

# Standard Swing Sets for Individual Lots

## Design Guidelines & Standards

the Refuge at Whitehall Owner Association, Inc.  
the Refuge at Whitehall Architectural Review Board (RWARB)  
01 August, 2010



This standard is developed and empowered per Section 5.03 of the Refuge Owner Association Covenants. As a supplemental standard to the ROA Covenants (and exception to past ARB rulings on requested swing sets), this standard shall be applicable to any pending or future lot owner request for individual lot swing sets in the Refuge neighborhood.

### **I. Purpose of Standards**

Understanding that the Refuge is a private, exclusive community, carefully and comprehensively planned and developed to preserve, protect, complement and enhance the natural ambience of the property, this standard promotes and ensures a high level of design, quality, harmony, and conformity throughout the property, consistent with the ROA Covenants.



Standard swing set examples in the Refuge neighborhood



## II. What Applies:

### Standard Swing Sets:

Swing sets can vary greatly in product size and arrangement, therefore a neighborhood standard with detailed ARB review, is required to protect the intent of the Refuge Covenants. Swing sets must be placed in the back yard and shall be of the same or similar construction method and materials as the existing swing sets in the Refuge park systems. (see photograph examples) All pending and proposed swing sets must be submitted in detail to the ARB for approval, and must meet requirements outlined under Part III, Submittal Requirements. The ARB reserves the right to reject swing set proposals (and will ask the Lot Owner to “revise and re-submit”) for those individual lot proposals determined by the ARB as having:

1. a detrimental impact to adjacent properties in the immediate vicinity
2. a visual impact on the public realm (public right-of-ways, public parks, amenities, or waterways)
3. a design that is not in conformance with the design standards and specifications outlined herein

Swing sets shall be of the same or similar construction method (and materials) as the existing standard swing sets in the Refuge park systems. The existing swing set examples in the Refuge neighborhood are of a simple natural wood fabrication, with a casual appearance that conforms and complements the Refuge environment as a whole. All pending and proposed swing sets must be submitted to ARB for approval, and must meet requirements outlined under Part III, Submittal Requirements.



Standard swing set examples in the Refuge neighborhood

### **III. Submittal Requirements:**

Prior to erecting or placing a swing set, the Lot Owner must submit to the ARB (for review and written approval), design plans and specifications and must include the following:

#### **A. Location / property line setbacks / buffer plantings**

In accordance with Refuge building standards, swing sets must be placed in the back yard, with a minimum 30 foot setback from the rear property line, and a minimum 15 foot setback from the side property line(s). For corner lots that front two public right-of-ways, the rear property line is the boundary opposite the front doorway side of the house. Within these setbacks, a screening buffer with native evergreen shrubs (of adequate container size and plant spacing) must be planted by the Lot Owner. Plant material must be 30% indigenous (native plantings) per Refuge standards. Plant species, totals, size, and spacing must be included in the submittal. The ARB will determine if the proposal is acceptable in terms of location, setbacks, and adequate screening plants.

Per Exhibit "C" within the Refuge Covenants, as applies to lots 1 through 30, which are located on the Middleton Place Foundation Conservation Easement: To preserve and protect views from historic Middleton Place, swing sets are not permitted within this conservation easement. All restrictions outlined within Exhibit "C" of the Covenants shall apply to proposed or pending swing sets.

#### **B. Materials / specifications**

Natural treated lumber (like the existing Refuge park swings) is required (with no bright stains or paint), and shall be the primary material. Hardware shall be galvanized or stainless steel, durable, and weather-proof. Standard rope may be used as part of a swing fabrication. Overall, the materials and fabrication must be casual, natural, and blending with surroundings. (For example, the existing park swings have a simple "post and beam" wood construction, with no fancy brackets or exposed hardware.) The ARB scope is to review (approve or disapprove) the aesthetic quality of the materials and fabrication, the suitability and harmony of the location, and the overall benefit (or detriment) which would result in the immediate vicinity of its location, and to the Refuge Property as a whole.

#### **C. Color schemes**

Colors will be reviewed in the same manner as for Refuge homes. In particular, bright primary color schemes are absolutely not permitted per the Covenants. If a color scheme applies, then only natural "earth tone" colors will be accepted as part of the specifications, and only as a secondary color to a primary (predominant) natural wood assembly. The ARB strongly encourages the Lot Owner submit an 'as-built' photograph of the structure (or similar one) for review. The ARB has the right to refuse the proposal (proposed, pending, or erected) that is not suitable or desirable as complementing, blending with natural surroundings of the immediate vicinity, or enhancing the natural ambience of the Refuge Property.

### **III. Submittal Requirements (cont.):**

#### **D. Dimensions / overall scale / visual impact**

Standard swing sets cannot exceed the height of the existing example swings in the Refuge park systems. Swing sets cannot be in open view to the public realm, nor be a detriment to adjacent properties. Swing sets with features having strong visual impact, (such as tall “towers” or large, expansive, active, bright, colorful features) will be rejected by the ARB due to non-conformance with the criteria outlined herein and within the Covenants. More casual, standard swing sets (of lesser impact / height / width / depth), that complement the Refuge property as a whole are permissible by the ARB, so long as they meet the requirements outlined herein.

#### **IV. Severe Storm Events / Hurricanes:**

During severe storm events or hurricanes, swing sets can pose as a potential danger to the general public, the subject property, or adjacent properties. The Lot Owner is responsible for disassembling the structure prior to a severe storm event or hurricane. The ARB reserves the right to enforce this standard.

#### **V. Maintenance / “Life” of Swing Sets:**

It is the responsibility of the Lot Owner to maintain a swing set so that it remains in acceptable condition, meeting an acceptable level of appearance, and not posing as a potential safety concern. If the swing set is damaged or falling apart, it must be repaired and maintained in a timely fashion, as outlined in the ROA Covenants. For swing sets that are geared only to certain ages, the ARB strongly encourages that the Lot Owner disassemble the structure once it has met its intended “Life”, (once the children have grown up) and the swing set is no longer used or needed by the Lot Owner. The ARB reserves the right to enforce this standard.