



Architectural Review Board Guidelines

The purpose of the Bell Tower design review process is to establish and protect community design standards and also to protect property values of Bell Tower on a best effort basis. The Design Review Board (DRB)/Architectural Review Board will make all considerable effort to assist owners, design professionals and contractors during this process. All binding decisions and rulings of the DRB will be in written form. All oral representatives of any DRB decisions or advice shall be non-binding.

The creation of the DRB is required by Article 1 of the Bell Tower Declaration of Protective Covenants, Property Owner's Association and Restrictions of Use dated May 7, 2018 as filed in Columbia County, Georgia. The Bell Tower Property Owners Association (BTPOA) and/or the Design Review Board (DRB) are not responsible for the craftsmanship or conformity with the contractual specifications of any construction. This is a matter between the owner and the contractor. No warranty or representation is made to or should be indicated by any individual owner that the actions of the DRB is issuance of permits, inspections, and approval of the construction or otherwise is intended as an approval of the quality, safety, desirability or suitability of such design or construction.

No structures or things (including docks) shall be placed, erected, or installed upon any site except those in compliance with the Bell Tower Declaration of Protective Covenants, Property Owner's Association and Restrictions of Use, as well as this ARBG document. All work done on-site will also be in compliance with these (ARBG) documents. Clearing and construction can only commence when the applicant receives written approval of the Bell Tower DRB and all other permits Columbia County requires. The Bell Tower final approval form must accompany the County building permit request. If, for some reason, Columbia County Does not accept Bell Tower DRB approved plans, it will be the responsibility of the applicant to make all necessary changes based on the County review and submit those revised plans to the DRB. During construction all permits must be displayed on the builders construction sign at the front of the lot.

The process will consist of the following steps:

Preliminary Design Review (Optional but suggested) – The DBR encourages but does not require applicants to request a preliminary review of the conceptual plans and sketches thus allowing an opinion and/or suggestions as to the suitability and harmony of a design or concept with community criteria. The preliminary review is to facilitate the applicant in avoiding the expense of changing detailed plans.

Full Design Review – The full application packet requires a completed application form and One (1) complete (minimum 11x17 at EXACTLY a 50% Reduction or full size) set of building plans that accurately represent the proposed structure to scale. The review package includes the following:

- Site layout – Site survey (topographical by licensed surveyor) showing location of the home and any additional structures and the finished floor elevation of the structure. In addition, to the structure footprints, location of driveways, walkways, fences, patios, decks and other improvements must also

be shown. Proposed silt fence location and drainage plan showing direction and means of water removal in a manner that does not adversely affect adjacent properties. For River front lots, initial submission must include identification of the trees marked for removal that are 6 inches in diameter or greater (at breast height) as they must have approval by the DRB. It is intended that “Mature Trees” (in excess of 24 inches in diameter at breast height) are to be protected and in some instances would require Columbia County approval as well. **No site work can be done until approved by Matt Eschelbach, 706-651-0114 office number and 706-825-7472 cellular phone number.**

Building Plans – One (1) full set of building plans is required. Currently the minimum heated square feet allowable in the “Main House” is 2,200 sq. ft. and the maximum heated square feet allowable in the “Main House” is 7,500 sq. ft. excluding basement, porches, etc. If there are multiple structures to be built on the site a construction-phasing plan must also be submitted. The building plans are to be of a readable scale and include:

- Foundation Plan
- Floor Plans including room dimensions and square footage of all levels including plumbing fixture locations and electrical layouts
- Exterior elevations – all sides including specific roof pitches, roof materials, overhangs, exterior finishes marked on the plans and exterior lighting
- Roof Plans
- Exterior material list – explaining materials to be used and colors, samples of each of the actual exterior materials must be submitted with the package.
- Landscape Plan – Initial submission made with design review package should include general landscaping plan for property. Final landscaping plan must be approved by the DRB prior to the Certificate of Compliance being issued by the DRB and Certificate of Occupancy by Columbia County. Installation of underground sprinkler systems in the county right of way is prohibited.

DRB Meetings – The DRB will meet as required to review plans. At the time of application the building corners must be marked and connected with string. Trees over 6 inches in diameter at breast height proposed to be removed must be banded with orange ribbon at that time. A written response, as to the status of the request, will be sent by the DRB to the applicant within 10 days of the review meeting. The DRB could require additional information, approve submissions in whole or in part or disapprove the submission entirely. Approvals of plans are good for six (6) months from the date of approval. Once construction begins, construction must be completed within twelve (12) months of the issue date of the Columbia County building permit. The DRB will submit approved packages to the Declarant/Developer – Rivergate Development, LLC who will have the final approval.

