

Design Standards for Gran Forest

Revision History

September 2008	
October 2013	Section 2.5 (Mailbox standards)
March 2017	Updates to language for clarity of the standards
December 2018	Increase unapproved tree cutting to \$500 per tree

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I. Introduction

These guidelines provide the basis for a common understanding of the design standards of the Gran Forest community and for the benefit of present and future residents. These procedures are used by the Architectural Control Committee (ACC) for the review of plans and specifications pursuant to provisions of the Declaration of Covenants of Gran Forest with which all property owners should be familiar.

Homeowner documents, including modification request forms are available on the [Gran Forest community website](http://granforest.com) (granforest.com).

Who is subject to the approval process?

All property owners are responsible for obtaining the necessary review and approvals to comply with the terms of the Covenants. There are **NO** exceptions or automatic approvals. Approvals must be obtained from the ACC, and no current or former HOA board member or individual ACC member has authority to approve any project. Each application is reviewed on an individual basis, regardless of other prior approvals in the neighborhood.

Which home improvements require ACC approval?

Any exterior addition or alteration to your home or property requires written approval from the ACC prior to installation and in some cases, final inspection once the project is completed. This includes but is not limited to: change of exterior paint color, tree removal, retaining walls, significant changes in landscaping, and fence installation.

Who administers the approval process?

The authority for administration for the approval process lies with the ACC.

How do I apply for ACC approval?

Requests for additions or alterations to your property should be submitted at least thirty (30) days in advance of start of work. Requests must be submitted using the Gran Forest Modification Request Form. The form can be found in the [Homeowner Documents](#) of the Gran Forest website. All requests should be submitted to the current management company's address, found on the [FAQ page](#) of the Gran Forest website. If this procedure is not followed, your home will be considered in violation of the covenants. The Modification Request Form must include the following:

- 1.** A site plan such as a survey, sketch, air photo, or contractor plat and/or drawing depicting the particulars of your project in relation to structures, pathways, and property lines. If detail or scale are not sufficient to understand the project, a more detailed plan may be requested.
- 2.** Describe in detail the location, dimensions, shape, color, and materials to be used for your project.
- 3.** Include other pertinent information as you deem necessary.

Your request will be forwarded to the ACC for their review and you will receive a written response within 30 days of the receipt of request.

II. Design Review Procedures

The Architectural Control Committee intends to be fair and objective in the design review process. The ACC's decisions are based on a simple majority and shall not be arbitrary or capricious. The Committee may, at its discretion, assist the applicant by suggesting an alternative solution.

All plans must be approved by the ACC before beginning work on the improvement or alteration. All work must be done in accordance with the plans, as approved by the ACC. Any changes or modifications to the original plans must be submitted in writing and approved by the ACC.

After additions or alterations to your home are complete, the ACC reserves the right to conduct an on-site review to verify that the finished project conforms to the approved alterations.

How do I appeal an ACC decision?

Any decision reached by the Architectural Control Committee should initially be appealed back to the ACC for reconsideration. Technical design information supporting the appeal request must be included with the request for appeal. All appeals will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and the granting of an appeal for one residence for a particular situation does not imply or warrant that a similar appeal would be granted for another residence. Each case will be reviewed on its own design merits and in keeping with the overall objectives of the Design Standards. Should a homeowner disagree with the final decision of the ACC, they may request a review by the HOA Board of Directors.

Enforcement of ACC Decision

The Gran Forest Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions gives the Architectural Control Committee the authority to enforce the Design Standards and to carry out the business of the Committee. Fines may be assessed if projects are not approved or not completed as described in the formal plan submitted to the ACC.

III. Design Standards

These standards address a broad range of exterior structure and site conditions. They do not replace or alter the original Covenants, but are intended to clarify and define expectations for the community. They are not intended to be all inclusive, but rather a guide by which our community should be maintained. In the event of a conflict between the Declaration of Covenants for Gran Forest and the Design Standards, the Covenants will prevail.

Contractors are required to comply with all applicable laws and regulations, and be licensed, bondable, and insured. All approved projects must have dumpsters, where applicable, and be emptied regularly. During the project, construction areas must be kept neat and clean, and continuously cleared of debris. Construction materials are to be neatly pile on site and materials cannot be stockpiled or stored on adjacent properties or on streets.

Construction Hours – It is the Owner’s responsibility to inform contractors of the permitted construction hours for all contractors working in Gran Forest. The hours are Monday – Friday: 7:00 a.m. - 30 minutes after sunset; Weekends/Holidays: 7:30 a.m. – 30 minutes after sunset.

