



January 23, 2020
12:00 p.m.

MEMBER COMMENTS:
PROPOSED CHANGES TO ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS FEE SCHEDULE
January 1 thru 23, 2020

The member comment period for the proposed changes to the Architectural Standards Fee Schedule started January 1 with the notice posted in the January Tahoe Donner News. The notice was also posted on the 45-Day Notice webpage on the Tahoe Donner website. Comments must be submitted noon on February 21, 2020. There was one commented submitted between January 1 thru 23, 2020.

Almost exactly one year ago Architectural Standards Task Force (ASTF) reviewed the AS fee schedule changes proposed for 2019. The letter with ASTF feedback started with the following two paragraph quote, which is very applicable today as well.

“Mission: Architectural Standards ensure that structures and properties in Tahoe Donner are in harmony with their natural surroundings and benefit the quality of life and property values of association property owners.

As the BOD considers these pricing changes and any other changes - please keep in mind that we believe that the goal for the ASC is to help homeowners to improve and maintain existing properties. Please ask yourself whether the fee increases are consistent with the stated mission.”

In my professional work I learned, that most of the good design documents include two sections: “Goals” and “Non-Goals”. We need to make sure, that above mentioned goals are considered along with the “Non-Goals” for ASO.

For example, enforcing the aesthetic standards and harmony with natural surroundings is a goal. But enforcing the up-to-date accuracy of plans in ASO archives by demanding, that the owner changes the plans, is a non-goal.

Keeping in mind the goals and non-goals we can review the proposed fee schedule changes.

1. Decrease of administrative fee for major and minor projects with notification. This makes sense from the PR perspective to please developers community. However, the reason for the decrease given in the document sounds strange, because the recent fee increase was not based on the processing cost in the first place. In





- general, this is a good change if ASO can afford it, but a better reason language would help.
2. Increase of inspection fees by \$10. This is purely cost based increase and makes sense if the numbers are right.
 3. Create a fee for revisions. The new fee is proposed to “avoid the current practice where an unlimited number routing through the same above timely process is conducted where revision fee does not exist”. The cases, where a long review is needed, are when a revision substantially changes the project. For example the change to add a new structure (a room or a house), a significant (over 150sf) footprint increase, a change requiring immediate neighbor notification, or a change, that can NOT be allowed even with a variance. If these cases are meant in “Full Committee Resubmittal fee” and “Revision Fees”, it should be made more clear. In cases of other deviations from the project, which almost any house improvement project has, the deviations found during the inspections should be photographed and added to project file. No need to change original project documentation. This would be a better solution to change this "same timely process" for the majority of revisions.
 4. Create a non-permitted improvement fee. This fee is an example of chasing a non-goal and should not be added. If a non-permitted improvement found by ASO violates important AS guidelines and can not be grandfathered, there should be a fine, not a fee. Such improvement has to be reverted or corrected. Example may be a new unusual bright color causing a need to repaint, a new bright street light violating light pollution standards, a large change to a structure footprint causing coverage % violation. All the other non-permitted improvements should be photographed and added to property file without forcing an owner to obtain a back-dated permit.

We want to remind everyone the mission of AS in TD quoted above. We believe, that ASC and BOD needs to make amendments to the proposed fee schedule.

We also remind, that a year ago we were expecting operational plan timeline for implementing ASTF recommendations. Still waiting.

