

## **HELPFUL TIPS FOR RESIDENTS PLANNING CHANGES TO THE EXTERIOR OF THEIR HOME**

As a deed-restricted community, most changes to the exterior of Watercrest homes and/or properties require approval from our **Architectural Review Committee (ARC)**. The ARC is a 5-member resident committee tasked with reviewing such requests in light of our governing documents: The **Declaration of Restrictions** and the **Community Wide Standards (CWS)**.

By carefully following a few easy steps, you can help turn your plans into reality:

1. Visit [www.mywatercrest.com](http://www.mywatercrest.com) to access the Declaration of Restrictions and the CWS, to determine whether your planned modification is permitted in Watercrest and what requirements must be met. This is a crucial step, to avoid delays and disappointment later in the process. Check both documents, not only under the headings for your proposed project (Decorative Objects, Exterior Lighting, Gutters, Pools, Fences, Lanai, Landscape, Hurricane Protection, for example), but also other headings that may apply, such as Setback Lines, Trees, Drainage and Easements.
2. Download and print the **ARC Request Form** (available on [www.mywatercrest.com](http://www.mywatercrest.com)).
3. Complete the form carefully, including all relevant information and supporting documents. **Ensuring that nothing is missing will vastly increase your chances of getting a straightforward approval.** Any modification that changes the footprint on your property (landscaping, pool, fence, extended lanai, for example) will need a **marked survey**, showing the details, to scale, of your proposed changes, including dimensions and setbacks from lot lines. More complicated projects, such as pools and extended lanais, will also need supporting diagrams, contractor info, landscape plans, and copies of any County permits required for moving or replacing trees.
4. It is highly recommended that plans for any project needing a building or tree permit from the County **be first submitted to the ARC for approval**, as restrictions in our governing documents may be more stringent than those required by the County (pool cage setbacks, for example). Delays can occur to projects that receive County approval first, then do not meet Watercrest requirements, and subsequently have to go back to the County for approval of revisions.
5. Submit your ARC request and supporting documents to the ARC at [watercrest.arc.assistant.chair@gmail.com](mailto:watercrest.arc.assistant.chair@gmail.com). Your application will be reviewed and decided upon by the ARC at its next regular meeting, typically held the first and third Wednesdays of each month. Shortly thereafter, you will receive an email notifying you whether your request has been **approved** (with stipulations), **denied** (with an explanation and recommended next steps) or **tabled** (pending further research or owner information).
6. It is important to note that **work on any exterior project must not begin until you have received written ARC approval**, in order to avoid the risk of a stop work order, removal of the project or fines.
7. There are no restrictions, and no requirement for ARC approval, for decorative objects and potted plants placed ***entirely*** within the home's covered entryway, covered lanai or any caged area, unless they are obviously obtrusive to the community color scheme or overall period theme. Obtrusive noise and light restrictions do apply, however. Exterior holiday decorations are specifically addressed in the CWS.

Observing these guidelines can greatly facilitate approval of your exterior project and make the process efficient and trouble-free. **The ARC approves over 90% of the fully researched and sufficiently**

**documented requests it receives.** A submitted and approved ARC request ensures that you will not have to worry about receiving violation notices for making exterior changes without ARC approval. Please note that the ARC does not search out or report violations; such reports under the purview of the Compliance Committee or Sunstate Management only.

Now get out pencil and paper and start planning! Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact **ARC Chair, Pam Matsanka, at [watercrest.arc.pchair@gmail.com](mailto:watercrest.arc.pchair@gmail.com)** or **Assistant ARC Chair, Diane Sale, at [watercrest.arc.assistant.chair@gmail.com](mailto:watercrest.arc.assistant.chair@gmail.com).**