

## ASHBOROUGH GUIDELINES FOR ARB DECISIONS

Protecting resident property value is the primary purpose of an ARB. This is done by maintaining a sense of aesthetics that is consistent with our covenants and reflects the practices of similarly valued neighborhoods. If our property value suffers as little as one percent compared to competing neighborhoods it costs Ashborough residents about one million dollars. In many respects the guidelines can be thought of as the golden rule "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you".

- 1) If the requested change to an owner's property were to be instituted throughout the subdivision - would the property values of Ashborough likely go up or down. If the answer is down, then the request would likely be denied.**

We don't feel we have the right to grant changes for individual homeowners when the proposed change would have a negative effect on Ashborough if everyone were allowed to do the same thing. That would be favoritism.

Example 1: a homeowner wants to cover his front yard with gravel to cut down on yard care. *If all Ashborough residents were to gravel their yards, property values would surely suffer. We would have to deny permission.*

Example 2: a homeowner wants to remove a healthy grand tree causing no damage and even has Dorchester county approval. *An important part of the value of Ashborough is the large lots with mature trees. If one person can cut down healthy trees then all could. We would strive for a compromise - if none could be reached we would have to deny permission.*

- 2) If the requested change would negatively affect the property values or 'livability' of an immediate neighbor, then the request would be denied.**

In the past we put residents on the spot by asking whether they objected to their neighbor making this or that modification. Residents have told us they have been uncomfortable in speaking out against proposed changes - trying to be a "good neighbor".

The ARB will try to make these decisions without pitting neighbor against neighbor.

Example: a request is made for a storage shed that, by itself, does not reduce the property values of the neighborhood. *However, if the requested location of the shed is out of the normal line of sight of the owner (they don't want to have to look at it) but it is an eyesore to the next door neighbor, the **site location** would not be approved.*

- 3) If property is in such a condition that adjacent property values are being affected then corrective action needs to be taken.**

If you are trying to sell your house and the realtor tells you the condition of your neighbor's property will reduce your asking price - you have a problem. The ARB and Covenants committees need to act to insure property maintenance and/or unauthorized changes are addressed in a timely fashion.

Example: *shingles sliding off the roof, dangling shutters, broken yard ornaments, garage doors not painted to match trim, yard care significantly below the neighborhood average, vehicles visible in the back yard, etc.*