

Springfield Oaks
Homeowners Association
Architectural Standards
October 1997

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE

The Architectural Standards for Springfield Oaks maintain the integrity of the original community design and enhance the quality of life within Springfield Oaks by protecting the property values, health, and safety of all residents. The *Standards* serve not as inviolate rules, but as guides for decision-making by the Springfield Oaks Homeowners Association's Architectural Review Committee. Decisions regarding all modifications or additions not expressly authorized by the *Standards* will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Prior to beginning any exterior modification or addition, homeowners must complete and submit an application form accompanied by the plans and specifications to the Springfield Oaks Homeowners Association's Architectural Review Committee, as set forth in the *Declaration of Covenants: Conditions and Restrictions, Article V*. The Architectural Review Committee must review all proposed exterior changes or modifications that require approval or are not expressly authorized.

Homeowners should submit the required application form as soon as they decide to make an exterior change that may require approval. In all cases, the application form should be submitted no later than 60 days prior to the scheduled start date, because the *Declaration of Covenants: Conditions and Restrictions*, grants the Architectural Review Committee 60 days to act on an application. The Springfield Oaks architectural application form is in addition to any state or local building approvals required by Code or Ordinance. For example, plans for the construction of decks, patios, sheds, and other structures must meet Fairfax County building codes, and appropriate building permits must be obtained before beginning any construction. All projects must be completed in a timely manner.

Please note that throughout this document the acronym "ARC" stands for the Architectural Review Committee and "SOHOA" stands for Springfield Oaks Homeowners Association.

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B. GENERAL DESIGN CRITERIA

The ARC of the SOHOA specifically considers the general design criteria delineated below in evaluating a proposed modification.

1. Design Compatibility

Design Compatibility requires that the proposed modification be compatible with the architectural characteristics of the applicant's home, adjoining houses, and neighborhood setting. For example, its architectural style, quality of workmanship, scale, use of color, materials, and design and construction details must be similar to existing nearby homes.

2. Location

The proposed modification must not adversely affect the neighborhood. Such problems may arise with disruptions of the natural topography or changes in the rate or direction of storm water run-off.

3. Scale

The size of the proposed modification must be proportionate to the adjacent structures and surroundings.

4. Color

Continuity of design requires using the same or compatible materials and colors as those used in the original construction.

5. Workmanship

Proposed modifications must be completed as specified, be aesthetically acceptable, and require normally expected maintenance only. Should there be a question of workmanship, the applicant is responsible for any necessary corrections.

6. Timing

The proposed modification must be completed in a timely manner in order to minimize safety hazards and the possibility that continued construction will constitute a nuisance under the *Declaration of Covenants: Conditions and Restrictions*. All

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applications must include the estimated start and completion dates. If the time period is considered unreasonable, the ARC may disapprove the application.

C. APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

All completed applications should be submitted to:

Sequoia Management, Inc.
13998 Parkeast Circle
Chantilly, Virginia 20151-2283
(703) 803-9641 ext. 3002 / Fax (703) 968-0936

The application will be forwarded to the ARC for review. If the application is complete, the review process will begin. If not, the homeowner will be contacted for additional information. The ARC has sixty (60) days from the date of receipt to review an application or respond to a homeowner requesting additional information. The decision of the ARC will be sent by letter to the applicant's address. Failure of the ARC to act upon any request within 60 days from the day Management receives a completed application, shall result in the request being automatically approved.

D. APPEAL PROCEDURE

Any applicant receiving an adverse decision by the ARC regarding a proposed modification may appeal that adverse decision to the Board of Directors (Board) of the SOHOA. The Board will decide in favor of the applicant if:

- proper procedures were not followed during the administrative review process;
- the decision was arbitrary and lacked a rational basis; or
- the applicant persuades the Board to amend the *Standards* in the applicant's favor.

To initiate the appeals procedure, applicants or other affected residents must submit a written request for an appeal within 10 days of the applicant receiving the ARC decision. The appeal will be referred to the Board of Directors for review at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.

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E. ENFORCEMENT

Compliance with the *Declaration of Covenants: Conditions and Restrictions* and the *Architectural Standards* is the responsibility of each homeowner. When violations are noted, either by complaint or inspection, the homeowner is notified and requested to take corrective action within a reasonable amount of time. If compliance is not met, a Due Process Hearing is held to determine the proper enforcement action to be taken, which may involve charges being assessed against the homeowner. (See Resolution 2, Guidelines for Enforcing Rules and Regulations, for a detailed explanation of SOHOA's enforcement procedures.)

