

# Stonebridge: Architectural Committee Procedures and Guidelines

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## MISSION STATEMENT

The Stonebridge Community brings together many of the best loved elements found in classic neighborhoods, a soccer field, tennis courts, swimming pools, a club house and plenty of beautiful trees. The Architectural Committee's mission is to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of our community and to maintain the conformity and harmony of the external design with existing community standards.

## ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW AUTHORITY

The Architectural Committee is authorized by the Stonebridge Board of Directors to fulfill a requirement in the Association's Declaration of Covenants and Bylaws. You may obtain a copy on the Stonebridge web site (Contact info: <https://www.StonebridgeHOA.org/need-to-know> ) The purpose of the Architectural Committee is to work with homeowners as they propose changes and improvements to their property. The intent is to encourage homeowners and builders to preserve and enhance the architectural integrity and appearance of the community. These Guidelines can serve as a framework for homeowners as they plan external modifications to their property. The Guidelines are based upon and supported by the Stonebridge Covenants; and are revised by the Architectural Committee when appropriate and are approved by the Stonebridge Board of Directors.

## ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES INTRODUCTION

1. These Architectural Guidelines (Guidelines) embody the spirit/vision of the Stonebridge Community and serve as a framework for the architectural integrity and appearance of the community now and into the future. These Guidelines are the primary method for communicating the need for establishing and maintaining the architectural consistency and diversity for the Stonebridge Community.
2. The current Guidelines have been prepared to assist the homeowners for possible modifications to their existing property. The request for Architectural Approval form is available for homeowners to use. The application is reviewed and decided upon by the Architectural Committee at regularly scheduled meetings. Turn around for a normal application is within 30 days upon receipt of a completed AA request. Additional time may be required if information not originally included is requested from the homeowner.
3. A copy of the request for Architectural Approval is included in the Appendix to these Guidelines, and a downloadable electronic version (PDF format) is accessible through the Stonebridge Community web site (<https://www.stonebridgehoa.org/> or <https://www.StonebridgeHOA.org/need-to-know>). In the site select: HOA Essentials, find Architectural references highlighted in the section under Protective Covenants. It's also available in the last pages of the Stonebridge directory.

## THE ARCHITECTURAL APPROVAL REVIEW PROCESS

1. All improvements / additions / changes must conform to the covenants with attention to Article III; even if an improvement / addition or change is not specifically identified, eg.: awnings, solar panels, etc.
2. The homeowner communicates the project plans for construction, modifications, and/or additions to the Architectural Committee by completing an Architectural Approval form. (copy in the Appendix, also available from the Mgmt. Co. and the Stonebridge web site: <https://www.stonebridgehoa.org/>). If questions arise during preparation of the Application, the homeowner should contact the Architectural Committee.
3. Applicant submits the Architectural Approval form to the Architectural Committee, in care of the Mgmt. Co. by mail, fax, or email.
4. A complete application includes sufficient information to describe what you propose to do. Depending upon the project, the application could include plot renderings, site plan, landscaping plan, floor plans, elevations (front, side, and rear), alternate/special details (e.g., handrails, columns, etc.), and anything else necessary to describe your intention (such as pictures). All applications must be single-sided on 8 ½" x 11" paper.
5. Partial applications (including attachments) cannot be processed by the Architectural Committee. The Mgmt. Co. will inform homeowner that package is incomplete. They'll be held by the Mgmt. Co. until complete application is received.
6. No project for additions, alterations, etc. may be started by the owner without formal Architectural Committee review and approval. It is the sole responsibility of the owner to insure complete compliance with all relevant building practices, code, permits, and licensing requirements.
7. The Architectural Committee will review each proposal and determine if the proposal is 1) approved, 2) approved with conditions, 3) needs to be resubmitted, or 4) disapproved.
8. The homeowner will be notified by the Mgmt. Co. of the Architectural Committee's decision within seven (7) calendar days after the decision was made.
9. The completed project will be reviewed to verify that the project was done as specified in the letter of approval. All projects should normally be completed within 6 months from the start of the project and no later than one year from the date of approval. A new application shall be necessary if the project is not completed within the one-year period.
10. If the application is approved with conditions, the project can commence as approved. If the homeowner disagrees with the decision, they should contact the Architectural Committee to discuss a resolution prior to starting any work. If the homeowner decides to appeal the decision of the Architectural Committee, it must be submitted in writing within 30 days of the notification date and sent to the Board of Directors via the Mgmt. Co.
11. If the application needs to be resubmitted, then either the original application was incomplete or questions arose during the review which could not be answered by the information that was provided. If the homeowner has questions on what is needed, the Architectural Committee should be contacted. The resubmission must be made to the Mgmt. Co. within 30 days of the notification date. If the homeowner does not resubmit within the 30-day period, the application will be treated as withdrawn by the homeowner.
12. If the application is disapproved, the homeowner may submit a new application addressing the identified concerns. If the homeowner does not agree with the decision, the Architectural Committee should be contacted to discuss a resolution prior to starting any work. If the homeowner decides to appeal the

