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7

Simple Changes You Can Make to Refresh Your Amenity Space!

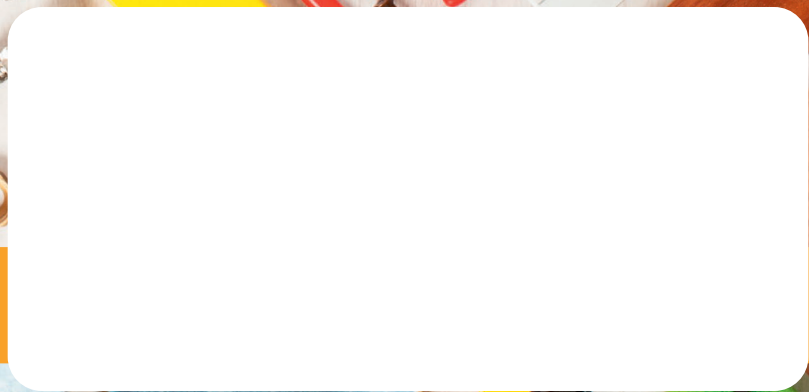
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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
KEYSTONE CHAPTER

community
ASSOCIATIONS INSTITUTE

*Information & Resources for
Building Better Communities*

July | August 2023





7 Simple Changes You Can Make to Refresh Your Amenity Space!

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“The best rooms have something to say about the people who live in them.”

-David Hicks.

The clubhouse is often the heart of a residential community, providing a place that brings community members together, either for fitness or social events, or as an actual revenue-generating space for your homeowners association. Either way, updating the look can really increase its value and use! Unfortunately, association funds are not always available for a major renovation. So, for those times when major renovation is not possible, but a refresh is needed, there are some no-fail, basic steps that your community association can take to really update your clubhouse environment to a clean, new look, without taking down walls!

1. Re-Paint the Walls in a Neutral Palette.

Using neutral colors allows the walls to become the “canvas” for the space. Let your furniture and accents give your room its personality and color. When picking your neutral paint color(s), look at the undertone that works with the existing wood tones and finishes and will best help you achieve your desired design “feel.”

Warm neutrals have undertones of yellows, reds, and oranges and create a “cozy” feel. Neutral with warm undertones are creams, beiges, tans, “greiges,” and warm grays. Cool neutrals have undertones of blues, purples, or greens, like cool or “bluish” grays, and create a more open and often a more formal feel.

A current trend is the layering of several neutral colors in a space — whites, off-whites, creams, grays, and taupes. They all play nice together, particularly if you keep the undertones consistent - all warm or all cool.

2. The Power of Contrast — Paint your Trim White.

Natural wood tones can be beautiful and rich in appearance. However, unless your wood trim, moulding, and doors are in great shape and finished in a medium, not-too-saturated stain color, painting them white will absolutely transform your space for the better! White trim will “pop” and always looks fresh and clean. Try to avoid almonds and off-whites, as they can appear “dingy.” White will always look

more impactful and you are in no danger of pulling the wrong undertone.

3. Consider your accents on your walls and ceilings!

Change or remove old wall coverings! If you have mirrored walls or old wood veneer panels, remove them. They are dated. Use a new, interesting wall-covering instead to accent. Wall-coverings are more than just wallpaper or paint; they can be more architectural, like wainscoting (box moulding or vertical panels below a chair rail), headboard (a vertical grooved look or shiplap (horizontal wide slat look), as accents.

Don’t forget the “5th wall!” Add interest to your ceiling with shiplap or beadboard, paint, faux beams, or “tin” look tiles. A current trend is metallic paint accents for ceilings, but be careful because too much metallic can overwhelm and reflect too much light. Consider “muted” metallics and selective placement, i.e. for cove & vaulted ceilings.

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4. Replace/Remove window treatments.

Take down old drapes, shades, or blinds. Keeping your window treatments clean can be a challenge. It's often easiest for a clubhouse space to avoid draperies altogether. Drapes and curtains are beautiful but can get dusty quick and also can fade fast if you have a space with lots of daylight! Replace with simple solar shades or wide slat blinds. There are many products on the market that are affordable and do a great job controlling sunlight. For a more finished or formal look for your shades and blinds, you can add a box valance/cornice.