Variations to DRB Guidelines – Variations may be issued by the DRB, in writing, when circumstances such as topography, natural obstructions, hardship, aesthetic or environmental considerations, or when design merit warrants. No variance shall be effective unless it is in writing, be contrary to the Covenants, Restrictions, and Limitations, or keep the DRB from denying any future variations. The inability to obtain approval of any governmental agency, the issuance of any permit, or the terms of any financing shall not be considered a hardship warranting a variance.

DRB fees and Construction Deposit - A non-refundable application fee of \$600 shall be submitted with the full design review package. DRB usage of Architects and other professionals will be compensated from the application fee unless there is an extraordinary expense. In the event there is expenses greater than \$600 for the review process, the applicant will be notified in advance of further reviews. Prior to actual construction or clearing of the property, a \$3,500.00 construction deposit shall be placed with the Bell Tower Property Owners Association. This deposit is to provide security against any violations or any damage to Common Property and other portions of Bell Tower and may be in addition to any other fines or damages. If there are no violations and

no damage, the deposit will be returned at the project completion. Any damage to common property, road rights-of-way must be corrected prior to the final inspection. Construction activity can occur from 7AM to 7PM on weekdays and Saturdays – no construction work may occur on Sundays or major Holidays.

Inspections, Construction Sites and Fines – The DRB will make an inspection for the initial site, random site inspections of construction sites during construction and one scheduled site inspection at the time a final Certificate of Compliance is requested. Erosion control devices, tree protection, portable toilet, dumpster and electrical and water service must be provided and maintained at each construction site in an inconspicuous location. Sites must also be kept in a clean and organized manner and construction activity and parking should not interfere with or damage any adjacent properties, sidewalks, paths, landscaping or roadways. Any dirt, sand or mud deposited on adjacent roadways, sidewalks, paths or walking trails must be cleaned up at the end of each work day. No burning is allowed on construction sites at any time. All personnel on a construction site must conduct themselves in a courteous manner and not unreasonably disturb community residents. The DRB at its discretion may impose fines on construction sites for various reasons. Examples of those fines and when they would occur is available from the DRB.

Lot under Brushing Permits – Limited Lot under brushing is the only clearing that can be done prior to a building permit being issued and only after under brushing plans have been approved by the DRB. In no case will any tree other than those approved by the DRB be removed larger than 4 inches in diameter at ground level. Removal of native ornamental trees or shrubs such as dogwood, redbud, holly, etc. is prohibited regardless of size. The DRB will review the under brushing request and the DRB is responsible for issuing the permit.

Final Certificate of Compliance – Upon request of the applicant stating that all improvements are in compliance with the submitted plans and applicable requirements of the design guidelines and application package, the DRB will conduct a final review of the property. As a condition of this final review, an as-built survey (prepared by a registered surveyor) may be required showing all improvements including structure, walks, decks, patios, walls, fences, topography etc. After a thorough inspection by the DRB and upon the issuance of the Certificate of Compliance, all or part of the construction deposit will be returned in compliance with the Covenants, Restrictions and Limitations.

Access Apron Construction – The interface between the County right of way and a particular Site is very important for drainage patterns and will be constructed / finalized by the Builder. The Builder is responsible for keeping a free and clear drive. If it be necessary the Developer can assess the Builder for corrective work required by the County guidelines.

Miscellaneous Requirements:

- Home businesses are allowed in Bell Tower as long as they do not create any extraordinary traffic within the Bell Tower Development. No signs advertising the business will be visible to the neighbors or residents. No equipment peculiar to a business will be visible to neighbors or residents. There will be no excessive deliveries or shipments by package services.
- Fences are allowed but must be approved by the DRB. Fences must be aesthetically pleasing and made from acceptable materials. Examples of acceptable fence materials are wood, primarily wood with brick / stone columns matching façade of the home and certain black aluminum fencing which are all subject to the DRB approval. Fences can be no higher than 6 feet. All wood fencing will be painted the color “Caribou” (a Sherwin Williams Woodscape acrylic solid color stain).
- Basketball Goals – must meet requirements set forth in the covenants section 3-7.
- Underground fencing is acceptable, however: the small flags denoting the area must be removed within 75 days.