1) **Maintenance**

Lawn: Each lot shall at all times be kept in a clean and well-maintained condition. Lawn areas should not exceed 4" in height and must not grow over the curbing. Front and side lawns must consist of grasses that are green at the same time of year. Acceptable grasses are Fescue, Bermuda, Zoysia or Centipede. Islands and bed areas shall be kept free of weeds and grass, remained edged and be regularly mulched. Trees and bushes shall be pruned regularly and any dead plant material must be removed from the property immediately. Weeds and debris along curbs of the residence shall be cleared by homeowner. Debris, leaves, clippings, etc. must be kept clear from drainage openings.

Structure: No structure shall be permitted to fall into visual or structural disrepair. Each structure shall be kept in good condition and adequately painted or otherwise finished. In the event of damage or destruction to any structure or property, all necessary clean-up, repairs or reconstruction must be performed on a timely basis and in accordance with current Design Standards. Should repairs require an alteration of the original appearance of the structure, approval must be obtained from the ACC. Homeowners are responsible for securing proper permits and for meeting local building codes.

2) **Landscaping**

Includes hardscapes and statuary. Please submit requests for statuary and hardscapes prior to installation. Any addition or alteration to a lot which makes a noticeable change from the street or which may cause erosion, requires approval in advance, i.e. retaining walls, landscape timbers, railroad ties and water features. Water features would include alterations such as ponds, fish pools, etc. Landscaping should relate to the existing terrain and natural features of the lot and cannot obstruct vision of traffic.

a. Trees

Prior approval is required to remove trees with a diameter of 6" or more, when measured two feet above the ground. The fine for removing trees without prior approval is \$500 per tree.

b. Statuary

All statuary visible from the street must be approved by the ACC in writing prior to placement. Statuary allowed must be of concrete or concrete in appearance and must remain original, natural color. Statuary must be within the constraints of an island and cannot exceed 36" in height. No more than two (2) statuary objects may be placed in any front yard.

c. Decorative Benches

Decorative benches to be located in front yards or visible from the street must be approved by the ACC in writing prior to placement. Wooden benches treated for outdoor use, wrought iron or concrete benches will be approved. Concrete benches must remain original, natural color.

d. Edging

Acceptable edging materials are limited to metal, wood, fieldstone, "solid" brick and low profile, solid black plastic edging materials. Any materials other than those listed above, must be approved by the ACC. Materials utilized for landscape edging must be consistent with the exterior of the structure, shall not exceed 6" in height and must be pre-approved by the ACC, if not selected from the current list of approved materials.

e. Gardens

Vegetable gardens must be located between the rear of the dwelling and the rear lot line.

f. Exterior Lighting

All low voltage lighting for foundation landscaping and path lighting is approved with the following exceptions: path lighting will be limited to walkways only and colored lighting shall not be used except those decorative holiday lights and ornamentation used during the traditional holiday season beginning at Thanksgiving and terminating January 15th each year. Additional lighting will require the written approval of the ACC and all lampposts must be approved prior to installation.

3) Fences

All fences must be approved in writing by the ACC prior to beginning construction. Approved fence styles are: picket, shadow box, split rail (with or without welded wire) and privacy. The tops of privacy fencing may not be "dog eared" or flat but must be scalloped or arched between posts. Other decorative profiles will be considered on a case by case basis. All fences must be a minimum of four (4) feet tall and a maximum of six (6) feet tall. Requests to paint fencing must include a paint chip of your chosen color.

All fencing shall be installed six (6) inches off the established side property line per bona-fide survey unless specific approval is given by the ACC for any deviation based on lot topography. If a fence along the property line previously exists, the proposed fence must adjoin that fence. All fencing shall be constructed with the finished side facing the adjacent property or street. Fencing must create a complete enclosure. Fences shall begin to the rear of the midpoint of the house as defined by the main roof peak.

Chain link fencing shall be allowed only across the rear lot line in a permanently wooded area. All chain link fencing must be coated with green or black vinyl. Any approvals for chain link fencing will require that the chain link portion of the fence cannot be visible from the street.

a. Secondary Fences

Additional fences must be approved in writing by the ACC and must be in a

permanently wooded area. Secondary fences must not be visible from neighboring properties or from the street. Appropriate evergreen trees or shrubs must be planted and maintained if fencing would otherwise be visible.

b. **Trellises**

All trellises, arbors, wooden screens and lattice structures must be approved in writing by the Gran Forest ACC prior to the beginning of construction. All structures shall be a minimum of four (4) feet and a maximum of eight (8) feet in height and be erected up to six (6) feet in height from the residence foundation. Approved trellises should typically consist of wooden structures constructed of a minimum of 1/4" high-grade wooden lattice supported by a minimum of two (2) 4"x 4" wooden pressure treated posts. Support posts should not exceed 6"x 6" dimensionally and have sufficient trim to give a finished appearance. Requests to paint all exterior wooden structures must be submitted in writing, along with paint swatch of the chosen color. The proposed location of all structures must be approved by the ACC.

