



GUILFORD ASSOCIATION, INC.

GENERAL ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES FOR GUILFORD RESIDENTS

Revised January 2026

**All exterior changes must be submitted for review and be approved in writing by the Guilford Association's Architectural Committee (herein referred to as the "Committee") prior to signing construction contracts, ordering building materials or beginning work on any architectural or significant landscape project.

Potential buyers of property in Guilford should be aware of this requirement and should inquire of the existing owner and their realtor as to whether prior approvals have been secured or documented for previous exterior improvements. Covenant compliance also can be confirmed by the Guilford Association office. In the interest of being a good neighbor, every owner making exterior improvements should inform the adjacent property owners of planned changes prior to the commencement of work.

1. APPLICATION PROCESS

The property owner must submit an application for each of the components, structures and exterior property-related improvements that require review and approval of the Committee pursuant to these guidelines and the recorded covenants of the Guilford Deed and Agreement. The application must completely describe the existing conditions and must accurately describe the proposed modifications. Plans, drawings, material cut sheets and photographs shall be included wherever useful for the review process. Their omission or failure to include all aspects of the project may delay the completion of the review process. It is the responsibility of the property owner to obtain accurate information regarding the dimensions of the existing house and accessory structures, the location of property boundaries and the required setbacks.

Applications for all new buildings and exterior alterations must contain documents that include:

1. Site Plan – (Minimum scale: 1" = 50')
2. Elevations – (Minimum Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0")
3. Floor Plans – (Minimum Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0")
4. Sections – (Minimum Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0")
5. Specifications for all new materials, finishes and paint colors
6. Landscape Plan where applicable

2. DEMOLITION

Demolition or removal of any structure or architectural component thereof, including windows, doors and shutters, must be approved by the Committee. Unauthorized removal of architectural components is a covenant violation that may require replacement in kind within a timeframe to be determined by the Committee.

3. ROOF TYPES & MATERIALS

Natural slate or terracotta tile shall be used to match existing condition. Standing seam or welded copper and "tern" metal are permitted under appropriate circumstances. Pre-finished painted metal roofs typically are not permitted. Asphalt shingle is not allowed as a replacement material. Under extraordinary circumstances, where there is restoration of a roof on which slate had been previously removed and a non-approved material such as asphalt shingles installed, a high-grade artificial slate material may be considered and permitted after application to and approval by the Committee.

Gutter and downspout replacement must be the same material and profile as the original installation or specifically approved by the Committee. Gutters on Guilford homes are typically half-round in profile. Boxed or “K” style gutters may be approved if it can be established through historical record that the original construction utilized this design. In general, copper gutters and downspouts are preferred; painted galvanized metal and heavy gauge aluminum may be acceptable, but in no case will vinyl or plastic be acceptable. See Roof Guidelines prepared by the Guilford Architectural Committee for additional guidance and specifications for repair, maintenance and replacement.

4. ADDITIONS & ENCLOSURES

A site plan and scaled drawings, indicating building materials and dimensions must accompany the application. Refer to the minimum scale of drawings previously stated above. The materials, scale and style must harmonize in appearance with the original structure and should be in keeping with the appearance and character of the neighborhood, taking into account such factors as the adjacent houses, the immediate street and existing trees. Any new construction should comply with the setback and free space requirement of the Guilford Deed and Agreement. Professionally prepared drawings are preferred for major renovations and additions. In general, clapboard siding is discouraged, except where it is an original feature of the house. Wood exteriors should contain historically accurate details and finishes. Porches, sunrooms and decks must be submitted for approval and will be reviewed by the Committee in the same context as additions and enclosures.

5. LANDSCAPING & GARDEN STRUCTURES

Extensive changes in the landscaping of a property and grading changes must be approved by the Committee. Applications for landscape work should be accompanied by a detailed site plan indicating exact location and dimensions of all elements and all materials as well as the species of shrubbery or trees; e.g., multiple plantings, walkways, patios, ponds or pools, parking pads, walls and fences. Mature trees contribute to the value of homes and the neighborhood and should be saved whenever possible. All proposed tree removal should be accompanied by an arborist report.

Sculptures shall be located in the rear yard unless otherwise approved by the Committee. The Committee reserves the right to review the placement of sculptures and to request the removal or relocation of sculptures that may reasonably be deemed offensive if visible from the ground level of neighboring properties or the public way. All proposed garden structures such as pergolas, arbors, gazebos, pool houses or other structures must be submitted for approval.

As with fencing, applications for planting trees or shrubs along a property boundary should be accompanied by a signed letter of consent or objection by the affected neighbor.

Improvements and substantial landscaping between the sidewalk and street will generally not be approved. Plantings shall be selected that will not impair visibility from the driveway to the street. New trees in this zone shall conform to the Baltimore City Arborist’s list for that particular block. Any proposed deviation from the Arborist’s list must be specifically approved by the Committee.

