
VII. Navigating the HOA Covenants

As mentioned before, the common misconception of an HOA is that it has a collection of rules and regulations that limit personal freedoms and individuality. But it is those same rules and regulations that protect, preserve, and enhance the investment each of us have in our homes. Looking through the WOL HOA Covenants can sometimes be a daunting process; yet each of us moved here with the knowledge that our community was to conform to these Rules & Regulations stated in Article VI, Section 6.1 of the Covenants. This conforming not only ensures we preserve, protect, and enhance property values; but also ensures our neighborhood is clean and well maintained at all times.

In the next few pages there are a couple of items that are very important to the covenant regarding the Woodlands of Livonia Homeowners Association Architectural Control Article VIII. When dealing with the covenants it is always best to read them thoroughly and completely. The covenants are the entire document, not just one article or section. However, Article VIII of the Covenants is the only Article that requires an Architectural Control Committee Request Form be filed in order to begin any exterior project.

The first thing regarding exterior changes is something that is extremely important to a large part of our neighborhood. This is OAK WILT. Oak wilt is a disease that has spread to and killed many of our oak trees in the WOL. Included in this handbook is information regarding oak wilt. It is important that we not remove any oak trees dead or living, without having knowledge of what is necessary to remove oak trees without spreading the disease. Safest rule of thumb is, if the ground is frozen, you are safe to proceed after receiving approval from the ACC. **The only deviation as noted on the attached Oak Wilt info page is that the later summer and early fall months outlined within as “Low” risk, Sherburne County and the WOL would STILL consider this period of Higher risk** of infection from trimming and cutting of oak trees. Sherburne County has presented a projected topo-graph from overhead of what our neighborhood will look like in future decades if we do not educate ourselves on Oak Wilt and abide by the guidelines and it is a decimation of our woods none of us desires.

Within this book, in Section IX, is the form for requesting any exterior improvement, as stated in Article VIII, from the ACC. This form is used for exterior improvements on both an existing home or existing structure or building on the property, and a new home or new structure on the property. The request form is also needed for any new landscaping or existing landscape or exterior changes / improvements. The requirements of the structure and landscaping architectural allowances are detailed in the Declaration of the Covenants Article VIII.

To help you with the ACC Request for Approval for Exterior Home / Land Improvements Form (ACC Request), that is included there is also an overview guide to filing the ACC Request. This guide in no way replaces the Covenant.

Please remember, ALL of the homeowners that live in our community agreed to abide by these WOL HOA covenants and follow the Rules and Regulations within them. As mentioned in the beginning of this handbook, these covenants are designed to preserve, protect, and enhance the property values of not only our neighbors, but our own property as well.