

Kim Davis

From: Ruth McMaster <mcmaster0057@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 17, 2024 4:49 PM
To: Planning Department
Subject: SSTR Case No: CUP 24-09 Proposal: Short-term rental Applicants: Sara Hadad-Dembs and John Dembs

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As long term residents of 1722 Edgumbe drive directly across from the street from the proposed property 1729, we urge you to decline the Conditional Use Permit for this property for the following reasons.

Applicants state that this is their primary residence but they have only owned this house for less than a month having moved off their home on Mertz island where they lived as a part of their business Bumble Expeditions. Will this STR become part of their tourist business? They are also advertising renting their large primary home by the month October to April for \$3200 a month not including utilities, then they will be switching to short term rentals the summer. They also own another home on Edgumbe Dr. We believe this house was bought not for a primary home when they are living in the very small ADU attached 600 sq ft. efficiency apartment. It is our opinion that this house is or will become part of their busy tourist business Bumble Expeditions which we oppose. We are a residential neighborhood not within the Business District.

There is no cost listed for this proposed STR yet but it can be assumed that it will be in the upper range for homes of this size and design. With the price it can be assumed that the rental duration will be short term with a quick turn over. There also could be increased taxi traffic also many extra cars. In our 30 plus years in our home there has never been more than 2 vehicles in the family home at 1729 Edgumbe Dr. 6 parking spaces are too many and very crowded for vehicles that have to back into the road to exit the parking areas.

Noise and traffic in our quiet neighborhood will change the peaceful environment we have enjoyed for many years. We fear the early departures on the 6 am flights (checking in before 5am) and late night arrivals 11pm will bring noise and traffic to our quiet neighborhood. Also noise/voices travels far up here on the hill.

In addition to the above comments it is the uncontrolled growth of STRs and part year rentals that are changing Sitka. Loss of year round rentals for young families and new residents coming for long term work are making it difficult to find housing due to the growth of the housing switching to short term and temporary (Oct to April) housing. Residents are being displaced when they have to move before April at the worst time of the year.

There needs to be more sensitivity to what and how neighbors feel about the growing STRs.

In the 35 years living in this residential family neighborhood from Charteris to Cascade Creek Rd have watched 16-30 neighborhood kids grow up many of them remain in town with kids of their own. Every household in the block between Charteris and Cascade Creek Road are full time year round homes for families. They are homeowners or year round residents. (Except for the recent addition of the new full sized apartment STR at 1711 of which many were apposed to.) I fear as time goes on if there isn't a moritorium or regulation change we would have fewer and fewer year round homes for young year round renters. It's already happening. People are moving out of town due to lack of housing and the rising costs.

We need as a city to think hard about what kind of town we want to be. A tourism town that caters to the short term traveler or long time residents who need year round housing so they can raise a family, and have year round jobs and kids in our schools.

You can look around town and see that many businesses are in need of workers. Jobs that serve all residents not just the tourists. We need to try to keep our young people here in Sitka.

The growth of SEARHC has also put a drain on the housing availability. Every week you'll see folks coming for work who can't find a housing that is affordable or available.

We urge you to consider declining this Conditional Use Permit. Case No: CUP 24-09

Proposal: Short-term rental

Applicants: Sara Hadad-Dembs and John Dembs

Sincerely,

Gary McMaster

Ruth McMaster

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Sitka Alaska 99835