

Architectural & Environmental Control Guidelines



OF THE
COURTS OF FOUR SEASONS
HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION

VERSION 4

EFFECTIVE MARCH 1ST, 2008

RESPONSIBILITY & AUTHORITY

The Courts of Four Seasons Covenants state that anything which changes the physical appearance of any lot and/or exterior of any structure, alters the use for what the lot and/or structure was originally intended, or any undertaking that involves the maintenance of any lot and/or structure in the Courts of Four Seasons is subject to review by the Courts of Four Seasons Architectural and Environmental Control Committee (AECC or the Committee).

The AECC has the authority to require property owners to abide by the provisions of the community Bylaws and Covenants' conditions and restrictions provided at settlement and by the guidelines and procedures described in the following pages.

WHAT ARE THE BYLAWS & COVENANTS?

The Bylaws & Covenants are a binding legal obligation between the Courts of Four Seasons Homeowners' Association, Inc. and all the residents. The Bylaws & Covenants assure the residents of certain minimum standards for land use, architectural design and property maintenance throughout the community. They also provide for your membership in the Courts of Four Seasons Homeowners' Association, and establish a mechanism for the operation of this association.

HOW DOES THE ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL PROCESS WORK?

Your Bylaws & Covenants provide for an Architectural and Environmental Control Committee (AECC). This committee reviews all applications for exterior alterations.

The first step is to consult the guidelines herein and submit a formal application (sample enclosed and available from any member of the AECC or board member of the Homeowners' Association).

Submit your applications early. Most applications will be acted upon within 30 days, but not more than 60 days from receipt by the AECC. All applications will be reviewed at regular AECC meetings, usually the third week of each month. Upon review by the Committee, a copy of your application will be returned to you with one of the following dispositions: **Approved As Submitted; Approved With Provisions; Approved As Exception To Guidelines; Postponed With Reason; Denied With Reason.**

IMPORTANT: ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY AND THE COURTS OF FOUR SEASONS HAVE SEPARATE APPROVAL PROCESSES. APPROVAL BY YOUR HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION DOES NOT RELIEVE YOU OF THE RESPONSIBILITY TO OBTAIN THE REQUIRED APPROVALS AND PERMITS FROM THE COUNTY.

THE COURTS OF FOUR SEASONS AECC GUIDELINES

The guidelines numbered 1 - 14 in this package identify some of the most common requests for exterior alterations subject to the AECC approval process. They are meant to be used as your guide when making your application. However, they are only guidelines; the location of your house, as well as the size, shape, and topography of your lot will have some bearing on the approval process. In addition, these guidelines do not cover all the potential improvements you may make. Therefore, please contact the AECC for clarification on whether an application is necessary for the following: **air conditioning units, attic ventilators, awnings & sun trellises, chimneys, exterior lights, gutters & down spouts, major building alterations, open space, rental properties, siding, roofing, solar collectors, other alterations.**

1. ANTENNAS AND SATELLITE DISHES

A. ANTENNAS

1. Applications are required for all antenna installations.
2. Exterior antennas shall only be accepted if they are fully concealed.
 - a. Where construction such as a false chimney is proposed for concealment, guidelines appropriate to that structure will apply.
 - b. Connecting cables must be fully concealed.
3. Applications must include site plan showing the antenna's location.

B. SATELLITE DISHES

1. Applications are required for all satellite dish installations.
2. Applications must contain the following provisions:
 - a. size and type of satellite dish;
 - b. site plan showing the satellite's location.
3. All dishes must comply with the rules, regulations, and restrictions imposed by the Federal Communications Commission, as well as any State and County requirements.
4. Satellite dishes over 1 meter in diameter are not permitted.
5. All dishes shall be installed so that they are as inconspicuous as possible in relation to neighboring properties. All cables must be concealed. This guideline applies to the extent that it does not

impair the installation, maintenance, or reception quality of the satellite dish.

2. PERMANENT BASKETBALL BACKBOARDS

- A. Applications are required for all backboards.
- B. Applications must contain the following provisions:
 - 1. location of backboard;
 - 2. type and color of backboard;
 - 3. any alterations being made to coincide with installation of backboard (i.e., concrete pad).
- C. **No basketball backboards are allowed in the front of or attached to the house.**

3. CLOTHESLINES

- A. Applications are not required for clotheslines.
- B. Only umbrella or retractable clothes-hanging devices are permitted.
- C. These must be removed from view when not in use, unless they are enclosed by a privacy fence or other structure which has been approved by the AECC.

