

OAKBRIDGE COMMUNITY SERVICES ASSOCIATION, INC.

Architectural Control Rules

Effective Date: 1986 Feb. 3

Amended and Restated: 2020 Oct. 21 • Amended 2025 Sep. 9

Section A: Policy Statement

A1. The Architectural Review Board (ARB) is required by the Declaration of Covenants and Restrictions (DCR) to regulate the external design, appearance, use, location, and maintenance of the properties and houses in such a manner as to preserve and enhance values and to maintain a harmonious relationship within the neighborhood.¹

A2. The DCR provides that no improvements, alterations, repairs, change of paint colors, excavations, changes in grade, or other work which in any way alters the exterior of any house or property shall be made or done without the prior approval of the ARB. The DCR also provides that no other structure (including but not limited to additions, outbuildings, and minor objects) shall be erected, maintained, improved, altered, made, or done without the prior approval of the ARB.² Items explicitly identified in these rules as “permitted” are considered to be pre-approved by the ARB.

A3. The DCR further provides that the owner shall submit to the ARB plans and specifications showing the nature, kind, shape, height, materials, and location of any proposed improvements, alterations, or changes.³

A4. The ARB is required to interpret the DCR and to adopt general rules to implement the purposes set forth in the DCR, including but not limited to rules to regulate animals, signs, storage and use of recreational vehicles, storage and use of machinery, use of outdoor drying lines, trash containers, planting, maintenance, and removal of vegetation on the properties.⁴

A5. In adopting these rules, the ARB seeks to strike a balance between individual freedom and upholding the restrictions of the DCR in order to maintain the quality of the neighborhood.

A6. These Architectural Control Rules (ACR) are and must remain subsidiary to the DCR and Supplementary DCR (SDCR). Some ACR provisions have been taken from those documents, as noted in the footnotes, and a change to one of them must be accompanied by a change to the other.

A7. Homeowners who have questions about whether a proposed change to their property is covered under these rules should contact the ARB for guidance. The ARB is specifically empowered to authorize reasonable exceptions to the ACR, including items normally prohibited, and to rule on items not specifically addressed in the ACR, provided it can show good cause and acts in accordance with adopted guidelines and procedures.⁵

¹ See DCR §6.2

² See DCR §6.3

³ From DCR §6.4

⁴ From DCR §7.1(b)

⁵ See DCR §7.1(c)

A8. In addition to these rules, homeowners must also comply with all applicable laws and regulations, specifically including zoning codes. To minimize time and cost, obtaining ARB approval prior to seeking a city building permit is recommended.

A9. Definitions. Within this document:⁶

A9.1. A “structure” is any load-bearing or space-enclosing object more or less permanently located on the ground. The term does not include:

(a) minor objects, such as fences, trellises, lampposts, flagpoles, mailboxes, basketball stanchions, and playsets.

(b) surfaces, such as sidewalks, driveways, and patios.

(c) mobile or portable items, such as flowerpots, lawnmowers, wheelbarrows, wading pools, umbrellas, benches, and lawn chairs.

(d) natural features, such as grass, flowers, bushes, trees, and rocks.

A9.2. A “house” is the regular living-space portion of a structure intended as a single-family dwelling.⁷

A9.3. An “addition” is any structure which is attached to or incorporated into a house but not intended as primary living space, such as attached garages, sunrooms, porches, decks, and greenhouses.

A9.4. An “outbuilding” is any structure on the property not attached to or incorporated into a house, such as sheds, detached garages, hot tubs, housing for pets or livestock, and gazebos.

A9.5. “Construction” is the process whereby an existing structure or surface is enlarged, expanded, altered, or replaced or a new structure or surface is created or emplaced.

“Installation” is the process whereby a minor object is created or emplaced.

A9.6. “Permitted” means that the item is allowed, within whatever constraints are specified, without the need to contact the ARB for approval.

A9.7. “Front yard” is the portion of the yard facing the street of its address; “back yard” is the portion of the yard on the opposite side of the house; “side yards” are all remaining portions of the yard.

Section B: General Rules

B1. Compatibility. Colors and designs of any changes shall be compatible with the existing property and surroundings.

⁶ The terms defined here may have different meanings in other sources (dictionaries and encyclopedias; laws, rules, and codes; usages by architects, engineers, and businesses; common parlance; etc.). Each term should be interpreted in the relevant context.

⁷ SDCR §3.1 requires that all Oakbridge houses be single-family dwellings.

