

OVERTON RETREAT

Summary of Architectural Guidelines

1. Introduction

The Site

Long Mountain is nestled deep in the foothills of central Tennessee. Mountain lakes, streams and waterfalls, rocky cliffs, and dramatic vistas characterize the serene, rugged beauty that has drawn people to this area for hundreds of years. Overton Retreat provides parkland and hiking trails over the mountaintop to access some of the most stunning scenery in central Tennessee. While the area is secluded and rural, it is also easily accessible: only 90 minutes from both Nashville and Chattanooga.

The Community

Overton Retreat is a place of retreat and recreation. Homes cluster around community parks, a 23-acre lake, hiking trails, and numerous common gathering facilities, fostering a community while allowing all residents to partake in the beauty and natural splendor of the site. With its unparalleled location and local history, Overton Retreat is a gathering place for people with an appreciation for both tradition and innovation. As a family oriented community, each home retains a feeling of privacy, but is also designed to be an integral part of the surroundings. Buildings for social gatherings as well as shared green spaces and trails provide opportunity for family interaction. Site and climate specific design, orientation, and construction will ensure that each house is unique in character, innovative in implementation, and contributes to the community's environment as a whole. All structures in Overton Retreat represent high-quality construction and design and contribute to the emergence of a distinguishable identity.

2. Design Guidelines

At Overton Retreat, the goal of the design guidelines is to create a common community character while encouraging creative design expression. It is intended that the simplest structures will add to the quality and appearance of the community and that the most creative desires of homeowners or designers will find room for expression.

The architectural style of Overton Retreat has been developed from a combination of historic style influences and modern forms. The styles influencing the guidelines are Rural Gothic, Adirondack and Tennessee vernacular styles. The background of these styles as well as the elements of each style incorporated into these guidelines is described further in the next section.

Contemporary forms not typically found in these styles, such as curved or angled walls, more extensive use of glass, or towers are to be combined with the historic influences to create the style found throughout Overton Retreat.

Overton Retreat offers spectacular views and unique natural features throughout its home sites. All structures within the community should relate to the topography of the sites as well as incorporate natural materials, appropriate massing and site responsive design.

It is not the intent of the design guidelines to duplicate or select one of these historic styles, but to blend these architectural influences together to create a new style unique to Overton Retreat. Each home should be as unique as the site on which it stands.

Design Guideline Influences

Rural Gothic

History

Settlers who were nostalgic for the old medieval cottages and farmhouses they had left behind brought the Gothic Revival style to the New World. This style, already outdated in Europe, sprang to new life up and down the Atlantic Seaboard as people discovered that not only was it comforting, but it was also comfortable.

In rural settings, the forms that were originally wrought in brick and mortar were translated into wood and stone. As farmers continued to adapt these familiar forms to the rural landscape, a distinctly American style was formed. Early American architects Andrew Jackson Downing and Alexander Jackson Davis, strongly influenced the development of this style through the publishing of several books with sample house designs published in the middle 1800s.

Downing and Davis drew inspiration from the grandeur of the great European Cathedrals and translated gothic expression of form into grand country residences throughout the Eastern States. The success of Rural Gothic resulted from the general public desire to escape the industrial hardness of the city and emerged, as people grew tired of the formal expressions of Classic Revival that had been proliferated in the early years of the nation.

Also known as the Picturesque Style, Rural Gothic is identified by its use of natural materials, simple architectural forms, and precise detailing. Bracketing, pointed, arched windows, and high, sloped rooflines are quintessential elements.

Influences incorporated at Overton Retreat:

Basic massing or form of the homes
Steep roof pitches
Large roof overhangs
Window and door shapes

Adirondack

History

Drawn from a variety of sources, and later to influence some of the great building of the mountain west, the Adirondack style emerged as the predominant style of rural summer residents in the Adirondack region of New York. Growing out of the desire of people to escape the cities and experience the natural surroundings and mountain scenery, the Adirondack style became a predominant architectural expression for mountaintop architecture.

Timber frame structures, with unique and ingenious natural expressions of materials, created a cottage/cabin feel that blended into the natural scenery. Meticulous craftsmanship and innovative use of materials are essential components. Natural finishes, large windows, use of natural exterior elements in the interior, great rooms, and massive stone fireplaces are common elements of this style.

Influences incorporated at Overton Retreat:

Naturally finished materials
Exposed structure
Post brackets
Complex, naturalistic railing and baluster design
Large windows
Stone Chimneys and Building Elements

Tennessee Vernacular

History

While not a style in itself, vernacular architecture is a concept of using locally available materials, traditional local cultural expressions and elements, and local climate conditions as reflections of the unique surroundings and history of a region. A prize example of rural vernacular architecture exists right on the property. The Overton Lodge, built in the early 1920s, incorporates a unique chestnut bark siding with stone and timber frame construction.

Tennessee vernacular architecture employs several unique forms that are especially suited to the region's climate and topography. These elements include the dogtrot or breezeway, the log cabin with square-notched logs, the L-shaped house or barn, generously pitched roofs, front or wrap-around porches.

Influences incorporated at Overton Retreat:

Local, natural materials
Large porches
Breezeways
'L' shaped plans
Relationship to site

Contemporary Architecture

History

In many places throughout the world, designers have used traditional styles or materials in new ways, creating structures that are clearly modern, but connected to the past. Through constant technological innovation in materials and structural capabilities, architects and designers have been enabled to continue to explore new concepts in design. While holding to some traditional concepts of design and expression, new homes can adapt to modern lifestyles with a greater focus on natural light permitted by more energy efficient window systems, larger volume spaces and open plan designs, and incorporation of recent technology. This is also the intent of the Overton Retreat guidelines, to allow for modern adaptations of historic ideals.

Influences incorporated at Overton Retreat:

Massing elements – curves, angles, towers
Use of glass – Large windows and glass areas

Design Guideline Implementation

The guidelines are implemented through three methods: Core Guidelines, the Stylistic Point System, and Architectural Review.

The *Core Guidelines* outline the mandatory requirements and encouraged direction of design at Overton Retreat. These guidelines are divided into three sections: Site Planning, Design Elements, & Landscaping.

The *Stylistic Point System* provides a preliminary evaluation of how well the design fits the community character. This point system assigns point values to various design elements. A minimum score must be achieved prior to final evaluation of the design by the Architectural Review Committee (ARC).

Architectural Review is performed by the ARC. The design is reviewed to ensure compliance with the requirements and intent of the guidelines. The committee will look for substantial compliance with the intent of these design guidelines as described in the introductions and *Encouraged* sections of each category. The committee will also look for compliance with all requirements described in the *Mandatory* sections.

Design components and concepts not specifically identified in the guidelines shall be encouraged provided that they are demonstrably influenced by the historic precedents used at Overton Retreat. Unique and innovative interpretations of these influences are permitted and encouraged.