



County of Albemarle
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Albemarle County Architectural Review Board
FROM: Margaret Maliszewski, Planning Manager
RE: **ARB-2023-107: Barnes Lumber**
DATE: August 12, 2025

On March 3, 2025 the ARB approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for the criteria for Countywide Certificates of Appropriateness for the Barnes Lumber development. ([See Attach. 1 for the March 3, 2025, submittal.](#)) The approval was subject to conditions, including “Revise the criteria to state that murals are not acceptable as treatment for blankness and to provide additional limitations to ensure appropriate appearances for the EC.” The applicant has revised the criteria to include the following exemptions:

- Artistic murals occupying less than 20% of the area of a facade visible from the Entrance Corridor that otherwise meets Entrance Corridor architectural criteria. Murals are not acceptable as treatment for blankness.
- Artistic murals occupying 20% of a facade that does not face the Entrance Corridor street.

The mural criteria are summarized in the following table:

ARB REVIEW OF MURALS in the BARNES LUMBER DEVELOPMENT	
Location	% of façade area
On facades facing and visible from the EC street	ARB review is required if the mural occupies 20% or more of the façade area
On facades facing and visible from the EC street	Murals occupying less than 20% of the façade area are exempt from ARB review
On facades not facing the EC street	All murals occupying any % of the façade area are exempt from ARB review

This revised language addresses the ARB comment by

- limiting exempt murals on EC-facing facades to those occupying less than 20% of the EC-facing facade, and
- by including the statement about murals not being an acceptable treatment for blankness.

This proposal would allow

- murals to occupy the full side elevations of buildings without ARB review, and
- murals on EC-facing facades up to 20% of the façade area without ARB review.

A work session is scheduled for the ARB meeting on August 18, 2025, to discuss these mural criteria. The following questions are recommended to guide the discussion:

1. In the Barnes Lumber development is there some percentage of an EC-facing façade that can be covered by a mural without ARB review/approval? If so, is 20% appropriate?
2. In the Barnes Lumber development is it appropriate for a side elevation of a building to be completely covered by a mural? If not, what percentage would be appropriate?
3. Is ARB review needed for murals on side elevations?
4. Are there other issues that should be evaluated when deciding on the appropriateness of murals; for example, impact on building materials, maintenance/appearance over time, reversibility, etc.?