Ember, the assistant in the resident app, can also point you to the right section.*