

December 17, 2009

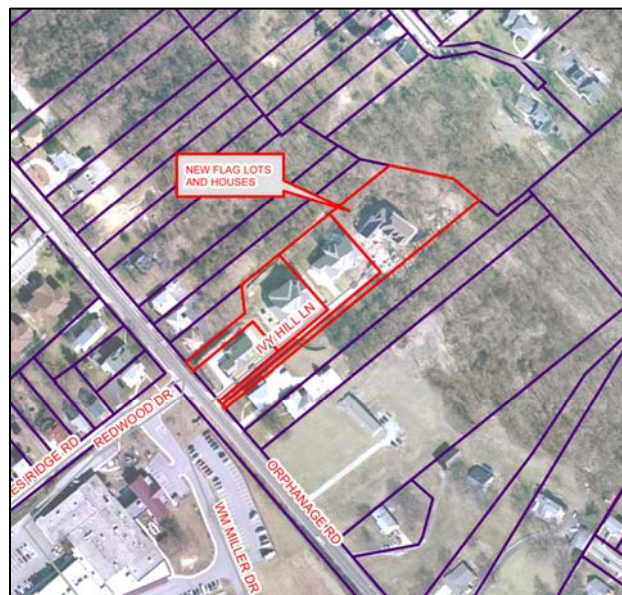
*(This is the fourteenth in a series of updates on zoning in Kenton County. The series is intended to brief city and county elected officials on issues being addressed by NKAPC in the **2020 Sourcebook**, a new model zoning ordinance for Kenton County's local jurisdictions. We hope you find it timely and thought provoking and encourage you to contact us using the link below if we can provide more information or answer any questions.)*

Flag Lots in existing neighborhoods will be more scrutinized

Increased demand for housing in and around older, established neighborhoods has made flag lots a way to maximize the use of land. It has also made the resulting lots and their residents an unwelcome intrusion for surrounding property owners.

None of Kenton County's 19 zoning ordinances addresses flag lots in these circumstances. This fact has led to questionable infill development in several cities and emotional outcries from their citizens. Provisions in the *2020 Sourcebook* change that.

Flag lots have a narrow appendage—the “flag pole”—that connects the buildable portion of the lot—the “flag”—to a public right of way. They are relatively common in new suburban residential projects where topographical issues make them a useful tool to maximize the use of land. They are uncommon in older settings where maximizing the use of land can also be an issue but where new, higher densities prove to be out of character with surrounding uses.



Typically, the creation of flag lots follows this scenario. An older urban dwelling located on a larger and/or deeper tract of land is bought, cleared, and subdivided into multiple smaller lots—flag lots—which are then accessed by shared driveways along easements. Almost always, the lot sizes, setbacks, and appearance of the resulting cluster of residences does not integrate into the existing

community fabric and can diminish the character, property values, and general welfare of the neighborhood.

Under provisions included in the *2020 Sourcebook*, flag lot applications within the Urban Service Area will undergo a higher level of scrutiny to ensure that they will not adversely impact the neighborhood in which they will be located. Provisions will accomplish this by permitting them only on tracts greater than three acres and then only if they are deemed necessary because of geometric, topographic, or other natural features.

In addition, proposals for flag lots within the Urban Service Area must also be submitted as a preliminary and final plat. This two-step process provides a more comprehensive review than the currently-accepted identification plat application.

As a general rule, flag lots are not suitable for residential infill development projects within Kenton County. Accordingly, *Sourcebook 2020* will protect the integrity and character of urban neighborhoods by ensuring that this type of subdivision does not become the standard by which all urban lots are subdivided.

To contact a staff member who can answer questions about the issues covered in this update or on the *2020 Sourcebook* in general, click [here](#).

To view past editions of this update series, click on one of the following.

[**A new approach to zoning in Kenton County: Where we've been... Where we're going...**](#)

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