

For New Homeowners

While you are enjoying your new home and making plans to remodel inside or out, it is important to know that it is necessary to apply to the Architecture and Landscape Committee (ALC) if the changes involve the exterior of your home or your grounds. For instance, changes like installing new windows, painting the house, removing a tree, replacing old or overgrown plantings, putting on a new roof. Before you line up an installation date, send in your application with details about the new changes you are planning. It may take up to 30 days to get approval from the ALC. It is possible that you may be required to remove some new changes if your application is not approved and you have already started work.

On this website you will find *Architecture and Landscape Regulations* that spell out the requirements for items that need pre-approval from the ALC. Take a few moments to read them over – it could save you from making some costly mistakes. The ALC's job is to ensure that the look and feel of each neighborhood remains intact. Your intentions and desires are always considered when the Committee reviews your application.

If you would like to see the Architecture and Landscape Committee at work, see how they discuss various applications, and hear the questions they ask of homeowners, you can tune in to their regular meetings on Friday mornings at 10 a.m. via Zoom.

If you are new to the plants that grow so prolifically here in Florida, the ALC has a section on this website that lists the plants that grow best here in University Park. If you are working with a landscape designer to re-landscape your yard, it is a good idea to share this plant list with them. The ALC has access to very specific information about plants that will and won't work here. Many newcomers who are unfamiliar with Florida plants waste money on flowers or shrubs that are not suited to this climate.

With the boom in building in the greater Sarasota/Bradenton area, water conservation has become a big issue. The ALC advocates the use of plants that require less water over those that are water hogs (St. Augustine grass, for instance). University Park will probably have access to less water in the not-too-distant future that will result in less watering of our thirsty lawns. So it is wise to plan for the future when re-landscaping your yard.

If you are planning a major project around your home or yard, it is wise to run it by the ALC before you sign contracts for work. The Committee may be able to guide you in ways that will save you time, money, and aggravation. The Committee is staffed entirely by unpaid volunteer homeowners just like you. They care about this community and want to help you out as our new neighbor.