

Cobblestone Condominium POA, Inc. Guidelines for Personal Landscaping

Technically, according to NC laws related to condominium complexes and other similar complexes, anything outside the building is considered to be common elements – grass, lawns, trees, shrubs, sidewalks, parking areas, swimming pool, etc., - and cannot be used personally by any one person because these belong to all of the owners of the complex. Therefore, common elements are under the management of the POA Board and nothing can be done in a common element area without the approval of the POA Board. In addition, part of the monthly POA fees includes landscaping (grass cutting, lawn fertilizing and weed treatments, annual mulching, shrub trimming, etc.).

That being said, as you can see from around the complex, we tend to be fairly agreeable to allow people on the ground level to decorate in the front or the rear of their units if it will enhance the overall appearance of the unit and the complex in general. This is an advantage that owners on the ground level have over those who live upstairs. There is nothing currently in the Rules and Regulations that addresses this issue.

Here's what we ask owners to follow:

- Nothing should be planted in the grass areas in front or rear of the unit so to not impede the work of landscapers and/or construction workers.
- Things like flowers can be planted or potted plants can be placed in the areas where mulch is placed in the front. We would recommend using pots because, when the mulch is placed annually, we or the landscapers are not responsible for any damage that might be done by the landscapers as they move around getting the mulch down or do trimming work and the plants are struck by the weed eaters. This would also include construction workers as well. The contractors cannot be held liable for any damage as the common areas are also provided to give them adequate access to do work in the work of the POA.
- As to planting things in the rear, it can be done but a clear path must be left open for emergencies and inspections. Again, we or the landscapers are not responsible for any damage that might be done by the landscapers as they move around putting the mulch down or doing trimming work and the plants are struck by the weed eaters. This would also include construction workers as well. The contractors cannot be held liable for any damage as the common areas are also provided to give them adequate access to do work in the work of the POA.
- Solar lighting in the front can be used but should be in the mulched areas and not along the sidewalk as it can create a liability issue. In the rear, solar lighting can be used but a clear path must be maintained at all times for emergencies and inspections.
- Small flag brackets and appropriate flags may be placed in the front mulched areas as well. Flags should not be controversial or offensive. In the rear, these flags can be used but a clear path must be maintained at all times for emergencies and inspections. If you have a flag about which you are unsure if it is appropriate, please see the POA Board.
- In the front, potted plants can be placed on your porch but should not extend along the sidewalk as it can create a liability issue. If an upstairs unit, potted plants cannot be placed on the stairs or hung from the banisters on each side of the stairs.
- If the bottom of the stairwell has a grass front, that area can be decorated but the irrigation system may be in many of these front sections and needs to be identified first and cannot be impeded.
- No additional trees or shrubs can be planted either in front or in the rear as the roots can affect water and sewer lines.
- Planters can be placed in the middle of the banister at the bottom of the steps (just before you turn left or right to go down the last few steps).

Thanks for following these policies. Fines will not be levied unless requests from the POA Board to remove or alter selected personal landscaping are not followed. If not followed, a \$25 fine would be levied for each occurrence. Thanks for your cooperation!

(05/13/2020)