

Vantage Pointe Homeowner's Association

Architectural Guidelines and Application Procedures

The specifications and general review criteria used by the Architectural Review Board (hereafter abbreviated as ARB) as the basis for their decisions are found in the Vantage Pointe Homeowners' Documents. Owners should receive a copy of the Homeowners' Documents and this Vantage Pointe Architectural Review Application Procedures and Guidelines at the closing of their house. Additional copies may be obtained by request from Morgan's Property Management (919-479-5762).
Revised 4/02.

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It is the responsibility of the applicant to insure complete compliance with all relevant building codes, practices, permits, and licensing requirements.

Application Procedures:

1. **Review the guidelines for project in detail** and be aware of current practices for type of application in community. Prior approval of a given style does not constitute automatic approval; every application is evaluated on a case-by-case basis to assure the full needs of the community are met.
2. **Obtain a city building permit if required** (additions, sheds, decks, driveways in right-of-way, etc.) Your project must be in compliance with the city and ARB guidelines. A copy of the permit must be included with your application or it cannot be approved by the ARB. (Building Inspections/Permits: phone 560-4144/ www.ci.durham.nc.us)
3. **Complete the ARB application form in detail.** Please speak to your neighbors about any change that may ultimately affect them.
4. **Include a copy of the foundation survey, plat, site plan, or reasonable facsimile** that shows the location of the proposed alteration or addition, the existing building, and the property lines with measurements.
5. **Turn in 2 copies of the entire application package** to Morgan's Property Management, P.O. Box 71294, Durham, NC 27722.
6. **Wait for approval from ARB before beginning your project.** The applications are usually reviewed at the monthly ARB meetings; therefore approval may take up to 30 days. If your project requires expedience, special consideration may be given to get approved as quickly as possible. **If your project does not comply with the ARB guidelines, the ARB must take the application to the Homeowners' Association meeting (which meets at least once every three months) to obtain possible approval.** Within 30 days of receipt of your application you will be notified in writing: 1. of the ARB's decision, 2. of an explanation of what you would need to do to comply with the guidelines, **or** 3. that your application would require a decision by the Homeowners' Association.
7. **Complete your project as stated on your approved application.** Additions and garages have one year for completion. All other projects should be completed within 90 days from the Board's approval. Contact Morgan's if you must alter part of your previous plans and wait for approval before proceeding.
8. If your project has not been approved or is not in compliance with the previously approved application, you will be notified in writing and given 30 days in which to comply with the ARB guidelines. If the situation is still not corrected, a follow-up letter will be sent, and within a week you could lose access to the recreational facilities and/or voting privilege for up to 60 days at a time. Depending on the infraction, the issue may be turned over to the city.

Additions (rooms, garages, decks, porches, green houses, sun rooms, etc.):

Considerations/Details: A city permit is required. Location of addition should not have an adverse impact on neighboring properties (including loss of privacy or right of enjoyment) or impair the view of neighbors. Additions should be located to minimize the removal of trees or destruction of natural areas. The ARB may require landscaping to compensate for the removal of vegetation or to soften the addition visually. Changes in grade or drainage must not adversely affect adjacent property; you could be held responsible for damages.

The design should be compatible in scale, massing, character, materials, and color with the original house. The size of the yard should also be considered. New windows and doors should match the house and be located to relate well with existing windows. Roof pitch should match the original roof.

Decks/porches must be constructed with rot-resistant wood and may be stained, painted to match the house, or left to weather naturally. The configuration, detail, and railing design should be of a simple design. Plantings are recommended at post foundations and under low decks to screen structural elements. Modifications to existing decks must provide continuity in detail to original structure.

Application: Read p.2. Also include:

- drawing or photograph of existing structure before proposed changes
- detailed construction drawings to scale, including a full view of the addition (windows, doors, etc.) with elevations as it will look attached to existing structure
- samples of colors and materials, if different from existing building
- landscape plan and plant schedule, if applicable

*Concept drawings or preliminary plans may be submitted for review and comment before more detailed plans are made. If the application is for an extension of an existing deck, and will be identical in construction, including substructure and finished appearance, detailed construction plans need not be included in the application.