4. DRIVEWAYS

- A. Applications are not required for repairing or replacing driveways with original construction material.
- B. Applications are required for all other repairs, replacements, additions, extensions, etc.
- C. All hard surface materials, with the exception of blacktop and loose stone, will be considered for replacement of driveways.

5. DECKS, PATIOS & WALKWAYS

- A. Applications are required for all decks, patios and walkways.
- B. The design, location and size shall conform to the design of the house and its relationship to neighboring dwellings.
- C. Applications must contain the following provisions:
 - 1. drawings which show the size, style and elevation of the structure and details of any railings, steps, benches, etc.;

2. list of materials to be used in visible construction;
3. description of treatment to be applied to the materials (it is recommended that materials be left natural or stained);
4. description of proposed installation of exterior lighting;
5. description of any planting to be removed for the construction of the structure;
6. site plan showing relationship of the structure to the house and other adjacent structures; description of any equipment, such as heaters, air conditioning units, etc., which will be relocated.

6. DOG RUNS & DOG HOUSES

- A. Applications are required for all dog runs and dog houses.
- B. Applications must contain the following provisions:
 1. signatures of all adjacent property owners stating their acknowledgment;
 2. site plan showing relationship of structure to house and adjacent properties;
 3. detailed drawing of the dog house or run, including dimensions, list of material to be used and color chip.
- C. Fencing material must be wood or simulated wood and left natural or stained an earth tone (cedartone, natural pine, or natural clear). However, if other fencing exists on the property, fencing for dogs must be of the same type and color. Dog houses may be left natural, stained earth tone, or painted to match the homeowner's house.
- D. They must be located behind the homeowner's house, preferably attached to the house, but as close to the house as possible. They should be situated so as not to be an inconvenience or nuisance to neighbors. To ensure the privacy of adjacent neighbors, dog runs and dog houses shall not be located near property lines. Approval is contingent upon homeowner's commitment to keeping the area clean and maintaining the structure in good condition.

7. FENCES

- A. Applications are required for all fencing.
- B. Applications must contain the following provisions:
 1. material, height, style, and color of stain to be used;
 2. site plan showing dimensions and relationship of the fence to adjacent houses, open space, and property lines.

- C. Fences may be:
 - 1. constructed of wood (preferred) or wood-simulated materials;
 - 2. left natural, stained earth tone (cedar, natural pine, natural clear), white or gray.
 - a. Applications for a stained fence will be considered on a case by case basis.
 - b. the height, style, and location of the fence, the color of the house, and existing or proposed landscaping will be taken consideration.
- D. Fences may not:
 - 1. be constructed of metal (i.e., chain link);
 - 2. exceed 6 feet in height;
 - 3. be constructed in front of the house;
 - 4. be painted.
- E. On corner lots, fences should be a minimum of 8 feet from the sidewalk. Size and style of the fence, as well as the adjoining properties, will be taken into consideration.
- F. Fences extending along the side of the house shall not be placed more than halfway forward from the rear of the house. The location of the stairwell, air conditioners, windows, and doors will be taken into consideration. Exceptions may apply to houses on cul-de-sacs.

8. PAINTING & STAINING

- A. Applications are required when any structure or trim is to be painted or stained a color different from its existing color.
 - 1. The term “different color” is hereby defined to be a complete color change, such as from yellow to blue or a lighter or darker shade of the original color.
 - 2. No AECC approval is needed to repaint or restain when the original color is maintained.
- B. Color samples are required for all painting or staining to a different color.
- C. Residents are discouraged from adding colors when two or more colors already exist.
- D. The criteria used to approve/disapprove a change in color will primarily be whether the house will continue to blend into the community in a style consistent with its surroundings.

9. WINDOWS & DOORS

- A. An application is not required for storm doors, windows and doors replacement (including front door and garage doors) provided the following criteria are met:
 - 1. style matches the style of the house;
 - 2. color matches or blends with the house or trim;
 - 3. doors and windows do not have bars, cross hatching or filigree.

