



**Architectural Code**  
COLUMBIA COUNTY, GEORGIA



## Architectural Code

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The fundamental premise in designing Tudor Branch was to create an enjoyable, pedestrian friendly community by promoting the neighborhood's public space and the abundance of the surrounding natural beauty. The community offers a solid balance of home sizes through the several independent neighborhoods within the master plan. Understanding that people maintain different housing needs, based upon family size, age, physical disability or income level, this community offers opportunities for a larger spectrum of housing type in a manner which is conscious of value growth and desirability. Like the communities and small towns throughout the United States which maintain their appeal and character through the participation of many, the designers of Tudor Branch understand how these time tested community attributes can be translated into a most desirable suburban setting.

At the heart of this setting is the common interest to preserve, as best as possible, the community's beautiful natural space within the Tudor Branch Wilderness Preserve. The "Preserve" serves to connect all of the neighborhoods of Tudor Branch, both physically and through the broader mission of conservation and restoration of our natural areas.



*The Wilderness Preserve connects all neighborhoods within Tudor Branch.*

With the basic development mission in mind, the Tudor Branch Architectural Code (the Code) was created to generally define how the private homes and the public realm of the Preserve can coexist in a harmonious manner. While the broader premises of the Code attempt to articulate the basic architectural flavor of the community, with emphasis on a simpler and more historically oriented Southern design palette, the more specific terms of the Code define standards which are meant to protect both property values and the overall aesthetic integrity of the public space. This will be considered through consideration of: a) homesite location and other site issues; b) sensitivity to unique landscape features; c) architecture/design.

In reading the Code people should understand that its intent is not so much restrictive, but designed to illustrate, as clearly as possible, a vision which will ultimately offer property owners a most helpful tool when designing or renovating a residence or improvement. While this vision does focus on the vernacular architecture of central Georgia, it also brings into light the important needs relating to technology and ecology.



*The code is not so much restrictive, but rather designed to illustrate architectural vision for the community.*

While the Code does not presume to dictate design issues which are more lifestyle and budget oriented, its very nature encourages a more thoughtful approach to the building process and its implications on our future. From a technological perspective, property owners are encouraged to try and anticipate the, often times, mind boggling changes in technological standards. This will both ensure that a homeowner is equipped with certain basic tools, which will hopefully bolster property values at the time of resale. From an ecological perspective, property owners are simply asked to remain conscious



*Emphasis is placed on a simpler, more historically orientated, southern design palette.*

of the community’s larger mission. This should encourage people to pursue designs which are compatible with the natural surroundings and, hopefully, go the extra mile in the use of Green Building practices, which should have long term economic benefits to both the homeowner, as individual, and the community at large.

Great care has been taken in the planning and promotion of Tudor Branch. To this end, it is only appropriate that equal care be given to the establishment of new homes which are consistent with the community vision.

### Architectural Standards

Given the wonderful variety of housing opportunities at Tudor Branch, a plan review process has been established to promote quality and consistency in design. The authority of the Code is specified in the Community Charter of Tudor Branch. While the Charter does not refer to specific design and approval items, they authorize the creation of the Design Review Committee (DRC), whose role will be to oversee the review and approval process. The DRC is authorized to utilize its discretion to interpret the applicability of specific items outlined in the Code; as related to each home or item submitted for review. Over time, as design and construction processes evolve, the DRC may elect to make alterations to the Code, with the endorsement of the Property Owners Association Board of Directors (Board); however, in general, the DRC will do its best to encourage aesthetic harmony between buildings and the surrounding environment.



*Certain typical features in a design will ensure that aesthetic harmony is preserved between buildings and the surrounding environment.*

The DRC will consist of three members appointed by the Board. Additionally, the Board may select a professional architect or designer to assist in the review and approval process.

Prior to the commencement of any construction activity on any homesite or existing home, the proposed work must be first approved by the DRC.

## Pre-Approval Considerations

While each property owner and builder should become familiar with the Code and the overall community vision, it will be most helpful to also understand other regulatory issues involved with constructing and renovating a home.

