From Countryside Farms to Community

Presented by
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March 2, 2012
Urban Kenton County
Suburban Kenton County
Rural Kenton County
By the Numbers

- 164 Square Miles
- 64,500 Households
- 3300 of these households are in unincorporated Kenton County
- 55% of land incorporated 45% unincorporated
- Total Population of Kenton County --- 2013 --- 163,145

Population Trending up:
1970—129,652
2000 --- 151,683
2013 ---163, 145

Population Trend in Independence
1970 ---1715
2000 --- 14,982
2013 --- 26,110
Partnerships
History and Timeline

• 2011 Agriculture & Natural Resources Agent was asked to be part of Direction 2030 Comprehensive Plan
• 2012 Preservation of Rural Character of Kenton County was included in Plan
• 2013 South Kenton Citizens group was formed
• 2014 Citizens survey of rural residents
• 2015 Committee subcommittees formed
Role of Extension

- Member of Task Force committee
- Expertise in agriculture and horticulture
- Facilitate meetings
- Updates to rural residents
- Encourage leaders to step forward
- Support efforts of the citizen survey
- Supporting agency of subcommittee
The Survey…The Voice

• Citizens group hosted several community meetings and created a Facebook page open for suggestions
• Used the comments from these meetings to design the questions for the survey
• On-line and mailed to all 3300 households
• 1043 surveys were completed = 29% return
Some General Findings

• 80% of the participants own property in South Kenton County
• 80% of the participants have lived in South Kenton County for more than 10 years
Reasons for moving or staying in South Kenton County

- To be close to family: 30.0%
- To retain the family farm: 10.0%
- To raise food for my family: 7.5%
- Easy access to employment: 5.0%
- To farm for commercial use: 2.5%
- Other: 20.1%

2013 survey
Uses of Land in South Kenton County

- Commercial agriculture operation: 13.4%
- Subsistence farming for family’s own use: 28.4%
- For preservation/conservation purposes: 29.1%
- Other: 29.1%
When I think of rural landscape I very much think of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wide areas of open land, pastures or wooded tracts</td>
<td>76.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small operating family farms (Under 50 acres)</td>
<td>70.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large operating farms (50 acres or more)</td>
<td>54.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large single home lots (5 acres or more)</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand alone small stores and service businesses</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groupings of small stores and service businesses around small communities</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large supermarkets or discount stores with large illuminated parking lots</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large office buildings; Clustered housing developments with less than one acre lot sizes; Factories or warehouses</td>
<td>2.0% or less</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Attitudes and Beliefs

• 92.2% Felt it is important to keep agriculture a viable part of South Kenton County economy

• 90.3% Felt it is important to maintain the rural character of South Kenton County

• 87% Were satisfied with access to commercial and retail stores
Preferences

• Over 80% Wished that subdivisions and other residential development be directed away from land which is being used for preservation, conservation or agriculture purposes.
Attitudes and Beliefs

• 61% Felt that South Kenton County does not need more employment centers (large employers)

• 59% Would not sell their farm if the opportunity arose for development
Other Comments

• “South Kenton County is more than a place, it is “home” and where many find they can “enjoy the land with family.”

• South Kenton county’s rural landscape is a part the residents’ “rural identity.”
Other comments

• “The main thing is to keep this area rural, yet a close knit community. The rural area is what us here. It is already getting “busy” and feels as though we are losing the “country feeling.”

• “Keep it rural. When it’s gone, it’s gone.”
Since the Survey

• Data was gathered and analyzed by Dr. Lori Garkovich, with the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service

• Survey results were shared with Kenton County Fiscal Court and with the Kenton County Planning Commission

• Public meetings were held to share survey results
Currently

• Steering Committee of the South Kenton Citizens Group meets regularly

• Three subcommittees are presently addressing the following:
  – Transportation and Services Committees
  – Agriculture and Heritage Committee
  – Zoning and Policies
Currently

• Recommendations are being compiled to take to the Kenton County Planning Commission to consider as they make decisions regarding the land use in South Kenton County

• A series of experts and professionals are being part of the conversation as these recommendations (Example University of Wisconsin Extension Service)
What is Next?

- Recommendations to Kenton County Planning Commission
- Recommendations presented at public meetings in South Kenton County
- Establishment of a non-profit organization charged with preserving the rural area and agricultural lifestyle of Kenton County
Questions