- A maximum of three household pets can be kept on any one site. Dog runs must be in the rear of the property made of materials consistent with the residence and not visible from the street.
- Swing sets and other outdoor children’s play equipment must be of a natural color and materials and approved by the DRB. Any plastic slides or the like should be dark green or brown.
- Freestanding flag poles are prohibited – Flag poles may be attached to the house at a 15-30 degree angle and flags shall be no larger than 4 feet by 3 feet.
- Storage Buildings – Must be approved by the DRB and be of the same materials and architectural design as the main dwelling. No pre-manufactured buildings are permitted.
- Mailbox – Bell Tower will have a mail box kiosk center to serve all residents. Keys will be provided upon approval and issuance of the certificate of compliance by the DRB.
- Driveways – Must be hard surface concrete unless approved specifically by the DRB. Driveways shall be a maximum of 9’0” in width between the lot line and the curb. A decorative driveway apron is encouraged but style, size and surface material must be approved by the DRB. Any surfaces such as pea gravel, sand, shell, etc. must be away from the primary roads and must have wooden or metal edging.
- Trails – Only non-motorized vehicles will be permitted on the trails. Golf carts, motorcycles and go-karts are strictly prohibited except for the golf cart utilized for the Bell Tower Sales Team or a disabled property owner.

Signs –

- Lots with no homes either under construction or completed:
 - The developers reserves the right to mark sold lots on the black lot posts which identify the lots in Bell Tower.
- Resale Homes:
 - “For Sale” or “Available” are permitted but must be on a Bell Tower approved neighborhood sign. A small sign announcing an open house is allowed on the day of the open house – this sign must be taken down immediately after the open house time frame is over.
- New Homes Under Construction:
 - Bell Tower builders may place a small builders sign not more than four (4) square feet (denoting their name and a provided space for the necessary permits). A brochure information box is allowed at the base of this sign. A separate sign may also contain a small status sign, i.e., “Available”, “Under Contract”, and “Open House”. This sign must be on the Bell Tower logo neighborhood sign and is allowed until the home is sold to a private party and the transaction closed. No other sign is allowed.
- **No subcontractor, landscape or vendor signs are allowed during or after the construction of any home at any time.**

The following protective measures for the Savannah River Corridor Buffer Area are consistent with Columbia County ordinance which is based upon a state of Georgia statute that was created to protect the Savannah River shore line. The Buffer area is clearly identified on each plat.

- Any proposed activity within the Buffer Area must be approved by the Bell Tower Design Review Board prior to that activity taking place to insure that the activity meets the guidelines set forth by the Design Review Board, Columbia County and the state of Georgia. Failure to comply with the necessary protective measures may result in the issuance of citations to the lot owner and/or the parties conducting activities within the buffer.
- The review by the Design Review Board will only be made after a plat and scaled drawing is presented complete with materials to be used and manner of construction. “Manner of construction” will include land disturbing activity such as the removal or cutting of land vegetation.

- No structure such as part of the home, swimming pool, pet house, storage facility, etc. may be constructed in the Buffer Area as defined by the property plat.
- Limited installation of fencing is allowed within the buffer area subject to the following guidelines: The Bell Tower Design Review Board may decline any request in its' sole discretion should it determine that the proposed improvements are detrimental to any other property owner or the Bell Tower Community.

Bell Tower Design Specifications:

ORIENTATION OF A BUILDING

Buildings will relate directly to the street and be sited accordingly. Corner lots which have multiple frontage sites will be positioned such that best establishes the front entry in relation to the neighborhood. This will be at the sole discretion of the DRB. Corner buildings should address both of the streets they are fronting.

ENTRY WAY

The primary entrance (front door) to a home shall embody the character, scale, proportion and detail of the overall house and its appropriate architectural style. The entry shall be easily identifiable from the street. A walkway of an approved material shall extend from the sidewalk to the steps, stoop or porch of the entry. When a porch is not provided, the entry shall provide at least minimal protection from the elements. Over scaled, out of proportion, over bearing or deeply recessed entries are prohibited.

GAS LANTERNS

Each home shall place a gas lantern on the street-facing (front elevation) side of the property and shall be visible from the street. It can be a single gas lantern hanging over the entry door or post mounted along the sidewalk connecting driveway to front door but in the close proximity to the front entry door. It can also be a pair or pairs of gas lanterns mounted as sconce lanterns on each side of the front entry door or several hanging lanterns on a front porch or any combination thereof. The required lantern(s) shall be copper or black in color. The DRB will provide the approved brand, model & size specification for each homeowner to purchase. It is important for Bell Tower to have continuity in respect to this theme throughout the neighborhood.

PORCHES

Porches are encouraged when appropriate to the overall architectural character and style of the home. Porches must either be a part of the entry to the home and or as outdoor living space. Porches which visually appears as “usable” must be designed with a minimum depth of 8’-0”. The materials, scale, proportion and details shall be harmonious to the overall architectural character and style of the home. Porches to the side or rear of the home in which the floor level is more than 3’-0” above finished grade shall have heavy timber or masonry piers or support columns. A solid masonry base / skirt wall is also acceptable.