II. MODIFICATIONS THAT MAY REQUIRE AN APPLICATION

A. AIR CONDITIONERS AND HEAT PUMPS

An application is **not** required for:

- Replacing an existing and comparable unit in the same location.

The following requires an ARC application:

- Any unit relocated or one that differs significantly in size.
- Window air conditioner units or window units of any kind, which will be permitted only under rare circumstances and then only temporarily.

The application should include a site plan and specifications for the proposed modifications.

B. ANTENNAS (OTHER THAN TELEVISION) AND CLOTHESLINES

The following requires an ARC application:

- Installation of wiring, antennae, and any other device to be attached to the exterior of any building (other than for television).

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- Clotheslines, which will be permitted on the exterior of any dwelling or on any common area only under rare circumstances and then only temporarily.

The application should include a picture with dimensions, colors, and details pertaining to the modification. (See **M. SATELLITE DISHES, MMDS, AND TELEVISION ANTENNAS** for standards pertaining to television.)

C. AWNINGS

The following requires an ARC application:

Any awning intended to be a permanent fixture.

The application should include a plat plan and a description of the modification.

D. DECKS

All decks require an ARC application. Applications must comply with the following conditions:

- Request for approval must include a site plan and specifications that meet Fairfax County building codes.
- A drawing must be submitted with both a plan view and cross-section with dimensions of the structure.
- Upper and lower decks must be constructed with pressure treated lumber.
- Upper and lower decks should match existing decks in overall appearance.
- Decks should not extend farther than twelve feet from the back wall of the dwelling and should not be closer than one (1) foot to any common wall separating townhouses.
- Privacy screening may not exceed six (6) feet in height and must be constructed of pressure treated wood to match the deck.
- No deck on the middle level may have an overhead structure.

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E. DOORS AND WINDOWS

An application is **not** required for:

- Replacement of doors and windows that match the color and style of the existing doors and windows.

The following requires an ARC application:

- Doors or windows that differ in color or style from those originally installed.
- Storm windows.
- Plastic coverings, which will be permitted on the exterior of doors or windows only in rare circumstances and then only temporarily.

The application should include a detailed picture and discuss the dimensions, style, and color of the proposed modification (see **R. STORM AND SCREEN DOORS**).

F. EXTERIOR LIGHTING

Lighting styles should be uniform in the front of the property. Colonial type lighting is the preferred style, with finishes being brass, antique brass, Verde, and wrought iron. Security lighting in the rear of the property is acceptable if it does not interfere with another homeowner or property and does not exceed 150 watts.

An application is **not** required for:

- Replacement of front lighting with the same style as the builder originally installed.
- Installation of low voltage lighting that does not exceed 18 inches in height, two (2) feet apart, with all wiring out of view.

The following requires an ARC application:

- Lighting that differs from that which is existing.
- Security lighting in the front or side of the dwelling.

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- Low voltage lighting that exceeds 18 inches in height.
- Any other lighting not in compliance with the above-mentioned standards.

The application should include a detailed picture and site plan discussing the location, size, wattage, color, and style for the proposed modification.

G. EXTERIOR OBJECTS

An application is **not** required for:

Door knockers, security viewers, temporary holiday decorations, and brass kickplates.

All exterior objects introduced into the exterior of the dwelling require an ARC application.

- Exterior objects that require an application include but are not limited to: fountains, birdfeeders, sculptures, figurines, statues, and items attached to the house (such as flagpoles).

The application should include a picture illustrating the color, size, and location of the object(s).

H. EXTERIOR PAINTING

An application is **not** required for:

- Repainting with the existing colors.

All exterior color changes require an ARC application. All such modifications must comply with the following conditions:

- New colors must be compatible with neighboring siding and roof colors.
- New colors must be compatible with neighboring properties and their color combinations.

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- Painting will be required if 20% or more bare wood or blistering paint is visible or signs of rot or decay are showing on any part of the townhouse.

The application should include samples of the paint colors and the finishes to be used.

