

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q. Who can submit requests to the Architectural Control Committee (ACC)?**

**A.** Any Forest Hills homeowner may submit a request to the ACC. Renters or property management professionals should work through the homeowner to submit requests.

### **Q. How do I request approval for an architectural action or change?**

**A.** Homeowners seeking review and approval of a proposed project should submit details the Chairman, Architectural Control Committee at [acc.fhva@gmail.com](mailto:acc.fhva@gmail.com)

Examples of actions requiring ACC approval include, but are not limited to:

1. Changes in exterior paint color
2. Installation, removal, or modification of awnings, porches, driveways, patios, stairs, or exterior lighting
3. Replacement of exterior doors, windows, garage doors, or shutters
4. Installation or removal of landscaping, sprinklers, or drainage systems
5. Roof replacement

The request to ACC should be as specific as possible regarding the scope of the proposal. It should include a detailed drawing of the finished design and provide a descriptive list of the materials that will be used. If the request addresses a major exterior change, the application's level of detail should be the same as that required for a building permit request required by Arlington County. Homeowners are encouraged to include a statement that the immediate neighbors are aware of the proposal.

### **Q. What types of actions do not require ACC approval?**

**A.** Homeowners must notify the ACC before beginning any project involving a change in external appearance and are encouraged to notify the Committee even if no appearance change is contemplated. In cases where the finished work will result in no alteration of the final appearance of the property, the ACC will review the proposed action to ensure that replacement items are the same design, appearance, and color, and the material equal or better quality than the original. The notification will also be recorded in the permanent file for the relevant property.

### **Q. What is the ACC's review process?**

**A.** The ACC screens all requests upon receipt. Simple projects are reviewed by email and normally approved within one week. Complex projects often require additional information, input from neighbors, and discussion at an ACC meeting. The ACC meets routinely every other month and can schedule additional meetings if needed for presentations by a homeowner and timely responses.

**Q. Why do I need to contact the ACC?**

A. The Forest Hills governing documents require that homeowners seek ACC approval when making an exterior change covered by the covenants. Article VIII of the Forest Hills Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions states that covered alterations need to be reviewed by ACC for quality of workmanship, design, colors, materials, and harmony. The requirements of the covenants are binding on all owners. The homeowner remains ultimately responsible for complying with the architectural requirements of FHCA governing documents. To avoid having to do the work twice, homeowners are strongly encouraged to consult ACC before beginning any project.

**Q. What is the purpose of the Covenants and the ACC?**

A. The covenants provide a framework for protecting the beauty, value, and harmonious appearance of the Forest Hills community. The ACC mission is to work with homeowners to maintain the quality and high standards of the original architectural design. Taken together, the covenants' purpose is to protect your investment in your home and the overall desirability of the community.

**Q. Can I appeal an ACC decision?**

A. Yes. The Forest Hills Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions and By-laws are silent on the issue of an owner's right to appeal an ACC decision. However, the Board allows interested and affected homeowners to appeal ACC decisions. Any appeal of an ACC decision needs to be filed in a timely manner (normally 10 days after a meeting or receipt of a letter) to the President or another Association officer. Every effort will be made to address the appeal at the next scheduled board meeting.

**Q. May I attend ACC meetings?**

A. Interested homeowners are welcome to attend ACC meetings. The Virginia Property Owners Association Act requires that committee meetings be announced in advance and be open to all homeowners. ACC meetings are normally held the second Monday of January, March, May, July, September, and November at 7PM via Zoom. If you would like to attend a meeting, please contact [acc.fhva@gmail.com](mailto:acc.fhva@gmail.com) for the Zoom link.

**Q. What difference does it make if I don't seek prior approval and don't comply with architectural rules?**

A. Prior to selling your home the Association prepares a resale certificate, as required by the Virginia Resale Disclosure Act. The package contains information about the Association and your home, including architectural changes that do not comply with the protective covenants. You or the new owner will be required to bring the home into compliance in order to finalize the sale.

## **Information on Specific Projects**

1. **Exterior Painting**

ACC maintains records on each property's approved colors and is prepared to advise homeowners planning to repaint. Repainting to match a home's approved color scheme is handled as a notification for the record. Homeowners requesting to change the exterior colors need to contact ACC with information on the proposed color scheme and verify that neighbors are aware of the proposed color changes before approval can be granted.

2. **Door or window replacement**

All projects to replace/update doors or windows should be submitted to the ACC for prior approval. The ACC recognizes that there have been changes in technology of building materials in recent years, particularly in terms of energy efficiency and ease of maintenance.

3. **Roof replacement**

Roof replacement using exactly the same materials as originally installed (cedar shake or cedar shingle depending on the property) is handled as a notification for the record. The Board and ACC have recently approved the use of specific composite materials that closely match the look of cedar but may offer improved weather and fire resistance. Owners seeking to replace roofs with any material other than the original must submit detailed requests to the ACC. You may contact the ACC at [acc.fhva@gmail.com](mailto:acc.fhva@gmail.com) to obtain background information and a template for roof replacement requests.

4. **Signs**

Forest Hills covenants state that no sign larger than one foot square can be displayed in public view. Real estate signs advertising a property for sale or rent are permitted and should not be larger than four square feet. Please advise your real estate agent that stick signs are traditionally used in Forest Hills and ask that they not install post signs. Real estate signs must be removed immediately after settlement. Contractors performing work on your home cannot place an advertising sign in front of your home that is larger than one foot square.

**For questions or comments, please contact [acc.fhva@gmail.com](mailto:acc.fhva@gmail.com) or any ACC member.**

Current members include: Christine Hunter - Chair, Bobby Blabolil, Marjorie Abbot, Bob Hood, Barbara Morris-Lent, Lance Schwulst, Amy Lauger, Julie Farnam, and Kimberly Spiegel