Awnings:

Considerations/Details: Awnings should be consistent with the architectural style and scale of the house. The color of the fabric must be compatible with the existing house colors. Any exposed frames must be painted to match the trim or dominant color of the house. Please note that frames must be removed if the awning is removed.

Unacceptable: In most locations, metal, vinyl, or other plastic fabric shade material will not be approved.

Application: Read p. 2. Also include:

- detailed description of the awning, including a sample of the material if possible

Basketball Backboards:

Considerations/Details: On residential property, basketball backboards should be located so as to be visually unobtrusive. Consider the effect that the backboard and its normal use will have on neighbors and their property. The backboard should be kept in good condition.

Application: Not necessary if above criteria are met.

Bus Shelters:

Considerations/Details: Because of the size of the lots in Vantage Pointe, the construction of a bus shelter on an individual lot may be inappropriate. Bus shelters will not generally be approved in order to maintain aesthetic appearance of the neighborhood.

Commercial Signs:

Considerations/Details: No commercial signs, with the exception of “For Sale “ or “ For Rent” signs, no more than two feet in width and three feet in height, shall be erected or maintained on any lot. Such signs are temporary in nature and shall not be held to any set back requirement.

Dog Houses/Dog Runs:

Considerations/Details: Dog houses should be located so as not to be obtrusive. They should be painted to match the house, blend with their immediate surroundings or left to weather naturally.

Dog runs must generally follow the guidelines for fencing. Pre-fab chain-link runs generally will not be approved unless screened by wood fencing or located in a heavily planted area and painted black or green.

Landscaping may be requested to soften the structures visually.

Dog cable runs are acceptable only if they are located in an area so as not to be visually obtrusive.

Application: Read p.2. Also include:

- description of dog house/run to include dimensions, material, colors
- plan showing location of dog house/run/cable to the house and property lines

Driveways:

Considerations/Details: A city permit is required for driveways in right-of-way. Plans must be submitted for driveway expansions, additions, changes, and removal. The size, location, color, and appearance of the driveway should be appropriate for the surroundings and not obtrusive. Material must be either concrete or asphalt and should be consistent or blend well with other driveways on the lot.

Application: Read p. 2. Also include:

- plan showing location of driveway, existing driveway, building and property lines
- material and supporting material (re-bar, etc.) to be used
- landscaping plans if changes are required as a result of driveway plan
- additions to existing driveway have to match i.e. same material

Exterior House Color (change/painting/staining):

Considerations/Details: The following guidelines not only apply to siding of buildings, but also to doors, shutters, trim, windows, etc. Paint must be flat. Selected colors must be harmonious with the other colors used on the structure, e.g. roofing and brick, and must be harmonious with other colors used in the neighborhood. No request for approval is needed to re-use existing approved colors. **Vinyl Siding : see page 10**

Unacceptable: House colors repeated side by side.

Application: Read p. 2. Also include:

- sample color chips of proposed new colors
- description of colors of houses on either side of your house

Fencing:

Considerations/Details: Fencing can detract from the open character of the neighborhood and may have both a visual and physical impact on adjoining property. Whenever possible, alternatives to hard fencing should be used. If the desired end is privacy, consider using shrubbery and landscaping. Small sections of fencing could be used as part of a landscaping plan. Neighbors that surround the property or will have a view of the fencing from their property should be consulted and their concurrence received prior to application in details such as: design, location, material and paint/stain used.

No fence can be higher than 8 '(city regulation), but **4 feet (48 inches) or less is the preferred height.** This height is from the natural grade to the top rail. Fences higher than 4' can sometimes be approved to shield boat, trailer, or dog run. It is preferred that the fence be located even with the rear corners of the house. Exceptions can be made for reasons such as having access to doors, crawl spaces, or water spigots. Every part of the fence (including posts and gates) must be on your own property. It is best, therefore, to construct the fence a few inches inside your property line. Do not construct the fence directly over your property line. (cont'd. on next page)

Fencing (cont'd.)

Fencing should be made of natural-weathering material and should be painted or stained a color consistent with the house or be left to weather naturally. Vinyl-coated wire mesh used to increase security as part of an "open" fence must be placed on the inside of the fence and must be black or black-green or in a place not readily visible from the street. Fencing finished on only one side must be constructed with the finished side facing out. Wherever possible, fences should be located so trees do not need to be removed.

