

DSG Policy Memorandum
Administrative Interpretation
#06-09



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TO: DSG Staff

FROM: Kirsten Taylor, Acting Development Services Director

DATE: October 3, 2006

RE: MICC 19.09.040 Private Access Roads – Sunset Ridge Plat

Mercer Island City Code (MICC) 19.15.010(C)(5)(a) authorizes the code official to administer, *interpret* and enforce the development code. The DSG Director is the code official for purposes of interpreting the MICC.

In the process of reviewing a proposed subdivision, a question has come up regarding the requirement for a turn-around at the end of the private access road. MICC 19.09.040 *Private Access Roads* in paragraph D indicates that, "All private access roads in excess of 150 feet in length, measured along the centerline of the access road from the edge of city street to the end of the access road, shall have a turn-around with an inside turning radius of 28 feet." The subject access road exceeds 150 feet in length.

This section of the code is based on the Fire Code and need to provide access of sufficient dimensions to accommodate fire suppression and rescue vehicles and activities. The International Fire Code allows for the Fire Code Official to modify access requirements if "other approved fire-protection features are provided". In this particular case, the Fire Marshal has required fire sprinkler systems in future buildings on each lot within the subdivision and all lots adjacent to the subject road as the "other approved fire protection feature" and consequently will not require a turnaround. Additionally, the access road without turn-around will provide sufficient access for typical motor vehicles accessing the subdivision.

Therefore, I interpret MICC 19.09.040 to not require a turnaround when the Fire Marshal approves fire protection features that are satisfactory as an alternative to such turnaround.

19.09.040 Private access roads.

A. The following are the minimum requirements for private access roads. To accommodate fire suppression and rescue activities, the Mercer Island fire chief may require that the widths of private access roads or the size of turn-arounds be increased or that turn-arounds be provided when not otherwise required by this section.

B. All private access roads serving three or more single-family dwellings shall be at least 20 feet in width. All private access roads serving less than three single-family dwellings shall be at least 16 feet in width, with at least 12 feet of that width consisting of pavement and the balance consisting of well compacted shoulders.

C. All corners shall have a minimum inside turning radius of 28 feet.

D. All private access roads in excess of 150 feet in length, measured along the centerline of the access road from the edge of city street to the end of the access road, shall have a turn-around with an inside turning radius of 28 feet.

E. All cul-de-sacs shall be at least 70 feet in diameter; provided, cul-de-sacs providing access to three or more single-family dwellings shall be at least 90 feet in diameter.

F. Gradient.

1. No access road or driveway shall have a gradient of greater than 20 percent.

2. For all access roads and driveways with a gradient exceeding 15 percent, the road surface shall be cement concrete pavement with a brushed surface for traction. Access roads and driveways with gradients of 15 percent or less may have asphalt concrete surface. (Ord. 99C-13) §