decision of the Architectural Committee, it must be submitted in writing within 30 days of the notification date and sent to the Board of Directors via the Mgmt. Co.

13. Neighbors may comment and present views about the requested improvements in their area. Signatures must be obtained from all property owners having common lot lines with the applicant and all property owners who would normally view the improvement from their property. The signatures indicate that they have been notified by the homeowner of the proposed improvement, but do not indicate that each neighbor necessarily agrees with what is proposed. If the neighbor has concerns that cannot be resolved with the applicant, they are encouraged to work with the Architectural Committee to determine if it is possible to alleviate these concerns.
14. Property owners are cautioned that if buildings and other property improvements infringe on easements, buffers, or access to right-of-ways, they are subject to removal.
15. Failure to follow Architectural Committee Guidelines and/or comply with the approved plan may result in a request to remove/correct out-of-compliance modifications/constructions.
16. Each Architectural Approval request will be examined on its own merit.
17. No construction shall begin without the written approval from the Architectural Committee via the Mgmt. Co.
18. Allow enough time for processing and approval by the Architectural Committee in the construction planning.

## **ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES**

1. This section provides guidelines regarding exterior architectural situations frequently encountered in the Stonebridge Community. Generally acceptable methods for achieving the required objectives and standards are indicated. These are suggested methods rather than mandatory methods. In addition, specific things not permitted in our community are included. Merely following the guideline does not guarantee automatic approval of the application: all applications must follow the approval process described above.
2. In general, any permanent structure needs to have an application submitted. We could not envision everything that could be put on a home or in a backyard. Unless specifically indicated otherwise, an application should be submitted even if you are fairly certain if it would be approved.

### **Boat, Trailer and RV Storage**

1. Based upon Covenant Article XIV: Parking: (See Appendix)
2. This standard seeks to define how the Architectural Committee interprets the term "screened area" and what type of structure will be approved as a screen.
3. The Architectural Committee must approve the structure for screening. The boat, trailer, RV or other items being screened must not be able to be seen from the street or by surrounding neighbors.
4. A structure built for a screen requires Architectural Committee approval.
5. Ideally screen structures should be constructed of treated wood.
6. Examples of structures that are approved are in the Appendix.
7. Recommended construction details:
  - a. All posts should be 4"x4" or 6"x6".
  - b. All holes should be appropriate depth to secure proper stability of the structure.
  - c. The sides should be constructed so as not to allow the screened property to be visible through the side
  - d. Lattice will not be approved if the screened property is visible.
  - e. The height of the structure should allow for it to be as high as the property being screened.
  - f. The gate should be attached to the structure so that it is sturdy and will not sag.
  - g. If a roof will be on the structure, it should match the roof of the house on the property.
  - h. Lumber should be treated and of grade #1 or #2.
8. Include in the request the plot plan to indicate the exact location of the structure in relation to the house and property lines.

### **Decks**

1. Based upon Covenant Article III: Site and Plan Approval: (See Appendix)
2. The lower portion of all decks can be enclosed with lattice. If lattice is used, it should be wood or vinyl and, if colored, complement the house colors. Lattice should be framed between structural members and may be held off ground up to approximately 6" to prevent discoloration from contact with soil.

