



King County
Permitting Division
Department of Local Services
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FINAL CODE INTERPRETATION **CINT23-0001 (Self-service storage facility)**

Background

This Code Interpretation request relates to a code enforcement case¹ stemming from a complaint that the property at 16611 SE 240th St (Parcel Number 5506000010) had roughly a dozen recreational vehicles stored on site. The property is located in RA-5 zone (Rural Area zone).

The County code enforcement officer inspected the site and found “Operation of a self-storage yard (recreational vehicles) from a residential parcel which does not allow that use in violation of Section 21A.08.060 of King County Code”, documented in a letter to the property owner on September 28, 2022. The letter also noted it appeared unpermitted clearing and installing of new impervious surface had taken place.

The property owner disagreed that they were violating the code and applied for a code interpretation on January 11, 2023. King County requested additional information, which was received and made the application complete on January 20, 2023. The code interpretation request was for an interpretation of K.C.C. 21A.08.060 and whether the storage of RVs on the subject property meets the definition of self-service storage.

Code Sections Subject to Interpretation

K.C.C. 21A.08.060 establishes which government and business service land uses are permitted in which zones. Self-service storage is not permitted within RA zones. Self-service storage is defined in K.C.C. 21A.06.1050 as: “an establishment containing separate storage spaces that are leased or rented as individual units.”

Discussion & Analysis

Property owner contends that the activities they are engaging in on their property do not fall under the definition of self-service storage, because:

- There are no buildings that are being used for storage, only a parking area;
- The RV owners are not accessing the property on a regular basis;

¹ DLS-Permitting File No. ENFR22-1052

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- The parking area is between two homes on the property and is not visible to the public and they contend there is no impact to neighboring properties;
- The site was not designed for the purpose of renting storage; and
- Other properties in the neighborhood are also providing parking.

None of the above reasons the property owner cited alters the applicable use designation and definition. Aerial imagery from King County iMap (below) shows the subject site appearing to provide parking to roughly 16 vehicles. It is undisputed that RV parking is provided on a rental basis to the RV owners. Each parking space can be understood to be a “separate storage space”, as used in the definition of self-service storage, and the parking spaces are being rented on an individual basis.



Further, a similar issue previous came before the RRC in 2004², at which it was also determined that rented parking spaces met the definition of self-service storage. In that case, a CB-zoned property leased spaces for the storage of boats, trailers, and trucks outdoors. The RRC concluded that, even though there were no storage buildings on site, the facility was a self-service storage.

Decision

The use of a property for the storage of RVs on a rental basis meets the definition of self-service storage and is not an allowed use in RA zones.

² <https://kingcounty.gov/~media/depts/permitting-environmental-review/dper/documents/codes/rrc/MinRRC04Jan28.ashx?la=en>

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Finality of Code Interpretations

Under K.C.C. 2.100.050.B, if the director determines that a code interpretation request relates to a code enforcement action, any appeal of the code interpretation shall be consolidated with and is subject to the same appeal process as the code enforcement action. If the King County hearing examiner makes the county's final decision with regard to the underlying permit, other approval type or code enforcement action regarding which the interpretation was requested, the hearing examiner's decision constitutes the county's final decision on the code interpretation request.

DocuSigned by:

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Jim Chan
Director, Permitting Division
Department of Local Services

3/14/2023
Date