DOORS, SIDELIGHTS AND TRANSOMS

Front entrance doors will be designed or selected to complement the design and character of the entry and overall architecture of the home. 8'-0" tall entrance doors are required where appropriate to style and proportions of the house. 6'-8" tall doors with the use of sidelights and transoms must be approved by the DRB and shall be harmonious to overall entry design. Metal, molded or full glass French doors are not permitted for use as a front door. Sidelights, if used shall match the design of the front entrance door. Transoms shall have a minimum glass height of 12" and shall be incorporated as a single door/transom unit with continuous casing trim. Two-story, over-scaled or separate transoms are prohibited. Security or storm doors are allowable if the color, material and design match the front entrance door and if approved by the DRB after review of full submittal of design details or sample.

WINDOWS

Window types, sizes, design, trim and location shall be appropriately styled and selected to be compatible with the homes overall design and character. Windows shall be (wood clad, vinyl clad or aluminum clad) as approved by the DRB. Face flange vinyl windows in which the window is not in-set into the framed rough opening is not permitted. If used, window muntins shall be true or simulated divided lights which are compatible to the architectural character of the house. Windows that are simple without muntins or grids require approval. Windows shall be vertically proportioned and head heights shall be in proper proportion to the scale of the house. Windows that are shaped, undersized, short or multi-arched or are not permitted. Size, style and type of window shall be consistent on all sides or façade. Brick mold casing shall only be used when appropriate to the architecture. Wider casing, head trim or special molding shall be appropriately sized and detailed. Multiple windows shall have a minimum of 4" mullion between the windows. When window sizes change on any elevation, proportion the bar/muntin grids as close as possible to the ratio of height vs width of the grids of all sizes of windows.

SHUTTERS

When shutters are used they shall be appropriate to the architectural design and style of the home. Shutters shall be sized to match the window opening and shall be mounted on hinges and held in place with hold backs or shutter dogs located along the bottom rail. "False" decorative shutters mounted directly to the wall and shutters which do not match the height and ½ the width of the window opening are prohibited. Shutters for double or grouped windows are not permitted unless they are actually sized to match the total width of the opening or made bi-folded so if closed, they would cover the entire sash.

DORMERS

Dormers shall be composed as a secondary architectural element or form used in a functional or nonfunctional fashion to compliment the primary form of the main structure. The mass and composition shall be composed in an understandable and straightforward manner and shall maintain the character and style of the design. Overly complex or contrived forms, offsets, projections and the resulting forms are prohibited. Rafter bearing heights, overhang dimensions, cornice and rake details shall be carefully studied and crafted to comply with the appropriate style. Typically, dormer roofs shall be hipped, gabled, shed or arched depending on the character of the home. In general, dormers shall be vertically scaled and proportioned and shall tightly frame an appropriately sized and styled window. Dormer overhangs and rakes shall be tight to the main body of the

dormer and shall be consistent on all three sides. Avoid excess space between the roof intersection and the window sill. As well as space wider than the jamb casing width at the sides of the window.

COLUMNS

The frieze board / beam and its relationship to the appropriate selection, detailing and implementation to columns is critical in obtaining approval for an appropriate house design in Bell Tower.

Whether square, round, custom milled, masonry or built-up, columns shall be appropriate to the design of the house and the details from final grade to the roof shall be properly designed. The construction documents must contain details which clearly illustrate the style, components, size and location of any column and the relationship to the frieze board or beam. The outside face of any column shaft shall align with the outside face of the frieze board or beam above. The column cap shall project beyond the face of the frieze board or beam, both at the inside and outside face of the column shaft and beam above. The column base is typically larger than the cap and will be, or “appear” as solid stone, brick or wood. With special attention to detail, a design shall maintain the desired look while providing proper / adequate ventilation as required. Visible aluminum vent blocks are not permitted. The foundation or porch edge must be extended beyond the edge of the frieze or beam above to ensure proper column alignment. This must be properly detailed on the plans and construction documents. All columns shall be of wood, masonry, or a composite material and properly flashed to allow for longevity.

CORNICES AND RAKES

Cornices and rakes and their relationship to the appropriate selection, detailing and implementation with the home is critical in obtaining approval for an appropriate house design. A cornice may be used as a cap at the top of a building wall if appropriate to the design of the building. A cornice shall be proportioned to define the top of the building wall, but not overpower or fight the façade elements beneath and shall project out horizontally from the vertical wall plane to create a dimensional depth and shadow on the façade.

