

HOMIEFINDER

SECTION H » SUNDAY, JUNE 20, 2010 » THE TENNESSEAN »

PRESERVATION

@Home connects historic home lovers

Are you interested in historic homes? Do you want to connect with others who share your interest? Then log on to @home, the National Trust for Historic Preservation's new social networking site that links lovers of historic homes throughout the country and provides them with quizzes, polls and contests for a fun and educational networking experience. Users of @home can post questions or tips about restoring, updating or decorating historic houses, as well as share updates about their own homes. The site also offers the National Trust's online real estate advertisements and other resources. To join, create an account at www.athomenation.org. For more information on the National Trust for Historic Preservation, visit www.PreservationNation.org.

— LINDSEY GARLAND,
FOR THE TENNESSEAN

DIY

Moving offers good excuse for cleaning

Moving out of your home is no excuse to stop cleaning. Instead, it should be an even bigger motivation. Think about it: When else will you have the opportunity to really look through all your belongings and sort them appropriately? That's why you should take advantage of this time and make piles for things you'll keep, donate or trash. Then you should clean your home and the things you'll be taking to your new place so you don't take dirt with you.

— MARTHA PHIFER, ORLANDO SENTINEL

PRODUCTS



Start fires in a flash

A new fire starter from Sweden eliminates the need for lighter fluid. The Looftlighter is an electrical device that lights a fire with heat and moving air. It's a metal tube punctured with holes that contains a heating element and a fan to blow air over the element.

You touch the tip of the Looftlighter to wood or coals for 15 seconds, and then withdraw it about 6 inches to allow warm air to blow onto the embers until a fire is ignited. The lighter connects to a wall receptacle or a compatible car outlet and can be used to light grills, smokers and fire pits.

The Looftlighter is available for \$79.95 at www.kotulas.com or by calling 1-877-566-3860.

— MARY BETH BRECKENRIDGE,
AKRON BEACON JOURNAL

HOME MARKET

Find sale prices of local homes

Want to know the selling price of a house in your neighborhood? Search our database of Middle Tennessee property transfers, updated weekly. Go to Tennessean.com/propertytransfers.



Susan Tatman's Sylvan Park home was built in 2009, one of many infill homes you can find in older neighborhoods, such as Sylvan Park and East Nashville. Companies such as Taylor Made Plans specialize in designing homes that offer all the advantages of new construction while blending into the neighborhood. PHOTOS BY SAMUEL M. SIMPKINS / THE TENNESSEAN

The Best of Both Worlds

INFILL HOMES OFFER MODERN CONVENIENCES IN HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS

By Bill Lewis
FOR THE TENNESSEAN

When Susan and Andrew Tatman decided to move from Green Hills to Sylvan Park, they looked forward to experiencing the culture, convenience and diversity of living in one of Nashville's older neighborhoods.

They did not, however, want to actually live in an older home, which would need constant maintenance and might not offer the interior space and modern, open floor plan they desired.

"We wanted a certain square footage. We were not looking for a house we had to fix up. We wanted it to be absolutely turn-key — colors already on the walls, landscaping, everything complete," said Susan Tatman.

Their solution, one increasingly popular among homebuyers, was to purchase a new home in an older neighborhood. Demand for infill homes, so called because they "fill in" empty lots on a street or replace an existing, less-desirable structure, is strong.

Between April 24, 2009, and June 2, 2010, the planning commission approved 191 residential building permits for infill construction in neighborhoods inside the Briley Parkway beltway.

The Tatman's house on 38th Avenue North was on the market just two weeks before they purchased it in July 2009. That was near the bottom of the real estate downturn, but the Tatmans found themselves competing with another buyer.

"We thought, 'Wow, this area really is in high demand,'" said Susan Tatman.

Castleridge Properties, which developed the Tatmans' home, completed nine infill projects in the past year, said partner Allison Lanquist. The company builds homes in several of the city's historic neighborhoods, including Sylvan Park, Belmont-Hillsboro, Woodland-In-Waverly, I2South and East Nashville.

"People want to live closer to the city and their jobs. They want a house with both historic design and functional design. They want to live in an older neighborhood, but don't want to live in an old house," said Lanquist.

Infill homes often offer what designer Lynn Taylor calls "historic modern" features that appeal to today's home buyers, including open floor plans, eat-in kitchens,



"We were not looking for a house we had to fix up. We wanted it to be absolutely turn-key, colors already on the walls, landscaping, everything complete."

SUSAN TATMAN, Sylvan Park homeowner

first floor master suites, functional bathrooms, separate laundry rooms and abundant closet space. Many are LEED- or EarthCraft-certified for energy efficiency.

"They can look and feel historic on the outside, but the floor plan fits the need of a modern family," said Taylor, whose company, Taylor Made Plans, has designed infill homes since 1998.

In that time, it has gotten easier to build infill homes. In April 2009, the Metro Planning Commission reduced the application fee for infill projects from \$2,100 to \$400. "The commission voted to reduce the fee to encourage infill construction," said Craig Owensby of the Metro Planning Department.

In response to the demand, Woodland St. Partners is planning an infill neighborhood — a 35-home development in the Rosebank neighborhood in East Nashville.

When developers build new houses in the city's designated historic districts, they have to follow specific guidelines that regulate architectural design and materials. Even in neighborhoods without those controls, Zach Thomas, owner of Woodland St. Partners, said developers have an

incentive to build homes that complement the character of the neighborhood.

"You don't want it to blend in and not stand out at all, but you certainly don't want it to be an eyesore," said Thomas. "Infill projects that aren't done well sit for a long time."

Woodland St. Partners, Taylor Made Plans and builder Vesta Homes recently shared a city preservation award for a new home at 1600 Long Ave. Even though the house sits outside the nearby Lockeland Springs neighborhood, which has design restrictions, it fits in well with the surrounding structures, said Taylor.

A well-designed infill house is better for a street than a vacant lot, she said. "If you have a vacant lot, it's like a missing tooth."

At a personal level, an infill house can make it possible for homeowners like Susan Tatman to fulfill the dream of living in a modern house that includes traditional touches that her grandmother might have enjoyed.

"We had gone to Charleston on vacation and loved all the porches," she said. "Now we have our rocking chairs on our porch."

HOME EDITOR KRISTIN WHITTLESEY, 6642271, KWHITTLESEY@TENNESSEAN.COM EVENT LISTINGS CALENDAR@TENNESSEAN.COM, 726-8902 OR FAX 259-8057



Don't Blow Your Chance at \$10,000 in FREE upgrades!

New Homes from the \$180's

*\$10,000 in FREE upgrades on select inventory or build your dream home and receive \$5,000 in Free Upgrades. Going on now through 8/31/10. Conditions may apply. Kevin Long Prime Lending 615-496-8400.

[www.SoutheasternBuilding.net] [615-826-9700]