### **Detached Structures**

1. Based upon Covenant Article III: Site and Plan Approval: (See Appendix)
2. All detached garages, carports, sheds and detached buildings should be consistent with the overall design and color scheme of the house. Detailing should be consistent with the design, material, and colors of the house. Plans for the proposed structure should show all views, with all dimensions clearly marked. Landscape plan should be included.
3. Flat roofs are not permitted.
4. All detached structures are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

## **Driveways, Parking Pads & Walkways**

1. A portion of Covenant Article IV states that "All driveways shall be paved (concrete or asphalt) from street to each house including parking areas. An exception for gravel drive-ways will be allowed, at the sole discretion of the Architectural Committee, provided the apron from the street to the property line is paved with asphalt or concrete and is the same width as the driveway."
2. Driveways and vehicle parking pads should be paved with concrete or asphalt; note: alternative surfaces (driveway drainage blocks) may be considered. Any type of pad other than naturally colored concrete should be reviewed and approved by the Architectural Committee on a case-by-case basis. The aggregate base, thickness, reinforcement, etc. shall comply with good construction practices.
3. Concrete pads adjacent to existing driveways are acceptable for parking purposes and are subject to above requirements.
4. All driveway additions or alterations must be reviewed and approved by the Architectural Committee.
5. Parking pads should be the same type of material as the driveway adjoining the parking pad.
6. Close attention should be paid to structure placement, setbacks to avoid encroachment onto buffer areas, association owned common property and neighboring lots. A plot plan shall be included with the application clearly identifying the proposed locations with distances to property lines shown.
7. Minimum information required at submittal:
  - a. Plot plan showing location of driveway or parking pad.
  - b. Elevation drawings showing the measurements of the parking pad, such as length and width, and any landscaping that will be added along the perimeter.
  - c. Detailed description of materials to be used.

## **Fences**

1. Based upon Covenant Article III: Site and Plan Approval; and Article X. (See Appendix)
2. Fences can serve many purposes. Careful consideration should be given to the fencing concept and execution, and shall be consistent with the need for fencing and the open character of the community. If there is a requirement for privacy, the homeowner should consider landscaping. However, the Architectural Committee will review applications for "privacy" if the homeowner feels that privacy fencing is their only option. Privacy fences will be reviewed on an individual basis. "Open" style fencing is preferred. All fence details, including reason for fencing, and location must be reviewed and approved by the Architectural Committee. A plot plan should be included to portray the location of the proposed fence. Examples of acceptable fence types and details are in the Appendix.
3. All applications for fences should also include the following:
  - a. A separate signed acknowledgement is required from neighbors if proposed fencing is to tie into their existing fence.
  - b. Homeowner fences should not extend onto Stonebridge Community common property.
4. To maintain the open style, fences should have a minimum 2" spacing between pickets.
5. Side and rear fence height should not exceed 5'-0" (4'-0" is strongly recommended).
6. Materials that are acceptable for fences are: treated wood, black aluminum, welded wire for horizontal wood fences mounted on the inside of the yard and in certain situations black chain link wire.
7. Solid wood privacy fences are not allowed except under special situations where it is necessary to screen out excessive noise from a major street that runs beside a property or other special situations that the Architectural Committee should approve.
8. Choose from the pre-approved fencing styles in the Appendix.
  - a. Curved or scalloped Semi-private/Shadowbox-2" spacing-wood/composite materials.
  - b. Black composite/aluminum
  - c. Horizontal wood with welded wire attached on the inside of the posts.
9. Construction details:
  - a. All posts should be 4"x4" or 6"x6" for wood fence construction.
  - b. All holes should be appropriate depth to secure proper stability of the fence.
  - c. The finished side of the fence should face the adjoining lots.

