

Townhall
April 18, 2022
Short-term Rental
Comments

Parking Lot

- We need more data
STR in commercial areas
Also like to know number of 2nd homes
- Are STR really the cause of lack LTR in Sitka?
Maybe it's the cost of building and land.
- Know two families pushed out by COVID long term rentals reverting to long-term anecdotal
- We should keep an eye on companies like Picasa that act as middlemen for multiple owners to own a single home.
- Two-short rental categories 14 days and 14 days-6month
- Investigate commercial zone STR's: must this be?
- Rental by seasonal operators for employees
- How is our need vs supply of rentals overall? What data do we have on loss of housing opportunities for locals?
- Retirement and seasonal haven
- Aging mobile homes in low costs that could be bought and cleared
- Be flexible in zoning changes or adjustments to pots tally make more building lots available.
- Solutions for affordable housing in Sitka
- Expand definition of STR's to include rentals 1 year or perhaps those that don't extend through the summer season.
- What's the tax structure like for residences that aren't a person's primary (e.g. vacation or second + home)?
- Is it sufficiently progressive to offer the loss of a long-term residence?

- Allow the subdivision of existing lots to occur more easily and with fewer restrictions.
- Require advertising plans for us to record and report data
- Redefine STR to less than 28 days (state low 30-day rental as lease term)
- Housing shortages with increase with SEARHC growth and new USCG ship moving to Sitka
- How can the City or community incentivize long-term renting?
- Maybe we need to enforce regulations and laws with existing short-term rentals, before making more ordinances.
- Higher tax rates for non-primary residences (if it's not already the case) and tax go to affordable housing
- The need to increase long-term rentals. How can Sitka open and facilitate more long-term housing?
- Can we tax STR's in residential zones at a higher rate than STR's in the downtown/commercial zone
- Define short-term rental as up to 3 months (Better yet, 6 months)
- Limit short-term rentals in all zones. (It is Sitka's overall resident housing stock that matters)
- Seasonal vs Long-Term vs Short-Term- Seasonal demand created specific pressure at a focused time
- With increase in tourism, we need to be able to house our long-term seasonal workers to support the tourists. Otherwise, we create a bubble that will pop sooner than later

What is your vision for short-term rentals in Sitka?

- A small fraction of the housing stock that helps support our travel economy and visiting friends, and family.
- Finding and balance
- Find a way to balance folks to run a reasonable and number of STR's while providing adequate housing for our long-term residents

- High quality experiences for various income levels, for visitors and locals not dominating neighborhoods
- Limited in people's home, to help families cover expenses
- A vibrant portion of the visitor community
- Must be a resident and to have STR
- Balance
- Specific criteria developed to address different kinds of STRs
- Alleviate pressure on limited hotel facilities. Limited rooms = Limited Tourism
- Owners and renters are respectful of the community and neighborhoods
- Consider the impact of the many STR in a neighborhood
- Seems like the latest trend is to build mini hotels in residential zones which flies in the face of zoning
- STR's should not be allowed to take over our housing stock at the expense of our residents
- No short-term rentals, B & B's only. We got by with no or few STR's until recent years
- We need data. How many STR's are purpose built? How many are converted from long-term rentals? How many go back and forth? How many of these rentals would not exist if not available for short-term rentals?
- Meet the needs of residents ([prioritize local people) over outside folks
- STR's in the summer, long-term rentals in the winter (flexibility)
- Allow families or individuals to make extra income while increasing the taxpayers for Sitkan's
- Short term rentals bring interesting diverse people to town
- Limit city involvement with telling people what they can do with their rental property
- Limit city involvement in STR market
- More short-term renters need more local service providers i.e. housekeepers etc.