Unacceptable: chain-link or vinyl fencing

Application: Read p. 2. Also include:

- description of fence design including dimensions, material, paint/stain
- location of gates included on your foundation survey or scaled diagram

Landscaping:

Considerations/Details: Landscaping plans should take into consideration the size of the lot, the location of the plants with relationship to landscaping that already exist, the house, and/or other structures, and the neighboring property. Landscaping should be aesthetically pleasing, appropriate to its surroundings, and well-maintained. Every effort should be taken to maintain erosion control and not change the direction of the flow of water run-off from the owner's property to another lot. You could be held responsible for damage to other property.

Vegetable gardens are to be placed in the rear of the property, concealed from view from the street, and are not to exceed 400 square feet.

Low-voltage landscape lighting is acceptable if of low-lumens and accepted by neighbors.

Compost and woodpiles should be placed in a position and to a height that is not obtrusive to view from the street or neighbors.

Structural elements introduced into an open area must not be obtrusive and must be appropriate to their surroundings. Size, scale, color, and material are important criteria for acceptability. Lawn art placed in the front yard should be tasteful and non-offensive in nature. It should blend into landscaping and be proportionally sized.

Removal of trees is addressed on p. 10 of these guidelines.

Retaining walls are addressed on p. 8-9 of these guidelines.

Unacceptable: trees, plants, or structures which obstruct sight lines of vehicular traffic or that are detrimental to neighboring property

Application: Only necessary if landscaping project includes built-in barbecues, arbors, etc. See p. 2. Not necessary if above criteria are met.

Mailboxes:

Considerations/Details: It is preferred that mailboxes be painted to match the color scheme of the house, be stained to blend with natural surroundings, or be a neutral color, such as, black, white, or beige. The height and placement is determined by postal service specifications.

Unacceptable: large stone/brick mortared structures

Application: Not necessary if above criteria are met. If you wish to have a different type of mailbox, you must submit an application for approval. Read p. 2.

Maintenance:

Considerations: All owners are asked to maintain their properties to the best of their abilities. The ARB will accept written complaints concerning maintenance of properties in the neighborhood in an effort to maintain the visual and aesthetic quality of Vantage Pointe. These will be handled on a case-by-case basis for the interest of those involved.

Miscellaneous:

Considerations: There are many alterations and additions that may not have been included specifically in this document. **Refer to Homeowners' Documents (p. 2-6) for items not covered in this document, such as garages, erosion control, clothes lines, building materials, exposed above-ground tanks, outdoor hobbies, animals, and prohibited activities.** In order to prepare an application for approval, refer the ARB guidelines to find the project closest in concept to your project and use it as a guide. You could also ask any of the ARB members for assistance in preparing the application.

Patios/Sidewalks:

Considerations/Details: Patios larger than 5' x 5' will need an application submitted for approval. Patios should be located at the rear of the house or within a fully enclosed area. The size of the patio should be consistent with the size of the house and yard. It should be constructed with natural colored concrete, slate, flagstone, brick, or wood. Patios will be reviewed with respect to their visual impact on adjacent properties.

Sidewalks will need an application for approval, as will all walkways constructed with a form, as these walkways are considered more "permanent." Sidewalks leading from side doors to back yards might be permitted.

Unacceptable: Front sidewalks running parallel to the street

Application: Read p.2 Also include:

- material/color/size/location of project

Play Equipment:

Considerations/Details: Play equipment should be placed in back yards. Considerations should be given to lot size, equipment size, material, design, amount of visual screening, and relationship to neighboring property. Equipment constructed from natural materials is encouraged.

Tree houses are not permitted because of their impact on neighbors and damage to trees.

Playhouses are addressed with storage sheds on p. 9 of these guidelines.

Unacceptable: Skateboard ramps in a residential area

Application: Necessary only for projects not meeting criteria above.

Read p. 2. Also include:

- drawing of your lot with neighboring lots to demonstrate impact
- construction design, material and colors used

Removal of Existing Structures:

Considerations/Details: The removal of any building, major addition, fence, wall, or structural element, which changes the exterior appearance of property, requires an application for approval. The removal of a structure could be an improvement or have a neutral effect. But, sometimes, removal may have an adverse impact. Removal of fencing is encouraged except where the fencing provides necessary visual screening or where it is an integral part of the building design. Removal of such items as basketball backboards, sheds/play houses, dog houses/dog runs, and mailboxes does not need approval as long as the area is restored.