The construction plans / documents must contain details and sections which clearly illustrate the style, components, sizes and location of any cornice and rake. Research and care should be taken to assure the details proposed are appropriate for style, materials and overall design characteristics of a home. Box cornice or “pork chop” cornice returns will not be permitted as seen on many tract houses. Vinyl or aluminum soffit and fascia is not permitted.

GARAGES

The location and scale of a garage shall not compete with or overpower the primary body of the house. Garage elements, design, materials and detailing shall be of similar quality to the house. A garage which is visible from the street or public view shall receive careful design attention and shall compliment the primary design overall.

Acceptable garage locations are:

- Basement or lower level, as grade allows, entered from the side.

- To the side of the primary house (side entry), but set a minimum 15'-0" behind the main body of the House and shaded by a minimum 2'0" overhang or trellis. If a full front porch is provided, the minimum recess of the garage may be reduced by the depth of the porch.
- Corner street access garages - When garage doors do not face the street the garage shall be designed integrally with the house and of complimentary design. If garage doors face the street, the garage design shall meet the requirements of a front street access garage.
- Forward street facing, side entry, two-bay courtyard style or any garages seen from public view must be an over-lay or true raised panel carriage style or a flush plank metal embossed garage door, all subject to approval by the DRB.
- A two-bay garage, courtyard style application is acceptable. The two-bay garage building should appear detached from the primary house with a low-pitched single story covered walk or breezeway connecting the structures. Only two-bay courtyard designs are permitted and shall be noted as a carriage house. Garage doors must be an overlay / raised panel carriage style and recessed a minimum of 30".
- Side entry and front entry garages which are placed beyond the rear corner of the main house dwelling are also permitted. These buildings should appear detached in nature with a low-pitched single story covered walk or breezeway connecting the structures. For this application, the forward facing garage must be an overlay / raised panel carriage style and recessed a minimum of 30". The side entry in the application shall have either the overlay / raised panel carriage style or the flush plank metal embossed garage doors, all subject to approval by the DRB.

“False panel” or “metal stamped doors” are not permitted. When possible garage doors shall be single bay in width and 8'0" tall. Street or forward facing garage doors shall be recessed 30 inches within the wall plane with the addition of a pergola or porch type roof extended above to minimize the impact. For this specific design criteria regarding forward facing garages, each house plan will be reviewed on a case by case basis with consideration to the overall design and architectural elements of the home. Garage doors shall be painted a dark or ‘recessive’ color in lieu of typical lighter trim color to minimize the scale and impact.

FRONT YARD TREATMENT

Front yard shall contain, at a minimum, lawn or other ground cover, shrubbery, flowering or specimen trees and perennials and/or annuals. Planting beds shall generally be regular and geometrically shaped. The location of landscape elements in each front yard shall reinforce the architectural elements and lines of the building and neighborhood streetscape.

FOUNDATION PLANTINGS

The visible exposed base of all residential buildings shall be planted with primarily evergreen shrubbery, a minimum of 2'0" tall and 3'0" on center. If a brick base is provided on the building, then foundation plantings may be reduced.

ELEVATIONS OF FINISHED FLOOR AND CEILING HEIGHT

The finished first floor height of the main house shall be a minimum of 24" above finished grade for the front façade. The front porch façade shall have a minimum finished floor elevation of 21" above finished grade.

First floor ceiling heights shall be a minimum of 10'-0" and the second floor height shall be a minimum of 9'-0" unless specifically approved by the DRB.

Make sure to clearly illustrate your finished floor elevation, ceiling heights and finish grade elevations for the main house and porches on your plans and construction documentation for the review process.

Building footprints including porches and entry locations, should generally vary from adjacent buildings.

MISCELLANEOUS

When siding or shakes are used for the majority of the exterior façade, a stone or brick base / skirt is required.

Aluminum siding, vinyl siding, E.I.F.S. or soft coat stucco is not permitted.

Any change in material on the outside façade of the house must occur at an appropriate inside corner.

Approved roof materials include the following: architectural asphalt or fiberglass shingles, wood shingles or shakes, slate or synthetic slate, pre-finished standing seam metal or copper.

Approved Exterior porch flooring materials include the following: wood decking, brick, stone, tile or slate. Wood decking shall be painted or stained in an appropriate color approved by the DRB. All concrete porches shall have brick, stone or other decorative edging.

Provide gutter and downspout location, size and color on your plans and specifications for DRB review.

Provide all exterior colors (main body, trim / cornice, any metal roofing, window color, door color, brick / stone and mortar color, shutter color, garage door color, gutter color and any other accent design colors.

The goal is to create a neighborhood of well-designed / quality built homes which compliment each other and the neighborhood as a whole.