6. FENCES & WALLS – TYPES/HEIGHTS/INSTALLATION

Style of fencing will be consistent with its surroundings and specifically approved by the Committee. 42” minimum high preferred to 48” maximum height in most cases. Enclosure of front yard areas (forward of the front plane of the house) is not acceptable except under extraordinary circumstances to be determined by the Committee. Fences shall be installed with posts and rails facing inward. Affected neighbors must be informed in specific terms of fence or wall installation and style and their consent or objection must be communicated to the Committee. Photographs of the fence proposed or shop drawings must accompany the application. Chain-link, vinyl and stockade fences are not acceptable. Wood picket and wrought iron/steel picket fences painted black are typical; post and rail fences may be allowed under special circumstances.

A fence that encloses the yard of a corner property located at the intersection of two streets will require special consideration because of its visibility and relation to surrounding properties. In this location the fence along a public way typically must be setback at least three feet from the public walkway with planting between the fence and walkway.

Walls generally should follow the same height requirements and walls must be of a material consistent with the material of the house and compatible with adjacent properties.

7. SHUTTERS, RAILINGS, DECORATIVE IRONWORK, GRILLES, ETC.

These architectural components and features are integral to the design and character of a house and may not be removed, altered or replaced without specific approval by the Architectural Committee. Shutters and operable hardware are to be maintained on all openings where the house was designed with shutters, particularly on all facades visible from a public way. Shutters must be of painted wood and match the size and profile of the window opening adjacent, so they will fully cover the window if closed. Historically accurate hardware must be used. Use of pine shutters is discouraged.

8. DOORS, STORM DOORS & WINDOWS – TYPES/MATERIALS

Replacement windows must match the dimensions, design, and muntin pattern of the original. New windows shall be consistent in muntin pattern and profile with the original. New and replacement windows must be wood with either “true divided lights” or “simulated divided light” (SDL). Muntin profiles must meet the size requirements and be permanently factory attached on both the interior and exterior with a separator bar between the glass surfaces. The window pane size or lite area must closely resemble that of the original window. Vinyl windows and tape or snap in muntins are not permitted under any circumstances. Pine is discouraged as a replacement wood for windows. Storm windows must be submitted for approval. Storm windows and exterior doors must be painted to match trim color (bare metal, mill finish aluminum is not permitted). Doors (including storm doors) must be wood and/or full glass and must be consistent in design with the original character of the house. Garage doors can be aluminum, steel or wood with manufacturer applied paint finish and style that harmonizes with the house and architecture. (See Window Guidelines for additional guidance and specifications.)

9. PAINT – COLORS

Paint and wood stain colors for structures, trim, shutters, doors and all painted elements must be approved by the Committee. Color samples, photographs, and a description of where the colors will be applied must be submitted along with the application. Traditional historic and period appropriate colors and color combinations are required.

10. SATELLITE DISHES

Free-standing satellite dishes are not acceptable. All other dishes should be sized and located so as to reduce visibility by neighbors and from public ways. Satellite dishes are subject to review and approval by the Committee.

11. WALKS & DRIVEWAYS

Concrete sidewalks must be exposed aggregate similar to traditional Guilford standard. Other materials such as brick masonry or bluestone may be permitted for walkways between houses and sidewalks. Driveways are recommended to be concrete and must be of the same exposed Guilford standard aggregate finish. Alternate driveway paving materials must be specifically approved by the Committee. New curbing shall match existing Guilford curb where installed.

12. POOLS & HOT TUBS

- 1) In general, pools and hot tubs shall be located and screened so as to not be visible from the public way or from the ground level of adjacent properties. The pool plan and related landscape plan must be reviewed and approved by the Committee.
- 2) Each pool must be surrounded by a fence per code and be at least three feet in height and no higher than forty-eight (48) inches. Fencing must be approved by the Committee as part of the pool plan.
- 3) Gates of such fences must be self-closing and have locks that cannot be opened by small children.
- 4) No pool or hot tub may be in the front yard of any house. In the case of a house at an intersection of streets, the pool must be located in the rear yard and may not extend beyond the lines of the dwelling facing the streets forming the intersection.
- 5) No pool or hot tub may at any point be closer to a contiguous neighbor's lot line than fifteen feet, or closer to the edge of a street than thirty feet.
- 6) No more than five percent of the total lot may be used for any swimming pool.
- 7) Each pool must be a permanent structure constructed so that no part of it is above grade.
- 8) No lights may be placed in the area other than submerged wall lights or small, shielded lights which may not be over three feet from the ground.
- 9) No inflatable pool cover or similar device will be allowed.