4) **Dog Runs**

No dog runs or pens will be allowed.

5) **Pet Shelters**

Structures for animal shelter are subject to ACC approval. Such structures must be sized appropriately for the animal, must be compatible with residence constructions/colors, and must be reasonably shielded from view by adjacent neighbors and from the street.

6) **Recreational Equipment**

Any permanent playscape or equipment must be of wood or composite construction, natural in color and pre-approved by the ACC. No metal playscape or metal playground equipment will be allowed. All playscapes/playgrounds must be located in the backyard. Basketball goals must be located adjacent and not more than fifteen (15) feet from the garage. Backboards may be clear, white or smoke in color. Under NO circumstances may the backboard be attached to the home. Exceptions to these guidelines must be approved in writing by the ACC.

7) **Sheds**

Storage sheds may be constructed if attached to the house in such a manner that they are not visible from the street and appear as part of the original construction. No free standing buildings will be allowed. All designs must be approved by the ACC before construction begins.

8) **Pools, Hot Tubs, and Spas**

In-ground pools are permitted with approval of the ACC prior to construction. Above-ground pools are not permitted, NO exceptions.

Exterior hot tubs/spas must be screened from adjacent properties and streets. All pumps, filters and equipment for hot tub/spas must be located so as not to cause a nuisance to neighbors and must be screened from view. The final site selection and placement will require approval by the ACC prior to installation, as well as final inspection by the ACC after installation is complete.

9) **Flags**

Approved flags must not exceed 3' x 5' dimensionally and must conform to the

precedents set in the community as a whole. The ACC reserves the right to review any flag(s) submitted for approval or reject any flag(s) erected without approval.

10) **Antennas and Satellite Dishes**

No television antennas will be allowed.

Satellite dishes 18" and under are recommended. Homeowners must make all efforts to reduce visibility of the satellite dish, which includes requesting the installer to investigate options other than those easiest for installation. All efforts must be made to keep satellite dishes behind the forward edge of the residence.

11) **Signs**

The only ACC-approved signs are the following: "Home for Sale" (commercial or by-owner), small signs designating home security (supplied by agency), and the Gran Forest "Yard of the Month" sign. "For Rent" signs are NOT permitted.

Signs may not be placed on the common areas except by the HOA Board of Directors to communicate meetings, social events, or other information pertinent to Gran Forest Homeowners. Standard service signs during renovation/painting are permitted throughout completion of the project.

12) **Mailboxes**

Effective October 1, 2013 all new replacement mailboxes must be Global Home Products model #MB630 or an exact replica. No deviations will be allowed. No metal or plastic post attachments for newspaper or other delivers will be allowed. Visit granforest.com or contact the current management company for information and an order form. Transition to the Global Home Products mailbox must be complete for all residences by December 31, 2018, after which a \$50.00 per month fine will be assessed.

13) **House Body, Trim and Siding**

Any color change to the house body and trim, front door, shutters, or garage doors must have ACC approval. The house body and trim must be different in color. Front doors and shutters should match. Garage doors and house trim colors should match. No vinyl siding will be allowed. Any siding alterations must have ACC approval. Color samples and details must be provided with the formal request form.

14) **Garage Doors**

Replacement garage doors may be constructed of materials other than wood but must simulate a wood-like appearance. Windows in the upper section of garage doors are allowed. Garage doors and house trim colors should match.

15) **Roof Replacement**

Replacement roofs must use fiberglass/asphalt shingles. No other materials are acceptable. Shingles may be standard three tab or architectural style. Approved colors are dark grays, browns or black only.

16) **Awnings**

Awnings are not allowed on the front or side of structures. Retractable fabric awnings to shade backyard decks are allowed but require ACC approval prior to installation.

17) **Windows**

Windows must blend with the home's design and be compatible with the architectural style of the home. The exterior trim of window inserts must match the exterior trim of the house. Any color change from the original color must be submitted for approval to the ACC before work begins. Window sizes may not be changed unless approved and associated with a major remodeling project. Application must include photos of the style and color of the window, the manufacturer, and material composition description.

a. **Window Styles**

The window style must match the original style (i.e. double-hung or single-hung, or fixed windows must be replaced with the same type.) The consistency of upper and lower window for double- or single-hung windows will be maintained.

b. **Internal Blinds**

Internal blinds require a thicker window frame which, consequently, changes the look of an installed window. No internal blind-type windows will be allowed on the front of a home.

c. **Window Grids**

Window grids shall be left to the decision of the homeowner. All windows must be similar in design – either all with grids or all without.