I. FENCES

All fences require an ARC application. The application should include a site plan identifying the dimensions of the fence and must comply with the following conditions:

- Fences must be located in the rear or on the side of the property and must follow the property line.
- No fences are permitted forward of the front door sidewalk for end units.
- No fences of any type are permitted in the front yard.
- Material must be of pressure treated wood (i.e., southern pine or cedar). No fences may be of wire, plastic, lattice, or rope.
- The style must be the same as the builder initially installed.
- The style must be board-on-board construction with a top rail cap.
- Vertical boards may not extend above the rail cap and must be squared to the railcap.
- The minimum height is six (6) feet and the maximum height is seven (7) feet depending on the grade of the rear property.
- Only natural wood color will be permitted on the exterior surfaces. No stains or paints.

J. GATES

All gates require an ARC application. The application should include a plat that provides dimensions and must comply with the following conditions:

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- All gates must be the same style and material as those installed by the builder.
- The maximum width is three (3) feet.
- Gate hardware must be unobtrusive and blend in with the existing design.
- Only natural wood color will be permitted on the exterior surfaces. No stains or paints.

K. LANDSCAPING

An application is **not** required for the following:

- Natural color stone, as a ground cover, that does not exceed 20% of the ground cover on the front property.
- Landscape of natural materials of wood or rock. Wood borders that do not exceed four (4) inches in height; stone borders that are less than 12 inches in height; wood, concrete, or plastic edging that does not exceed four (4) inches in height; and black rolled top edging should not exceed the top of the rolled edge.
- Replacements or changes made to the existing foundation plantings.
- Flower gardens that are less than 20 square feet.

The following requires an ARC application:

Plans for major landscaping (in either of the front or rear of the property) in which more than **50%** of the existing shrubbery will be disturbed.

- If more than 25% of the open space will be replaced with ground cover such as stone, mulch, or anything other than turf.
- Any trees to be installed on the property.
- Any changing of the existing grade of the property.

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The application should include a site plan and a detailed description of the materials and/or methods to be used. Plant materials will be reviewed with an emphasis on their overall mature size to ensure that they mesh with the scale of the neighboring properties.

L. PATIOS

An application is **not** required for:

- Patios that are located in the rear of the property and are at ground level, with dimensions that are less than 12 feet deep and 14 feet wide.
- Patios made of brick, slate, flagstone, concrete, or fieldstone.

Patios must not create a drainage problem for the adjacent property.

M. SATELLITE DISHES, MMDS, AND TELEVISION ANTENNAS

An application is not required for the installation of satellite dishes, MMDS (wireless cable), or broadcast television antennas, because federal law prevents homeowner associations from imposing application requirements on those seeking to install such items. However, SOHOA requires **notification** of the installation of such items in all cases. Whether prior notification is required depends on whether the item and its placement on the house meets the various conditions laid out in this section of the *Standards*.

Satellite dish systems, MMDS, or broadcast television antennas that **do not meet the conditions** require that SOHOA be notified **at least seven (7) days prior** to the item's installation. SOHOA will work on an expedited basis with all homeowners who may not be able to comply with all of the conditions.

Satellite dishes, MMDS, or broadcast television antennas **that do meet the conditions** require that SOHOA be notified **no later than 30 days after its installation**.

Prior notification is **not** required for Satellite dish antennas, MMDS, or broadcast television antennas that meet the following conditions:

- Satellite dish antennas with a diameter of less than one meter (39.37").

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- Items must be mounted on the rear of houses or in the rear yard except when such locations prevent adequate signal reception—in which case SOHOA must receive prior notification.
- Items must be positioned so that they cannot be seen from the front of the house except when such locations prevent adequate signal reception—in which case SOHOA must receive prior notification.
- Satellite dishes must be mounted so that the dish antenna does not extend above the highest point of the roof, on the rear side of the house, and MMDS and broadcast television antennas must be mounted no higher than 12 feet above the highest point of the roof, except when such locations prevent adequate signal reception—in which case SOHOA must receive prior notification.
- Satellite dish antennas must be of a dark color—painted dark if necessary—to minimize their visual impact on the home and surrounding property.
- All wiring must be tightly secured to the home in areas where it runs along the exterior of the home. Efforts should be made to run wiring along the trim, under the siding, or behind the downspout to minimize its visual impact on the home and surrounding property.

Notifications must provide the following information:

- A plat of the property showing the location of the satellite dish antenna, MMDS, or broadcast television antenna on the house.
- Pictures or drawings of the satellite dish antenna, MMDS, or broadcast television antenna, including dimensions and mounting details.
- The color of the satellite dish antenna, its components, and the house siding, roof, and trim.
- *For prior notification only*, any specific conditions that cannot be met, the reasons for any non-compliance, and the proposed solution that minimizes the problem caused by virtue of any non-compliance.