- 10) Every owner of property contiguous to the lot on which the pool or hot tub is to be built shall be provided with a plan depicting the proposed pool or hot tub and associated improvements for comment or consent. The Committee shall be informed of all consents and comments along with the application.
- 11) The pool or hot tub will be used with due and appropriate regard for the reasonable sensibilities of neighbors.
- 12) Hot tubs must be located to reduce visibility from public ways. Final location and vegetative screens must be approved by the Committee prior to installation.

13. PLAY EQUIPMENT AND ON-SITE SPORTS FACILITIES

- 1) All play equipment or sports equipment and facilities must be approved and located in the rear yard of the house. Visibility of the play equipment from the public way and the ground level of adjacent properties may be considered by the Committee as part of the approval process. Basketball hoops located on garages or in driveways, sandboxes, and play equipment or facilities not semi- permanently or permanently anchored to the ground or constituting structures or not visible from off the property are exempt from the approval process.
- 2) Children's play sets shall have a wood structure. Canvas awnings shall be forest green or approved earth tones. Softer colors are preferred for swings and slides.

14. LIGHTING

Exterior lighting designed for comfort, safety and security is subject to review by the Committee. Exterior lighting must respect the residential surroundings. It shall not be directed outside the owner's property and should not have an adverse visual impact upon adjoining neighbors. Exterior light fixtures which are original to the house should remain intact and be maintained in working order. Light fixtures which are proposed to replace the original fixtures or additional fixtures must be compatible with the style and output of the original fixtures. Security lighting, including motion activated fixtures are to be directional or shielded so that no light is cast beyond the property line or public right of way. Sodium vapor, metal halide or tungsten lamps are not permitted.

15. RADON MITIGATION SYSTEMS

Average radon levels in the Baltimore area are often higher than the EPA's recommended levels. If levels are tested at a residence and determined to be high, it may be recommended that a radon mitigation system be installed. Because radon mitigation typically involves the installation of exterior ventilation pipes resulting in an exterior alteration to the property, Guilford homeowners must submit an application to the Architectural Committee for review and approval before installation is undertaken. The application must identify the location where mitigation equipment and vent pipes are proposed to be located and the proposed material of the vent pipe.

Vent pipes and equipment may not be mounted on the front façade of a home and at a corner location where there are two street visible façades, the vent pipe may not be located on either street facing façades. A vent pipe should be located in the rear of a property if possible or if to be located on a side it should be affixed in a location of least visible impact.

Exposed vertical piping shall be copper to match adjacent downspouts where copper downspouts are present. Where copper downspouts are not present and PVC or other material may be proposed, the vertical pipes shall be painted a color that blends the vent piping into the exterior background color of the home. Where the piping is to be painted the selected paint color shall be identified in the application to the Committee.

16. REPAIRS AND RESTORATION

Application to the Committee is required for major repairs or restoration. Repairs and restoration to correct damage from fire, storms, flooding, vandalism, long-term property neglect or other causes shall be consistent with the original house design and historic building materials. Repairs shall be consistent with the Guilford Architectural Guidelines. In situations where materials and quality of construction had been previously reduced from the original construction, the repairs and restoration should upgrade the construction to the original level of quality and materials.

17. APPROVALS

Committee approvals are valid only for 12 months from the date of issue and will automatically expire at the end of such period unless the work is substantially underway by then. Once construction begins, it must diligently continue in a reasonably clean and orderly manner until completion. A Baltimore City Building Permit is not a substitute for application and approval by the Association's Architectural Committee and does not supersede approval from the Committee. Guilford is a National Register Historic District and properties within the District are eligible for application to the state for tax credits. While application to the state for historic tax credits is encouraged, approval of a proposal by the Architectural Committee does not qualify or guarantee the project for tax credits.

Property owners who proceed with exterior alterations without written Committee approval do so at their own risk and will be subject to a notice of covenant violation. The Guilford Association is obligated to enforce the covenants of the Deed and Agreement. Covenant violations must be corrected within a timeframe determined by the Committee and be consistent with the Architectural Guidelines. At the time a property may be listed for sale, the Maryland Homeowners Association Act requires that all outstanding covenant violations be disclosed by the seller to potential buyers. If violations are not corrected by the seller prior to closing, the Association requires a written agreement between the purchaser and the Association that commits the purchaser to correct the violations within an agreed upon timeframe.

Property owners are advised to submit applications early and with complete information to allow ample time for review and comment from the Committee. In some cases, the Committee will require a re-submittal or revision of a proposal for final approval. Property owners who sign a contract with a builder or installer for work prior to obtaining Committee approval do so at their own risk and such prior agreements will not be considered by the Committee as a mitigating factor in their review of the application. Approval is granted based on the documents and materials provided in the application; any modifications and visible deviations from the approved documents must be submitted to the Committee for review and approval.