- d. All pickets should be vertically plumb, follow the contour of the ground and be parallel to the vertical lines of the house.
  - e. Prefabricated fences are prohibited with the exception of black aluminum fencing.
  - f. Lumber should be treated and of grade #1 or #2.
10. Minimum information required at submittal:
    - a. Plot plan to indicate the exact location of the fence in relation to the house and property lines.
    - b. Detailed description of material to be used (lumber and hardware).
    - c. Fence dimensions should be included.
    - d. Gate locations, dimensions and hardware information should be included.
  11. Fencing finished on only one side should be constructed with the finished side facing out.
  12. Existing topography, drainage, and landscaping shall not be disturbed for the construction of a fence except with the review and approval of the Architectural Committee.
  13. Wherever possible, fences shall be located so that trees do not have to be removed.
  14. Chain-link fences are not permitted without the prior written approval of the Architectural Committee.
  15. Photographs showing examples of acceptable fences are included in the Appendix.

## **Play Equipment**

1. Based upon Covenant Article III: Site and Plan Approval: (See Appendix)
2. In general, installed play equipment shall not be placed in front yards. Consideration should be given to lot size, equipment size, material, design, amount of visual screening, and relationship to neighboring property.
3. Tree houses are generally discouraged and must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Detailing should be consistent with the design, material, and colors of the house. Tree houses shall be visibly attractive.
4. Playhouses should be placed in rear yards and be in scale with the size of the yard and existing buildings. The playhouse should be painted or stained to blend with the natural open space or with the colors of the house.

## **Pools**

1. Based upon Covenant Article III: Site and Plan Approval: (See Appendix)
2. In-ground swimming pools are permitted and should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis prior to beginning construction. It is the homeowner's responsibility to ensure that pools comply with all local, state, county, etc., safety codes, and requirements.

## **Porches**

1. Based upon Covenant Article III: Site and Plan Approval: (See Appendix)
2. Modifications to existing front porches should be in keeping with originally-approved (or modified) house style and colors.

## **Retaining Walls**

1. Based upon Covenant Article III: Site and Plan Approval: (See Appendix)
2. Retaining walls should be unobtrusive as possible and built to the minimum height needed to serve their function and satisfy local code requirements.
3. Materials may be brick, natural stone, square corner timbers, or concrete, depending on location and contextual relationship.

## **Tree Removal**

1. There are currently no limits on tree management from a covenant view point. However, before removing trees keep in mind that one of the many aesthetics attracting home buyers to Stonebridge is the many trees.

## **Variances**

1. Variances from these guidelines will be reviewed by the Architectural Committee on a case-by-case basis. Approval of a variance by the Architectural Committee, Board, Appeals Committee or Covenants Committee, is not a blanket approval for subsequent similar requests.

# APPENDIX

## Covenant Article III

**Site and Plan Approval.** No building, fence, swimming pool, or any other structure shall be erected, placed or altered on any premises in said development until the building plans, specifications, and plot showing the location of such improvements, have been approved in writing as to conformity and harmony of external design with existing improvements in the development, and as to location of the improvements with respect to topographs and finished ground elevation by an architectural committee (the Architectural Committee) composed of three persons designated and appointed by Declarant or its assigns. In the event said committee fails to approve or disapprove such design or location within sixty days after said plans and specifications have been submitted to it, or in any event, if no suit to enjoin the erection of such improvements or the making of such alterations has been commenced prior to the completion thereof, such approval will not be required and this covenant will be deemed to have been fully complied with. Members of such committee shall not be entitled to any compensation for services performed pursuant to this covenant.

## Covenant Article X

**Fences.** No fence, wall, hedge, or mass planting shall be permitted to extend beyond the minimum building setback line or within 50 feet of any Street right of way line established herein except upon approval by the Architectural Committee. No chain link fence shall be used without the prior written approval of the Architectural Committee. .

## Covenant Article XIV

**Parking.** Adequate off-street parking shall be provided by the owner of each lot for the parking of motor vehicles owned by such owner, and owners of lots shall not be permitted to park their automobiles on the streets in the development. Owners of lots shall not be permitted to park boats, trailers, campers and all other similar property on the streets in the development, and such property shall be parked in a garage or screened area.

