

## ART JURY CORNER

### Design Review Workshops

If you've been thinking of building a new home or doing a substantial remodel of an existing home, make sure you don't get ahead of yourself in the design process; have the Art Jury review the design *concept* before spending a lot of time and money on a *finished* design. All too often, the Art Jury reviews projects that are submitted in near final form as a first submission. Sometimes these projects contain aspects that are inconsistent with the Protective Covenant or Design Guidelines; the Art Jury is then in the unfortunate position of having to request revisions to a design which, in the minds of the owner and architect, is virtually complete. By the time a project is this far along, the owners have already invested substantial time, effort and money working with the architect, and are very reluctant to make changes. At this stage the owners have often developed an emotional bond with the design of their "dream house" and can't imagine the design being any different, and thus may take any suggested changes very personally.

To help applicants avoid substantial changes late in their design process, the Art Jury holds Workshops to allow a project to be reviewed early on, when it is still in the conceptual planning stages. Any application to the Art Jury, other than a Workshop application, requires a fair amount of detail; by contrast, the Workshop application requirements are very simple. Usually, all that is required for a Workshop review is a site plan showing the "footprint" of the proposed structures, although the submission requirements vary with the type of project. The application may include more information, but to obtain the full benefits of the Workshop the design should not be too fully developed. At the Workshop meeting the Art Jury, owner and architect are able to have an open discussion regarding the design concept and alternative designs to meet both the owner's desires as well as the intent of the Protective Covenant.

The Workshop process is even open to prospective property buyers as long as they have the current owner's signature on the application. A Workshop is a perfect opportunity for those people looking to purchase a particular property, but want to make sure the property can accommodate their development plans before the deal is closed.

Anyone who is planning to build a new home or substantially alter an existing home should remain flexible, keep an open mind regarding the ultimate design, and not become prematurely set on a particular feature or design. Chances are, the owners are probably more interested in a particular "feeling" or "character" for the home rather than a particular design feature. A property will usually accommodate a design that creates the "character" desired by the owners, but due to different factors such as lot size, slope and prominence, the same property will not always comfortably accommodate particular design features or building sizes. A good architect will be able to create the ambiance that the client wants with a number of different designs; there is no such thing as a "one and only design solution." Architects who insist that only one design will work are not serving their clients well. A talented architect will be able to take the feedback from a Workshop with the Art Jury and create a design that satisfies his or her clients, and one that is also consistent with the Protective Covenant, Design Guidelines and community character, thus satisfying the Art Jury as well. The changes made in response to input from the Art Jury will often create opportunities for new design solutions that were not evident previously. Through this cooperative process, the final design can be a significant improvement over the original submission.

The importance of having a Workshop with the Art Jury cannot be overemphasized. Delays due to design revisions that occur on some projects may be avoided by taking the time to meet with the Art Jury before a final design has become cemented in the minds of the designers and owners. Getting the concept right in the early part of the design development will hasten the rest of the process.