Columbia County, through its planning department, maintains jurisdiction over the community. They should always be consulted to ensure compliance with all of the local ordinances and regulations (i.e.: code issues; maximum number of people allowed to reside a dwelling, etc.). Of primary concern is soil and erosion control, from both the County and State level. The current law requires that each person constructing a residence in Tudor Branch must submit appropriate documentation demonstrating Best Management practices both to the County and to the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) for soil and erosion control. Enforcement of soil and erosion issues is beyond the scope of the Code and the Community Charter; however, every property owner should understand the importance of compliance with these regulations and the possibility of severe penalties in the event of non-compliance. Soil and erosion control is required by and enforced by both Columbia County and the State EPD.



The final consideration should relate to drainage from the residence and homesite to other properties. Given the often-times hilly nature of Columbia County, homes will create drainage issues to and from each homesite. Consequently, care should be given to the consideration of drainage impacts from one resident to another. Because the DRC cannot serve as an arbiter of issues relating to drainage from one home to another, property owners should pay careful attention to this issue to avoid disputes or possible expense in the future. Equal care should also be given to homes bordering the Tudor Branch Wilderness Preserve, to ensure that storm drainage does not adversely impact this beautiful resource.

## Preliminary Review

The DRC encourages everyone building in the community for the first time to participate in a preliminary design review with the Tudor Branch sales staff. While not required, and while the sales staff is not authorized to approve or disapprove any plan submittals, a brief meeting with the sales team will help property owners familiarize themselves with the Code, as well as review some general design considerations which make the review process more efficient and affordable. This process may also be helpful in familiarizing property owners with interesting new home construction and design trends.



*Front entry garages will be considered, provided that the garage is set back from the front elevation, or additional architectural elements are added to soften the dominance of the front entry.*



*Plan approval will consider elevation contact with the surrounding area and proposed landscaping. Landscaping will serve an important role in completing the design.*

### Design Review and Final Approval

Design review is intended to be simple and straightforward for all applicants. Upon the completion of plans for new construction, renovation or other improvement, two copies of the final design package should be submitted to the DRC. The final package should include:

- 1) Scale site plan, showing existing topography, proposed finish grades, significant trees, other unique site features and any extreme site conditions, illustrating the footprint of the home and other proposed structures (decks, fences, etc.).
- 2) Front, side and rear elevations
- 3) Floor plans
- 4) Landscape plan
- 5) Exterior color selection

While the landscape plan and color selections are not required upon the initial review, they must be submitted for review prior to final approval.

Final approval will be granted upon completion of the home, when a brief site visit will confirm compliance. This site visit will review compliance with the basic plans, landscaping and color selection.

### Criteria

**Construction:** Construction must be completed within one year from the commencement of construction, unless written permission has been obtained from the DRC.

**Site Maintenance:** Every vacant homesite must be kept clear of wind-blown debris and maintained in general good condition, as defined by the DRC. Care should be taken throughout the construction process to ensure that homesites are kept reasonably clean at all times. Builders will be responsible for the debris of the subcontractors.

**Grading:** On steeply sloping lots, builders may be required to provide additional fill material to ensure that the home is sited at an elevation consistent with other homes on the street. Homeowners and builders are to take into consideration existing drainage swells, which may exist or be required between homes, or between the home and the Preserve, in hilly areas.

**Home Size:** The Tudor Branch DRC does not define minimum square footages for each of its neighborhoods; however, plans for homes which are conspicuously smaller must demonstrate a greater degree of architectural detail and other value criteria for DRC approval.

**Siding:** The dominant veneer material should be of brick, stucco, stone, hardiboard (or other comparable masonry siding) or high grade wood siding (cypress or cedar). Vinyl siding in limited use (dormers, gables, etc.) will be considered on a case by case basis, provided that samples of a high quality choice are submitted to the DRC.

**Garages:** Side entry garages are preferable and may be required on estate homesites. Front entry garages may be considered with certain conditions. For consideration, any front entry garage elevation must be at least 5 feet behind the primary front elevation of the home and/or the garage door opening(s) must provide for additional architectural elements to soften the dominance of the front entry (i.e.: shed roof; divided car ports; arched entries, etc.). Detached garages are encouraged. Carports or outdoor parking will be considered in the rear of the yard on a case by case basis, depending upon lot orientation & landscaping.



