

## Architectural Review Committee FAQs

### What kinds of changes to my home require ARC approval?

In general all major changes to the exterior of your home require ARC approval. We most commonly receive requests for:

- Fences
- Backyard sheds
- Changing the exterior color of a home
- Building decks and enclosing decks
- Removing trees more than 6 inches in diameter at their base or ornamental native trees greater than 3 inches in diameter at their base, unless they are within 10 feet of a house or another large tree.
- Awnings
- Driveway expansions
- Permanently installed playsets
- Gazebos and pergolas

### What kinds of changes to my home do NOT require ARC approval?

- Repainting the exterior of a home without changing colors
- Landscape changes that do NOT involve construction of structures more than 4 feet high, altering water drainage, or removing large trees (see Section 20.6 of the WHOA Handbook for details).
- Landscaping that does not include planting a "living fence" or tall hedgerow that may impact on either your neighbor's property or traffic visibility.
- Repairs to fences, railings, trim boards, windows, shutters etc. as long as repairs do not change the style, color, or major dimensions of the structure.
- Waste/recycle can enclosures that comply with ARC's design guidelines (see examples at end of this document).
- Removing Bradford pear or Leyland cypress trees, or other trees that are dead, significantly damaged by natural causes, or whose trunk is within 10 ft of the foundation of your house or of other large trees (see Q&A on page 5 of this document for details).
- Temporary structures (e.g., seasonal greenhouses) that will be in place for less than 6 months per year.

### Common questions about the submission process:

#### How do I contact the ARC if I have questions?

The ARC encourages you to discuss your project in advance to ensure that your application is complete. The ARC can be contacted by email at: [arc@woodlakecommunity.com](mailto:arc@woodlakecommunity.com).

#### What do I need to submit to ARC?

Completely fill out the ARC Architectural Change form. This form can be found on the Woodlake web site  
(<http://www.woodlakecommunity.com/woodlake/index.php/contact/architectural-review>).

One copy of the completed form and all additional materials must be submitted

A completed house color and/or material (i.e., roof covering, applied siding, etc.) change application will contain:

- Manufacturer paint chips and or color samples. For changes to siding, trim, shutter, and/or door color(s), specify colors for all four house elements regardless of whether or not any particular element is changing color, and provide paint chips for those elements that are changing color. Up to 3 color schemes may be submitted, of which all, some, or none may be approved.
- Signatures of all abutting neighbors as well as neighbors who may easily view the changes from their own property, confirming they have been notified of the plans for the proposed project.

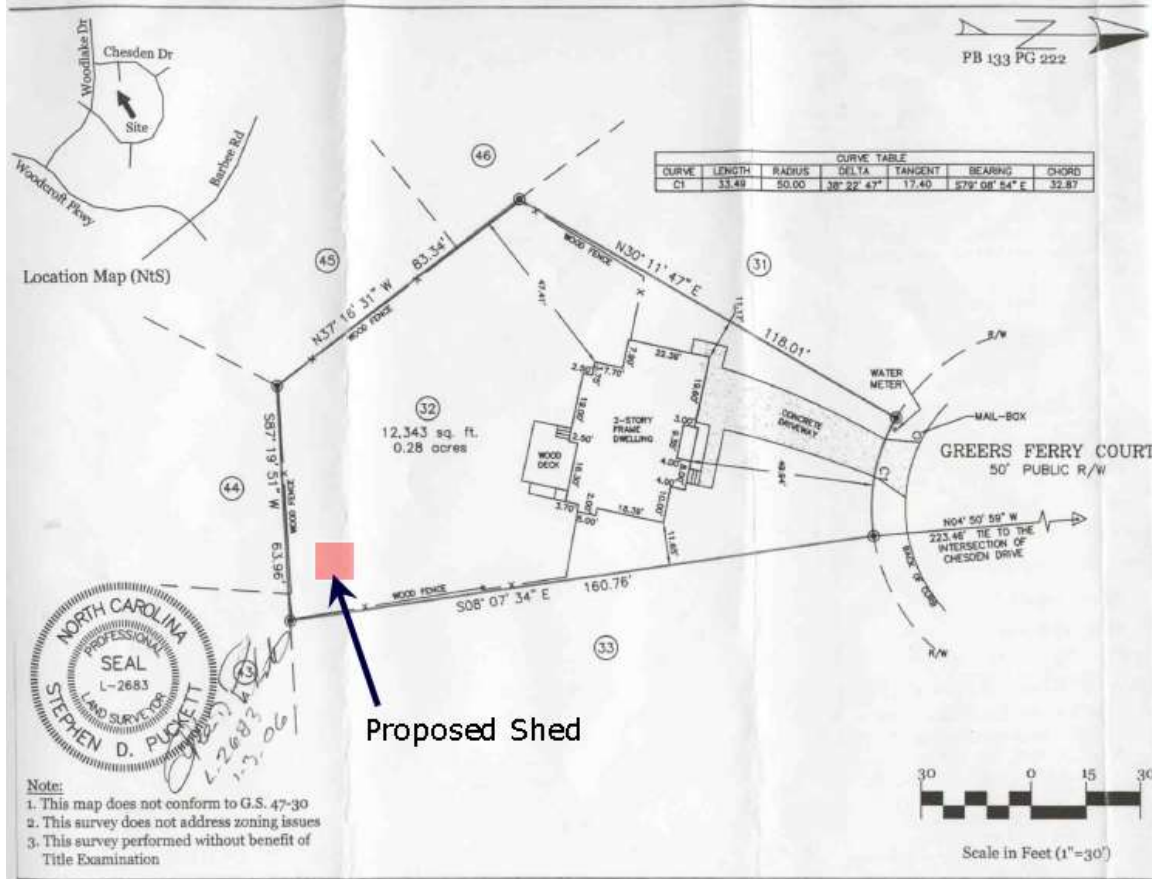
A completed application for architectural changes will contain:

- Project drawings showing plan (from above) and elevation (from each side) views drawn to scale of proposed structures, locations of proposed landscape alterations, and design style. All diagrams must be neatly drawn to scale and accurately reflect the finished appearance.
- A plat (plan view of lot) or foundation survey drawn to scale showing the location of existing structures and landscaping, as well as the proposed changes. The proposed changes may be neatly hand-drawn on the plat.
- Manufacturer color swatches and/or paint chips.
- Signatures of all abutting neighbors as well as neighbors who may easily view the changes from their own property, confirming they have been notified of the plans for the proposed project.

### **What is a plat?**

It is a graphical, scale representation of your property prepared by a surveyor. This is also known as a foundation survey (see example below). You may have received a plat with the closing paperwork when you purchased your house.

You should map your proposed change onto a photocopy, and make one copy of this annotated plat to include with your proposal package. The purpose of the plat is so that we can assess how your addition impacts your property and your neighbors. We look for potential encroachments and easements and determine which neighbors will be most affected by your proposed project.



The Plat for 8 Greers Ferry Court with position of proposed shed clearly indicated.

**When is a plat (foundation survey) required?**

Because you need to map in the location of your structure, a plat of your lot MUST be included in ALL architectural review proposals with the sole exception of those only seeking a color change.

**What if I can't find my plat/foundation survey?**

You may be able to get a hard copy from the Durham Register of Deeds.

200 East Main Street Ground Floor,  
 Old Courthouse Durham, NC 27701  
 Phone: 919-560-0480 FAX: 919-560-0497  
 Hours: 8:30 AM-5:00 PM

However, Durham has on-line records from which you can obtain a rough plot plan that is suitable for most architectural review applications at the following web site:  
[http://maps2.roktech.net/durhamnc\\_gomaps/#](http://maps2.roktech.net/durhamnc_gomaps/#).

**What kind of diagram should I submit?**

Please submit as detailed a diagram as possible that shows both foundation and elevation views of your addition. This diagram should be to scale and should include dimension measurements. If you are employing a contractor for your addition, they should be able to provide you with a site plan for the project with this information. Hand drawn sketches must be neatly drawn to scale and accurately reflect the finished appearance.

**How many neighbors need to sign?**

Generally, any neighbor who can readily see the whole of the proposed change from their property must sign that they have been informed of the proposal. Remember to include “back door” neighbors and neighbors across the street or cul-de-sac that can see the proposed changes. A maximum of 6 signatures is required. If more than 6 neighbors can readily see the proposed change, then signatures from 6 most relevant neighbors should be obtained. Signatures confirm notification of the plan for the proposed project, but do NOT signify approval of the project.

Neighbors who are renters do not need to sign. Please indicate this status on your application.

**I can’t track down a neighbor for the signature. What should I do?**

If a neighboring home is vacant, indicate this on your application. If you cannot contact your neighbor, contact ARC and they will provide you with a form for making three attempts to contact the neighbor

**When does the ARC meet?**

The ARC meets once a month. Meeting times are posted in the ARC section of the Woodlake website and on the bulletin board at the front door of the Clubhouse.

**How far in advance should I submit my forms?**

All requested information must be submitted by the Tuesday prior to the meeting to ensure consideration at the next meeting.

**Can I come to the ARC meeting?**

Yes! You are more than welcome to attend the meeting to present your proposal or to comment on a neighbor’s proposal but please indicate such on the application form or contact us at [arc@woodlakecommunity.com](mailto:arc@woodlakecommunity.com) to let us know that you want to attend..