5. Change Your Lighting.

Lighting can make or break a space. Often restrooms don't get

renovated due to the costs associated with tile replacement, but paint and new lighting can also make a big difference. Consider replacing old and dated above-sink bath vanity fixtures with ceiling-hung pendants or wall sconces flanking the mirror. Replace dated ballroom chandeliers with more updated, new hanging pendants. You can retain the room's "identity" and style—even in the most traditional spaces—but can still find new updated fixtures to elevate a room's look.

And, it's not just about a good-looking fixture; the lamp (bulb's) temperature really makes a difference too. It creates atmosphere, so when choosing LEDs, make sure you pick the right temperature. Be sure to check your lightbulb's temperature. 2700K is closest to the warm and flattering light of

our traditional incandescent bulbs of old. Lightbulbs with a temperature over 3500K tend to cast "brighter"/cooler. The lower the temperature, the warmer and cozier the light it emits.

And remember, placement is important too. Accent lighting can really bring drama into a ballroom or dining area, if placed strategically in recessed coves and coffered ceilings.

TIP: Always look at finishes (paint colors, wood, tiles, fabrics) in different daylight, times of day and the type/temperature of the interior lighting in that room. Both daylight and artificial lighting can affect how our eye perceives the paint color's undertone, and, in certain light temperatures, a color can appear more warm or cool. Of course, brushing on a paint sample or looking at a tile or wood in every lighting condition is the best way to ensure your outcome meets your vision.

6. Replace a few key pieces of furniture.

Often the chairs are the culprit in "dating" a ballroom or multi-purpose space. While practical, the traditional stackable chairs



Above and to the right: Before and after shots of a hallway renovation show you how implementing 7 Simple Steps really can refresh your space!



Photos: PaulScharffPhotography



Clubhouse ballroom at Locust Hill, NJ before (left) and after (right). Draperies removed and moulding/trim painted white, neutral blue gray walls, accented with wallpaper panels, new chandeliers, wall sconces, and accent cove lighting.

Photos: PaulScharffPhotography

were often not very “stylish.” Consider replacing your banquet chairs. There are a plethora of chairs available now at all price points. New, brighter, lighter, neutral banquet chairs for your ballroom will make a big difference.

Also, whether it’s your clubhouse or your home, sometimes replacing one key piece of furniture in a space is enough to change the whole look. In a lounge or hallway, keep the good side chairs or end tables, but replace the sofa. And, often, a new statement coffee table can bring an older sofa to life!

7. Embrace the good stuff.

If you have wood in good shape, embrace it! Clean and Refinish wood paneled ceilings. Don’t hide exposed trusses and beams. Clean them up, re-finish, or paint! Then, re-think your lighting to compliment and highlight these “treasures.” Repair and paint detailed moldings —they finish the room and the older moldings are definitely worth saving. Refinish hardwood floors that are in good shape whenever possible.

Remember, “simple” changes doesn’t necessarily equal “cheap” changes, but the added value for your community’s amenity space will far outweigh costs —

whether it is a revenue — generating space or just that the space will be used more by your community’s homeowners! Both are a win-win! And remember, don’t try to tackle painting, wall-coverings, and lighting without help from professional contractors. A poor installation job with any of these items could mean the difference between the look of a band-aid or hobbyist attempt or a beautiful, enduring update!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

After graduating Fordham University with an Art History/Studio Art Degree, **Giselle Hymanson, ASID** enjoyed a 25-year career in marketing & advertising, before switching gears into interior design, now “branding” spaces for residential and commercial clients. A graduate of Brookdale Community College’s Interior Design program, she has been a part-time adjunct professor and Advisory Board Member there. For the last 6 years, she’s headed the Interior Design team at Parallel Architectural Group, in Long Branch, New Jersey, a full service architectural & engineering firm. Contact Giselle by email at: ghymanson@parallelgrp.com.



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MATTERS PODCAST

Community Matters Episode Alert: “Clubhouse Renovations”

CAI Keystone’s **Community Matters** podcast, hosted by Chapter Executive Director Tony Campisi and presented by Hoffman HOA Law, brings you conversations that are critical to managing and governing condos, cooperatives, and homeowners associations.

Tune in to a recent episode featuring Giselle Hymanson, ASID from Parallel Architecture Group and Barbara Saxton, CMCA, AMS, PCAM from The Galman Group and dive deeper on tips and trends for community associations that may be considering a renovation to a clubhouse, common room, or other common areas to keep your community fresh and updated.

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