



## Country Creek Homeowners Association of Manatee, Inc.

P. O. Box 21322  
Bradenton, FL 34204-1322

### **Board of Directors**

President:  
Bruce Iles

Vice President:  
Cara Misciewicz

Secretary:  
Ray Miller

Treasurer:  
Carola Russell

Director at Large:  
Steve Hodgkinson

A Letter from the Country Creek HOA Architectural Review Committee February 11, 2016

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Architectural Review Committee's duties, responsibilities and authority are explained in Article VI of the CCHOA covenants. Basically, we serve "at the pleasure of the Board of Directors", and act as the eyes of the board in matters around the community. We are tasked with enforcing the covenants included in articles III through V in our bylaws.

We look into ARC applications from residents who want to make improvements and changes to their property. And we also review violations reported to the board, and make recommendations to the board on how to best resolve a violation.

Residents have voiced their opinions on ARC issues at HOA meetings, on the street, through our website, and in our recent election. Right now in Country Creek there is a small group of residents who would like to see less enforcement of the bylaws. This group includes residents with violations on their property. While at the same time, there is another small group of residents who would like to see the bylaws enforced with more vigor. Finally, there is a vast majority of residents who are mostly satisfied with our community and the way the ARC has conducted its business in recent years. It is the intention of this ARC to represent the vast majority of residents, by enforcing most violations, but without any heavy-handed police actions and with a minimum of intrusion into resident's lives. We intend to take a common sense, middle of the road approach to enforcement. One thing is for certain: no matter what we decide, and no matter what action we take, there will be some residents who agree with us, and there will be others who will disagree with us.

Recently, some residents have accused the ARC of selective enforcement. We understand that it may appear that way sometimes, but this is not the case. The ARC does not have the resources to enforce all violations, all the time, everywhere. To make matters worse, enforcement is like a "wac-a-mole" game: as one violation is resolved, another one appears, or the same violation reappears. This may cause some residents to ask, "What's going on, and why isn't the ARC doing its job?" Recently, the ARC committee has refrained from acting on some violations due to the contentious nature of the election. Now with the election behind us, we will survey the neighborhood this month and report the most egregious violations to the board at our next meeting.

Any property owner is invited to join the ARC committee. The job requires some leg work and regular attendance at HOA meetings. You must accept that it is a thankless job for the most part, and in return for your service, some residents will treat you like their servant, and sometimes with scorn. Please reply to my email address below if you would like to join the ARC.



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Everyone is invited to walk with us during this survey. We will meet at the park on Saturday 2/20/16. We can meet in the morning, or afternoon, whichever is best for the most people. Please reply to my email address below to RSVP, and let me know what time is best.

### **RE: THE UPCOMING SURVEY OF VIOLATIONS**

#### **What if there are violations on my property right now?**

We ask that all residents remove any violations from their property before the survey. This will save us some time and effort.

#### **What if I plan to have my boat or trailer in my driveway that day?**

Boats and trailers are allowed for short periods of time while in use. If they are removed after a day or two, then there is no violation.

#### **How will the ARC conduct this survey?**

We will walk the community and view the property from the road. We will photograph any violations we see to be included in our report. We will not confront any residents, nor will we step onto anyone's property.

#### **Who will decide what violations will be acted upon?**

The ARC will be involved, but the final decision will rest with the CCHOA Board of Directors. These decisions will be made in an open forum at the HOA meetings. There never has been, nor will there ever be, any back-room plans to enforce some covenants and not others. We will always treat all residents equally; there will be no favoritism.

#### **What will the ARC look for in the upcoming survey?**

We will look for commercial vehicles, boats, and trailers stored on the property for an extended period of time. We will look for vehicles parked on the lawns and in the street overnight. We will look for construction materials, equipment and debris stored in plain sight. We will look for neglected homes, landscaping and fences. We will look at the homes where complaints have been made in the past few months. We will look for violations to the covenants contained in articles III – V in our bylaws. We will also look for any safety hazards.

We will not look for issues regarding painting, pressure washing, mailboxes, flower pots, trees, or sheds.



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### **What about commercial vehicles and sheds?**

The board is presently working to define what constitutes a commercial vehicle and which ones will be allowed. Incidentally, the internet is full of examples of HOA's grappling with this ill-defined issue.

There are numerous sheds in C. C. that are not in compliance. Some were built without ARC approval, and some were granted ARC approval by previous boards. We have no means of determining the status of existing sheds. We have not, and will not allow any sheds to be erected without ARC approval.

### **What will the board do about the violations?**

They will send three letters asking for the violation to be corrected within a few weeks time. Then they will visit the home to advise the resident that legal proceedings will begin if the violation persists. The board will notify the owner of the property that he or she will be responsible for all legal fees relating to the violation. The board also has the right to impose fines as they see fit. The board and the ARC hope that no such actions will become necessary. With this process, most violations are corrected before the second notice, while others may take months to resolve.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation with the ARC process. And thank you for your help in making Country Creek a wonderful place to live.

Sincerely,

Bob Meehan

ARC Chairman

Reply to: robjmee@msn.com