Application: Read p. 2. Also include:

- photograph of existing condition of item to be removed

Retaining Walls:

Considerations/Details: Retaining walls that are 4 feet or higher or walls that do not meet the criteria below will need an application for approval. Retaining walls should be as unobtrusive as possible and built to the minimum height needed to serve their function. Materials may be brick, natural stone, square corner timbers, or concrete, depending on the location and contextual relationship. The ends of the walls should be tapered into the ground rather than abruptly ending in space. If the height of the wall would require a railing to comply with county building codes, the applicant should consider stepping the wall in a terracing effect.

Unacceptable: Generally, rounded landscape timbers will not be approved due to their lack of stability when used to retain earth, the strong horizontal lines created by the juxtaposition of the timbers, and their "Lincoln log" appearance.

Application: Read p. 2. Also include:

- section view showing construction details, materials, colors to be used

Storage Sheds/Play Houses:

Considerations/Details: A city permit is required. Sheds/play houses should have a simple design and should be located behind the house so as not to be visible from the street if possible. The structure should match the architectural details of the building, e.g. colors, material, roofing. When selecting a location for the structure, views from adjacent property must be considered, and the structure must be at least 5 feet in from your property lines. City guidelines may require more distance depending on the size of the structure. Structures located in natural areas may be painted or stained to blend with the background. The ARB may require additional landscaping to screen or visually soften the structure.

Unacceptable: prefabricated metal storage sheds

Application: Read p. 2. Also include:

- description, dimensions, material, and colors of structure
- color of any nearby structure

Spas/Hot Tubs:

Considerations/Details: Spas and hot tubs should be located in the back yard away from adjacent property so that their use, presence, and noise of the mechanical equipment do not adversely affect the adjacent property. They should be an integral part of the deck, patio, or landscaping. They should be screened from adjacent property using landscaping or a wooden fence. Mechanical equipment, pipes, and wiring should be concealed. The understructure of spas/hot tubs set into the above ground decks must be screened.

Applications: Read p. 2. Also include:

- a catalogue clipping, description, color, material, and dimensions of equipment
- a description or drawing of type of screening to be used

Television and Radio Antennae's and Satellite Dishes:

Considerations/Details: No exposed or exterior radio or television or receiving antennae shall be erected, placed or maintained on any part of a lot or upon a structure thereon which shall exceed the height of the trees upon such a lot.

Satellite dishes do not need to be approved as long as they are no larger than three feet in diameter. All satellite dishes must be mounted attached to the house, out of view from the streets of the neighborhood. If an acceptable signal cannot be obtained, please submit your signal verification along with your application for approval for a different location.

Trailers/Boats/Campers/Tents/Temporary Buildings:

Considerations/Details: No house trailers shall be permitted on any lot. Boats, trailers, campers, tents, or temporary building shall not be permitted except in areas where they cannot be viewed from the street. If visibility from street cannot be totally blocked, vegetation or fencing or a combination of both may be required.

Tree/Hedgerow Removal:

Considerations/Details: Every effort should be taken to protect and preserve our trees. No live ornamental trees (e.g. beech, dogwood, redbud) may be removed without approval. No live deciduous or evergreen trees the trunks of which are six or more inches in diameter as measured two feet above grade may be removed without approval. Removal of live trees will be approved if their continued existence would be detrimental, conditions such as, physical intrusion by trees/roots/branches on buildings or other structures in a way that would cause excessive damage, excessive shade, or blocking paths and sights lines from vehicles. Overgrowth may also be considered detrimental. In many cases, the ARB may require replacements.

All natural hedgerows existing at time of purchase of Lot shall be retained except with the consent of the ARB.

Trees/hedgerows damaged by storms or other events or diseased/dead trees may be removed without approval.

Application: Read p.2.

Vinyl Siding:

Considerations/Details: Requests for Vinyl Siding must be approved before installation begins and on pre-existing homes only. Vinyl Siding must have a wood appearance and match the width of the existing wood siding to be acceptable.

Application: Read page 2 also include:

- sample of siding must accompany the request for approval.