*Detached garages are encouraged. Carports or outdoor parking will be considered based upon lot orientation and landscaping.*

**Chimneys:** All exposed chimneys must be of brick, stone or stucco, as is consistent with the other materials of the home.

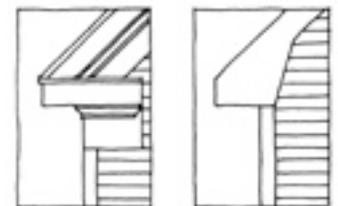
**Roofs:** A variety of roofing material are encouraged, including metal and wood shake. Asphalt shingles must be architecturally dimensional.

**Roof Accessories:** Exposed roof accessories must be located on the rear or side of homes (not facing the street) and should match, or be painted to match, the roof color.



**Accessory Buildings:** Accessory buildings must be consistent with the main structure in terms of design, color and material. No prefabricated metal buildings will be permitted. The DRC may require approval from adjoining neighbors, additional fencing and/or landscaping, depending upon site requirements.

**Cornice Return:** Only traditional cornice returns will be acceptable.



Yes  
proper cornice return, profile, crown, finish

No  
horizontal, flat cornice

**Landscaping:** Landscape plans shall demonstrate the use of sod, ground cover or ornamental grass on all portions of the yard facing the street (front and side yard on corner lots) from lot corner to lot corner. No seeded laws will be permitted in these areas. Existing trees should provide for mulch areas within the drip line. Plant material shall be of an adequate size to ensure a mature looking landscape within two growing seasons. Foundation planting shall be required on the front of all homes, and all the street side of corner lots. Native plants and shrubs are strongly recommended. A list of prohibited plant material can be obtained from the Tudor Branch site office, which will include varieties and species which are invasive, disease prone or, otherwise inconsistent with this climate zone. Homes

which border the Preserve will be required to demonstrate the use of shrubbery, trees, fences, or other acceptable hardscape items, to compliment the preserve areas and delineate the homesite from the public Preserve area. Preference will also be given to plans illustrating landscape or hardscape features which detach the front property line from the public sidewalk right-of-way.

**Street Trees:** Because of the general open nature of the Tudor Branch property, the DRC will require the installation of one street tree per residence with a minimum caliper of 3". Each neighborhood will maintain a different list of approved trees, to ensure both variety and protection of the public benefit in the event of blight or disease within a certain species.

**Sidewalks:** Each new home constructed must install concrete sidewalk, five feet wide, in the designated sidewalk easement. Sidewalks must be installed at grade with driveway crossings.

**Fences:** Privacy fences cannot exceed 5' in height, with decorative lattice, pickets, scalloped, portion not to exceed 6'. Ornamental fences and walls inside of the street side setback may not exceed four feet in height, and must be located in a consistent manner with adjoining fences and walls and in a manner which serves to compliment sidewalks and other public areas. For detailed information on fences, consult the fence handbook.

**Radio and Satellite Antennae:** Radio, TV, receiving/transmission antennae or satellite dishes must be installed in areas which is not viewed from the street and must receive DRC approval.

**Swimming Pool:** No above ground swimming pools will be allowed. Location of in-ground pools must meet approval of the DRC.

**Appurtenant Decorations:** Decorative embellishments and lawn ornaments must be consistent with the neighborhood character and may not be used conspicuously adjacent to any public area (streets or the Preserve).

## Enforcement

The DRC maintains an important, and often times time consuming role, in the community. The DRC maintains the right to enforce the terms of the Code, and shall maintain the capacity to enforce terms through the withholding of approval, the assessment of fines (to offset any expenses associated with the specific action), or by bringing legal action in the court of competent jurisdiction. Despite the sometimes specific nature of the terms contained in the Code, the DRC maintains the unfettered discretion to approve or disapprove any submittal, based upon specific circumstances. Prior approval of similar or like submittals does not create precedent which will guarantee future approvals.



*A pedestrian oriented community embraces designs which encourage community activity. Designs should compliment the public space and the natural environment.*