**Where can I get more information about the Woodlake regulations?**

The Woodlake Handbook contains all regulations that the ARC uses. You can access the Handbook through the WHOA website: [www.woodlakecommunity.com/Forms/handbook.pdf](http://www.woodlakecommunity.com/Forms/handbook.pdf)

If you would like a new hard copy, e-mail: WHOA Board of Directors  
[board@woodlakecommunity.com](mailto:board@woodlakecommunity.com)

or call: CAS, Inc.  
919-403-1400

**My request was denied. Can I appeal?**

If a homeowner is not satisfied with the decision reached by the ARC after resubmission, the homeowner may appeal the decision by writing to the Board of the Directors to request a hearing. The request must explain the basis for the appeal and include any special circumstances and all relevant project documentation including that from any proposed contractors that the board should consider if an exemption from ARC rules is requested. This appeal should be emailed to [board@woodlakecommunity.com](mailto:board@woodlakecommunity.com).

**Common questions about proposed changes to your home:****I want to landscape my yard and remove a few trees. Do I need ARC approval?**

Except as provided in Section 20.6.2 of the WHOA handbook, removal of large trees requires ARC approval (see the next question for additional explanation). When submitting an application for removal of trees, include a plot plan showing the location of trees to be removed, the reason for their removal, and any other pertinent factors (e.g., plans to plant replacement trees at the same or an alternative location, or other landscaping plans). Trees to be removed should be marked with surveyor tape or brightly colored ribbon.

Installation of planting beds (annuals, perennials, etc.) and removal of tree branches and shrubs do not require prior approval

**Can some trees be removed without ARC approval?**

The following listed trees are exempt from ARC approval requirements. However, the homeowner must notify ARC and the Grounds Committee by e-mail at least 72 hours prior to the removal of any planned removal of a tree larger than 6 inches in diameter.

- Dead tree (please take pictures),
- Tree that has been significantly damaged by natural causes (e.g., an ice storm or a hurricane),
- Tree base is located within 10 feet of a house foundation or other large trees,
- Native ornamental tree (e.g., hollies, dogwood or redbud) with a diameter of less than 3 inches,
- Bradford pear and Leyland cypress trees, or
- Any other tree with a diameter of less than 6 inches.

The notification should include the house address, the number of trees to be removed, the planned removal date, and the basis for the exemption (e.g., significantly damaged by natural causes or within 10 feet of the house). The WHOA has the right to inspect the trees and to prohibit removal if the exemption criteria is not met.

Tree diameters are measured at a point two inches above the ground. Distance from the house is the shortest distance from the tree trunk to any point on the house.

**What are the regulations to build a fence?**

- Fences may not be more than 5 feet in height.
- Fencing cannot extend forward of the rear corner of the home, and also must be within your property.
- Natural wood fencing is encouraged.
- Fencing along lakefront properties is discouraged and will require justification by the homeowner.
- Physically connecting your fence to a neighbor's existing fence is strongly discouraged. If your fence will be physically attached to a neighbor's existing fence, a memorandum of agreement confirming you and your neighbor both agree to the physical connection of the two fences is required.
- Tree removal to accommodate the fence requires ARC approval for any trees that are not dead, not significantly damaged by natural causes, or whose trunk is not within 10' of the foundation of your house.

**Instead of a fence, I want to plant a row of bushes that will grow to form a tall hedge. Do I need ARC approval?**

The ARC considers hedgerows as we do fences and so DO require approval. In considering hedgerows, our greatest concern is that, when fully grown, the plants do not impinge on your neighbor's property.

**What are the regulations on a backyard shed?**

Metal sheds are prohibited. Sheds should be in keeping with the color scheme of your home or of a neutral color.

**What do I need to submit if I'm painting my house?**

Manufacturer sample paint chips for all proposed color changes must be submitted. Most paint projects require color chips for the house, the trim and shutters and the front door.

**Do I need ARC approval before installing a waste/recycle container screen?**

Section 15.1.3 of the WHOA Handbook requires that trash, yard waste, and recyclables containers be stored out of direct view from the street. Several options exist to comply with this requirement:

- If possible, the best option is to store your bins in the garage or in a fenced yard.
- If a constructed partition is to be used, ARC approval is not required if commercially available panels (such as wooden or vinyl lattice or fencing panels) or decking boards are used. Panels should be at least 36 inches wide and 48 -60 inches high, should be attached to 4x4-inch posts, and should be similar in style to existing structures that are nearby. If the partition is made of wood, it can be stained, painted white or the same color as the house or trim, or left unpainted. Example designs are shown on the following pages.
- If the homeowner wishes to construct a screen using other materials or designs, ARC approval is required. If you have specific questions or concerns about trash can storage, please send an e-mail to ARC regarding design or other issues.