B2. Construction. No construction shall be commenced without prior written approval of the ARB. The owner shall submit to the ARB design plans and specifications showing the nature, kind, shape, height, materials, and location of the proposed construction. The external design, appearance, use, and location of the construction shall enhance values and maintain a harmonious relationship within the neighborhood.⁸

B3. Outbuildings.

B3.1. Outbuildings are prohibited except:

(a) Outside hot tubs may be in back yards only, may not be rated for more than 8 people, and must have a child-proof protective cover in place when not in use.

(b) A utility or storage shed of no more than one hundred (100) square feet in area and eight (8) feet in height is permitted in back yards only. It may house inanimate objects only.

(c) Solar collectors are permitted.⁹

B3.2. Any outbuilding must be at least 6 feet from any lot line.

B4. Space and Sizing of Structures.

B4.1. No first-floor areas of single-family houses, including additions, shall occupy more than thirty-five percent (35%) of the lot area the house is sited on.¹⁰

B4.2. No house, including additions, shall be closer than three (3) feet to a side lot line or fifteen (15) feet to a rear lot line. On streets on which public sidewalks are installed the minimum setback of such structures shall be twenty (20) feet unless a lesser setback is approved by the traffic engineer or the traffic official designated by the City of Madison.¹⁰

B4.3. No houses, including additions, shall be closer than ten (10) feet to each other.¹⁰

B4.4. No house shall exceed the height of the lesser of two and one-half (2½) stories or thirty (30) feet above the adjoining street pavement grade.¹¹

B5. Maintenance. Each owner shall keep his or her house and other structures, minor objects, and surfaces in good order and repair, clean, well maintained, and free of debris. This includes, but is not limited to, the painting or other appropriate external care of all structures.¹²

B6. Vehicle Storage. Parking or storage of any vehicle, including but not limited to boats, cars, and recreational vehicles, on areas other than the driveway is prohibited, except that not more than one (1) motorcycle may be parked on a paved area adjacent to a driveway. Parked vehicles may not obstruct the public sidewalk.

B7. Landscaping.

⁸ See DCR §§6.3 and 6.4

⁹ Wisconsin Statute 236.292(2) prohibits restrictions on solar collectors.

¹⁰ From SDCR §3.4; see also Oakbridge Specific Implementation Plan §2

¹¹ From Oakbridge Specific Implementation Plan §3

¹² See DCR §7.2

129 B7.1. The part of any plants which overhang the public sidewalk must be trimmed to a height
130 of at least eight (8) feet off the ground.

131
132 B7.2. The majority of each yard must be grass, neatly trimmed, except pursuant to a
133 landscaping plan approved by the ARB.

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135 B7.3. Vegetable gardens are prohibited in front yards; those in side yards and back yards are
136 permitted. Flower gardens are permitted anywhere on the property provided nothing from the
137 garden obstructs or spills onto the public sidewalk.

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139 B7.4. Hanging or potted plants are permitted anywhere on the property.

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141 B7.5. Each owner shall keep his or her lot and landscaping clean, well maintained, and free of
142 debris. This includes, but is not limited to, the seeding, watering, and mowing of all lawns; the
143 pruning and cutting of all trees and shrubbery; and other appropriate care of the grounds.¹²

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145 **Section C: Specific Rules**

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147 **C1. Antennas.** Exterior dish antennas exceeding one (1) meter in their longest dimension are
148 prohibited; those of 1 meter or less are permitted.¹³

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150 **C2. Awnings.** The ARB must approve the nature, kind, shape, height, materials, and location
151 of any proposed awnings.

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153 **C3. Basketball Hoops.** Basketball hoops are permitted provided the area of intended use is
154 entirely on the homeowner's property.

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156 **C4. Bird Feeders etc.** Bird feeders, bird baths, and bird houses are permitted.

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158 **C5. Decks.** Wooden deck trim must be painted or stained within one year of construction to
159 match house trim, unless the deck is a treated wood which does not require painting or
160 staining.

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162 **C6. Dog Kennels.** Dog kennels and pet runs are prohibited.

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164 **C7. Doors (Exterior and Garage).** All exterior and garage doors must be paneled.

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166 **C8. Driveways and Driveway Expansion.** All driveways must be paved or hard surfaced.
167 Any expansion must be contiguous to the existing driveway and match the existing material,
168 except that pavers are permitted provided they expand the driveway width by no more than
169 20 inches.

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171 **C9. Exterior.** The exterior of a house must be primarily of a single siding type having uniform
172 color. The color must be in some way muted to ensure the overall harmony of the
173 neighborhood. Ancillary exterior items such as trim, shutters, and window casings must be of

¹³ FCC rule (47 CFR §1.4000) prohibits restrictions that impair the installation, maintenance, or use of antennas used to receive video programming. The rule applies to video antennas including direct-to-home satellite dishes that are less than one meter in diameter, TV antennas, and wireless cable antennas.