### Examples of Acceptable Fences:



### Examples of Boat, Trailer and RV Storage Screens:



### **Setbacks:**

1. Accessory Buildings: per Restrictive Covenant Article XI: (including but not limited to detached garages, storage buildings, dog houses, green houses) locate at least 15 feet from rear and side lot lines and no closer than 50 feet from the minimum building set back line (this is typically the front of the main dwelling).
2. Buildings / Garages: per Covenant Article V: locate at least 75 feet from the front lot line and at least 30 feet from the rear lot line; plus at least 20 feet from a side lot line; for a corner lot, at least 30 feet from the side street.
3. Fences: per Covenant Article X: location not to extend beyond the minimum building set back or within 50 feet of any street right of way.
4. No improvement of any type – building, accessory building, garage or fence – can infringe on easements of any type.

### **Request for Architectural Approval:**



# Request for Architectural Approval

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Briefly describe your request

I acknowledge that I have read and understand all the restrictive covenants applicable to all property in Stonebridge and that this submission is in full compliance. I also acknowledge that I am responsible for any and all requirements imposed by Wake County Government as it pertains to this submission.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for submitting this 'Request for Architectural Approval'. Your compliance with the following steps will help insure a complete and speedy approval of your architectural request.

**STEP ONE:**

1. Prepare your proposed plans. Your hand or cad drawn plans should include elevations indicating structure height, type of material that will be used and finishes.
2. Include a copy of your property plat with the proposed structure noted. Make sure you indicate dimensions to each adjacent property line.
3. Present your plans to your adjacent neighbors and have them affirm approval below:

I have reviewed my neighbor's plan, elevations, appearance, finishes and plat and have no objections:

Neighbor	Address	Date	I reviewed the plan
Sign _____	_____	_____	_____
Sign _____	_____	_____	_____
Sign _____	_____	_____	_____
Sign _____	_____	_____	_____

**STEP TWO:** Submit all of the above material along with this form to the Mgmt. Co. (URL on page 10) by email or postal mail. Both addresses can be found at the bottom of page 2 on this application.

**STEP THREE:** A representative from the Architectural Committee will make an 'on-site' visit. This insures that the Committee has a full understanding of your proposed request. Clearly mark areas affected.

**STEP FOUR:** If all is in order, you will be notified that you have received a Stonebridge Approval and that you may proceed to County Permitting as needed. If a County Permit is not required, then you may proceed with your plan. In the event your proposed project is in violation of Stonebridge HOA Covenants, you will be notified immediately. You may resubmit your request when in compliance with HOA Covenants.

Please allow up to 30 days for review and Stonebridge approval.

*Note to homeowner:*

Please visit [www.wakegov.com/inspect/](http://www.wakegov.com/inspect/) for information about when and how to secure building permits for your project.

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Stonebridge Architectural Committee Use ONLY:

Date Submitted \_\_\_\_\_  
Material Properly Submitted: Y N (if N, returned date: \_\_\_\_\_)  
On-site Visit By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Plans Reviewed By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Comments: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Architectural Committee decision: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Approved\_\_\_\_; Approved with conditions\_\_\_\_; Needs to be resubmitted\_\_\_\_; Disapproved\_\_\_\_.

Date Homeowner Notified: \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Stonebridge Homeowners' Association, Inc.  
c/o Charleston Management Corp.  
P.O. Box 97243  
812 Salem Woods Drive  
Raleigh, NC 27624  
Email: [Management@StonebridgeHOA.org](mailto:Management@StonebridgeHOA.org)  
TEL: (919) 847-3003  
FAX: (919) 848-1548  
Representative: Kim Underwood, PCAM  
Kim's email is: [kunderwood@charlestonmanagement.com](mailto:kunderwood@charlestonmanagement.com)  
Request processor name is: Chelsea Toledo; her email is: [ctoledo@charlestonmanagement.com](mailto:ctoledo@charlestonmanagement.com)

Or you can use: [Architecture@StonebridgeHOA.org](mailto:Architecture@StonebridgeHOA.org) and [Covenants@StonebridgeHOA.org](mailto:Covenants@StonebridgeHOA.org)