10. PARKING and STORAGE of VEHICLES, BOATS & TRAILERS

- A. Boats, trailers, inoperable vehicles or any similar item shall not be parked or stored on any lot or street, except inside an enclosed garage.
- B. Outside storage on residential property or street parking of vehicles not intended for continuous use is prohibited. This also applies to partially disassembled vehicles and similar items in disrepair.

For more detailed information about vehicle restrictions, refer to the **DECLARATION OF COVENANTS, CONDITIONS AND RESTRICTIONS FOR THE COURTS OF FOUR SEASONS**, ARTICLE VII, Section 2, entitled Vehicle Restrictions.

11. PLAY EQUIPMENT

- A. Applications are required for permanent play equipment.
 - 1. Permanent play equipment is deemed as equipment that cannot be easily moved (i.e., swing sets, jungle gyms, etc.).
 - 2. The equipment should be located in the rear of the house.
 - 3. The overall size of the play equipment should be in proportion to the site (i.e., not dominate or stand as the primary feature of the lot).
 - 4. Play equipment must be properly maintained.

12. POOLS

- A. Above ground pools are prohibited.
- B. There are two types of pools that are acceptable:
 - 1. children's wading pools (those that can be emptied at night and do

- not exceed 18 inches in depth and whose surface area does not exceed 36 sq. feet);
2. in-ground pools that are more than 18 inches in depth and whose surface area exceeds 36 sq. feet.
- C. Applications are required for all pools, with the exception of children's wading pools.
- D. The size of a pool should be based on the lot size, be in reasonable proportion to the house, and conform to Anne Arundel County building codes.
- E. A 6-foot solid privacy fence compatible with the style of the dwelling is required to enclose the pool and other related facilities. Approval of the fence is contingent upon the completion of the pool. An application for fence approval should be submitted at the same time as the one for the pool.
- F. Pools must be located behind the house.
- G. All applications must include site plan showing the location and dimensions of the pool, other equipment, fences, etc., in relation to the property line, other dwellings and identifiable landmarks.
- H. Two-step approval process:
1. Approval of the GENERAL CONCEPT and PLAN (Paragraph G above) DOES NOT PROVIDE FINAL AUTHORIZATION for the construction.
 2. Final approval will be granted only when the resident submits a second application stating that there are no changes required by the County or informing AECC of any changes required by the County that differ from the original drawings, measurements, etc.

13. TOOL & STORAGE SHEDS

- A. Applications are required for all tool and storage sheds.
- B. Applications must contain the following provisions:
1. proposed location of storage/shed in relation to the house and property lines;
 2. picture or detailed drawing that includes building dimensions, style and location of door(s);
 3. list of materials to be used, including:
 - a. color of exterior and trim;
 - b. type of exterior material (vinyl siding, plywood, etc.);
 - c. roofing materials.

- C. Storage sheds must be located behind the house where they will be least visible from the street and by neighbors.
- D. Storage sheds may be constructed with siding that matches the house.
- E. Paint on the shed must match or blend with the house.
- F. Storage sheds must be maintained in good condition.
- G. It is the homeowner's responsibility to secure any and all permits required by Anne Arundel County.

14. MAINTENANCE & WOODPILES

- A. As required by the HOA Bylaws and Covenants, lot owners are to maintain their lot and all improvements thereon in good order and repair.
- B. All plantings and gardening areas are to be properly maintained at all times, both environmentally and aesthetically. All dead plantings are to be removed as soon as possible.
- C. All woodpiles must be stacked and maintained in good order. Woodpiles must be located in the least conspicuous place on the lot and preferably in the back. Woodpiles are not permitted in front of the house or on driveways. Woodpiles must not be stacked or stored immediately adjacent to any portion of the house.
- D. All trash, trash receptacles and recycle bins must be stored out of view from the street.
- E. Compost piles must be contained and inconspicuously located in the rear of the lot behind the house. All compost piles are to be properly maintained to avoid unpleasant odors. (Note: Composting large amounts of grass clippings will produce matted, slimy, odorous conditions that can be avoided by using a mulching blade on the lawn mower and recycling the clippings back into the lawn. For further information contact the Maryland Department of Agriculture.)