174 a color which complements the primary siding. The exterior siding must be either 4 inch or 5
175 inch. Corner trim must be provided on all outside walls and windows.

176

177 **C10. Fences.** Fences are prohibited, except for invisible (electric in-ground) fences. Back-
178 yard privacy screens should be short as possible, as low as practicable but in no case higher
179 than six (6) feet, and as close to the house as possible.

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181 **C11. Laundry Poles.** Laundry poles are permitted provided the laundry is removed daily.

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183 **C12. Little Libraries.** Little libraries are permitted provided they are not on the terrace and
184 have an enclosed space not exceeding two (2) cubic feet.

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186 **C13. Mailboxes.** All mailboxes must be standard rural mailboxes approved by the US Postal
187 Service and mounted on sturdy poles or posts, which may not be embedded in cement or
188 concrete. Each mailbox or post shall display the house number using numbers no less than
189 two (2) inches high by one (1) inch wide, in a contrasting color, on both traffic-facing sides.

190

191 **C14. Patios and Porches.** Patios, screened porches, and sunrooms are prohibited except in
192 side yards and back yards.

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194 **C15. Pools.** Pools are prohibited except small children's wading pools, which may not remain
195 filled for more than 72 consecutive hours.

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197 **C16. Roofing.**

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199 C16.1. The roof pitch of the house must be a minimum of 6/12 pitch.

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201 C16.2. The roof of the house must be a dark gray or other muted color.

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203 C16.3. The roof of any addition or outbuilding must be a muted color or glass.

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205 **C18. Swing Sets.** Swing sets are permitted in back yards.

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207 **Section D: Procedures**

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209 **D1. Designation.** In this section, "chairperson" also includes any ARB member designated by
210 the ARB chairperson to perform chairperson duties in her or his absence.

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212 **D2. Application.**

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214 D2.1. An owner shall submit to the ARB plans and specifications showing the nature, kind,
215 shape, height, materials, and location of any proposed construction, installation, or
216 landscaping changes to her or his property, unless it is explicitly permitted under these rules.

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218 D2.2. The preferred method of applying to the ARB is electronic submission. However, a
219 paper application may be mailed to the ARB chairperson or hand-delivered in person to any
220 ARB member.

221

222 D2.3. Applications must contain either a completed copy of the application form most recently
223 approved and publicized by the ARB or the equivalent information and one (1) copy each of
224 the plot plan, the landscaping plans, blueprints for additions and outbuildings, and plans for
225 minor objects. The blueprints or plans should include dimensions and materials. Samples of
226 the materials should be submitted if possible.

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228 D2.4. Photographs or renderings of similar completed projects may be submitted to aid in the
229 ARB's decision.

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231 **D3. Receipt of Applications.**

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233 D3.1. Within one week of receiving an application, the chairperson shall notify the applicant
234 that her or his application has been successfully received, review it for completeness, and, if it
235 is incomplete, notify the applicant of its deficiencies.

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237 D3.2. The 30-day review period begins at the time an application is received.

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239 **D4. Review of Applications.** The ARB shall review each application to determine if it
240 complies with the DCR and the s ACR. Action on an application requires a majority vote of the
241 ARB.

242
243 **D5. Timing.** The applicant must be given a response within 30 days after receipt of the
244 completed application, or else the application is automatically approved.¹⁴ Construction on an
245 approved project must begin within one (1) year of approval and be completed within three (3)
246 years of submission or else a new application must be filed.¹⁵

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248 **D6. Notification of ARB Decisions.**

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250 D6.1. Notices to the applicant shall be in written or electronic form.

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252 D6.2. If an application is approved, the ARB shall so notify the applicant.

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254 D6.3. If an application is not approved, the ARB shall give the applicant prompt notice of the
255 decision and the reasons for rejection.

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257 **D7. Appeal of an Adverse ARB Decision.** The applicant may appeal an adverse decision of
258 the ARB to the Board of Directors, which may by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote reverse or modify the
259 decision of the ARB.¹⁵

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261 **D8. Records.** The chairperson shall retain for three (3) years from the date each application
262 was received a copy of the application and all accompanying documents, all relevant notes
263 made by the ARB, a record of any action taken, and the date the applicant was notified of the
264 decision.

¹⁴ From DCR §6.4

¹⁵ See DCR §6.4