N. SHEDS

All sheds require and an ARC application.

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Request for approval must include completed plans and building specifications. Sheds have the potential to significantly affect the surrounding property values, and will therefore be subject to special scrutiny.

- Shed height may not exceed the fence height.
- Shed dimensions should not exceed five (5) feet wide and six (6) feet long.
- Sheds constructed from pressure treated wood should match the existing color of the fence or dwelling.
- Metal sheds must be painted to match the color of the siding of the townhouse.

O. SHUTTERS, GUTTERS, AND DOWNSPOUTS

An application is **not** required for:

Replacement shutters, gutters, and downspouts that are of the same general appearance and the same color as those originally installed by the builder.

The following requires an ARC application:

- Permanently removing the shutters.
- Introducing a size or style that differs from the existing items.
- Color changes (see **H. EXTERIOR PAINTING**).

The application should include pictures of the proposed changes with the style, dimensions, and material to be reviewed along with a start and completion date.

P. SKYLIGHTS

An application is **not** required for:

- Skylights that are located in the rear of the dwelling.
- Skylights that are two (2) feet by four (4) feet or smaller in size.

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Q. SPAS AND HOT TUBS

All spas and hot tubs require an ARC application. The application should include a plat showing the dimensions of the spa or hot tub, exterior finish, color of the cover, and any decking or screening.

R. STORM AND SCREEN DOORS

An application is **not** required for:

- Storm and screen doors that are full view (70% glass), are made of metal or wood, and are free of any grille work.
- Storm and screen doors that match the color of the front door or the paint trim color of each townhouse.

S. TRELLISES

An application is **not** required for:

- Trellises that measure less than five (5) feet in height and three (3) feet in width.
- Trellises that are of a color conducive to the existing background of their location.
- Trellises made of wood or plastic.
- All trellises must be attached flush to a structure and may not project more than four (4) inches from the structure.
- No freestanding structure or arbors will be permitted.

T. STORAGE OF TRASH AND RECYCLING

Trash and recycling should be stored inside homes until the materials may be placed at the curb for pick up.

If **stored outside**, however, the following conditions must be met:

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- Trash must be collected in plastic bags (this is in accordance with the AAA contract) and must be placed in containers specifically manufactured to hold trash. These containers must be closed tightly and stored up against the house. Trash may be stored on the upper deck only as long as odors do not emanate from the container.
- Items for the recycling bin must be rinsed with water, and the bin must be placed up against the house. Recycling may be stored on the upper deck only as long as odors do not emanate from the bin.

U. STORAGE OF ITEMS IN FRONT AND SIDE YARDS

No items may be stored in front or side yards, unless stored out of sight. Otherwise all items should be removed from these areas when not in use.

III. MAINTENANCE OF PROPERTY

Lawns, planting beds, and natural areas require regular maintenance to protect the property values and safety of all guests and residents. Conditions including but not limited to the following will be considered a violation of the SOHOA's *Declaration of Covenants: Conditions and Restrictions*:

- Lawns in excess of seven (7) inches in height and untrimmed grass around planting beds and trees.
- Planting beds or lawn areas containing an excessive amount of overgrowth with weeds, dead plants, and fallen leaves.
- Areas that are eroded or flooded and conditions that cause erosion or flooding.
- Shrubs, trees, and other plant material that have become overgrown and obstruct walkways and sidewalks.
- Any dead plant material, support stakes, and beetle bags.

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IV. MAINTENANCE OF DWELLING AND MODIFICATIONS

Members of the SOHOA are responsible for maintaining the exterior of their dwellings and any other structures (*i.e.*, sheds, decks, patios, *etc.*). On their lots, conditions including but not limited to the following will be considered a violation of the SOHOA's *Declaration of Covenants: Conditions and Restrictions*:

- Peeling, fading, or chalking paint on the exterior of the unit.
- Dented metal siding.
- Dented, bent, sagging, missing, or unattached gutters.
- Broken items or items with missing parts (*i.e.*, exterior lighting, railings, house numbers, screens, door knockers, *etc.*).
- Deteriorated materials, structural items, walkways, or driveways.
- Incomplete architectural alterations or modifications.