Article 2.
Statutory Liens on Real Property.
Part 1. Liens of Mechanics, Laborers, and Materialmen Dealing with Owner.

§ 44A-7. Definitions.

Unless the context otherwise requires, the following definitions apply in this Article:

(1) Contractor. – A person who contracts with an owner to improve real property.

(2) First tier subcontractor. – A person who contracts with a contractor to improve real property.

(3) Improve. – To build, effect, alter, repair, or demolish any improvement upon, connected with, or on or beneath the surface of any real property, or to excavate, clear, grade, fill or landscape any real property, or to construct driveways and private roadways, or to furnish materials, including trees and shrubbery, for any of such purposes, or to perform any labor upon such improvements, and shall also mean and include any design or other professional or skilled services furnished by architects, engineers, land surveyors and landscape architects registered under Chapter 83A, 89A or 89C of the General Statutes, and rental of equipment directly utilized on the real property in making the improvement.

(4) Improvement. – All or any part of any building, structure, erection, alteration, demolition, excavation, clearing, grading, filling, or landscaping, including trees and shrubbery, driveways, and private roadways, on real property.

(4a) Inspection department. – Any city or county building inspection department authorized by Chapter 160A or Chapter 153A of the General Statutes.

(4b) Lien agent. – A title insurance company or title insurance agency designated by an owner pursuant to G.S. 44A-11.1.

(5) Obligor. – An owner, contractor, or subcontractor in any tier who owes money to another as a result of the other's partial or total performance of a contract to improve real property.

(6) Owner. – A person who has an interest in the real property improved and for whom an improvement is made and who ordered the improvement to be made. "Owner" includes successors in interest of the owner and agents of the owner acting within their authority.

(6a) Potential lien claimant. – Any person entitled to claim a lien for improvements to real property under this Article who is subject to G.S. 44A-11.1.

(7) Real property. – The real estate that is improved, including lands, leaseholds, tenements and hereditaments, and improvements placed thereon.

(8) Second tier subcontractor. – A person who contracts with a first tier subcontractor to improve real property.

(9) Third tier subcontractor. – A person who contracts with a second tier subcontractor to improve real property. (1969, c. 1112, s. 1; 1975, c. 715, s. 1; 1985, c. 689, s. 13; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 607, s. 1; 2012-158, s. 1; 2012-175, s. 1.)