- Meet new interesting people
- More short-term renters = more tax income for Sitka
- Allows families additional income in these inflationary times
- More short-term renters = more business for local's taxis restaurants retail
- Allows for people to have a rental who would not rent long-term or feel comfortable renting long-term
- We have a short-term rental we live in it about eight months when we travel it allows us to live in our house
- Can make a substantial more money on STR
- Nice houses to use for large family gatherings or staycations
- Places to have friends stay when visiting since I don't have much room for guests in my house
- Extra funds to pay high utility bills
- Allows families to cover cost for their home
- Can make money without year-round occupants
- Having an STR subsidized childcare cost in Sitka
- Subsidize my long-term tenants rent
- Visiting family has a place to stay
- We are in a commercial zone we use a portion of our house as an STR this offsets our living expenses
- They do not benefit anyone but the homeowner or company
- Mixed use beneficial to renter & rentee
- Short term rentals have been a negotiable benefit they increase house and rental prices

What are you concerned about short term rentals?

- There is no enforcement for noncompliance of the CUP
- Equity issue folks non doing STR to max income and renting or buying a place taking that housing off market to
- Not having housing for our long-term residence teacher's tourism elected workers
- Many short-term rentals owned by one person properties that are ideal for long-term converted to short term
- Can really change the community part of a neighborhood
- Neighborhoods dominated by STR either empty a lot in the winter or lots of changing neighbors who don't care about neighbors
- Over density in neighborhood
- Owners of STR's are not present and do not monitor the behavior of the tenants this has negative impacts on the neighborhoods where they reside
- STR displaced locals here year-round and also seasonal workers
- People living in Sitka are regularly displaced
- People who went to buy a house have to compete with commercial buyer's house prices on affordable
- Regulation of a privately owned asset, fairness of permitting process
- Long term rentals scarce expensive and unaffordable
- Neighborhoods are not neighborhoods anymore
- No real reason in place to decline a permit beyond parking
- No limit to how many exists in Sitka
- Certain property managers are managing extreme numbers of STR's, and I have experience lack of adequate service from such managers during family visits in which they rent a Sitka STR
- Outside investors buying a property to use exclusive STR's
- Driving up cost living so we lose young people and others on limited income
- Creating Neighborhoods with no long-term owner's renter's empty buildings in off-season

- There is an adequate housing for medical providers teachers and many other people who would benefit and are essential to the health of this community as well as many current residents.
- Changing communities' empty houses in the off-season
- Taking long-term rentals off the market
- Driving up the cost of buying a house
- Driving up the cost of rentals
- Systematic low wages is a real concern for many of these concerns needing to rent your apartment for higher rent not able to afford to buy a house
- Some of the housing shortages would be relieved if there were more long-term rentals
- The course of nature of turning beloved generous town into a primarily seasonal tourist trap and ignores their long-term good of the community
- People pushed out of housing
- Concerned about competition with long-term rentals increase rents and housing prices as it's happening in other communities
- I know young people who have left that cut because they cannot afford an apartment and never a house STR's drive up to cost of limited LTR's
- Some of the housing shortage would be relieved if there were more LTR's
- Drive cost up for everyone people born and raised here cannot afford to buy housing

What actions would you like to see taking on permitting of short-term rentals?

- Incentive for community participation
- Increase the defined maximum number of days from 14 to 30 days therefore a rental less than 30 days is a short-term rental
- Pass ordinance to 1. require permanent residence for STR CUP 2. Sunset CUP on property sale
- No intervention by city regulating who or how homeowners rent their property
- Zone a big part of town to only allow LTR's
- No more STR's in residential areas or only in the home the owner is living in
- Requirement to disclose when a STR is empty

- Need a comprehensive plan on action taken within a year many similar communities working on this issue
- Limit approval ADU's asked that are built and then use for STR and not long-term housing
- Minimize procedures and restrictions
- Citywide regulation number 1. remote properties no city hook ups STR OK 2. 1 to 3 units must be permanent resident proven with PFD address hunting license fraud reported to DA 3. 4+ units capped at 25%
- Uses resources for creating policy: Regulating short-term rentals: A Guidebook for Equitable Policy by the Sustainable Economics Law Center crash short term rental policies that generate inclusive properties for local wealth creation while balancing the needs of all members of the community. Should produce an equitable policy that protects public interest including housing affordability health and safety neighborhood quality and municipal revenues while retaining reasonable latitude for city residence to host in our money for short term guests.
- Increase tax find helping solve the problem directly Nantucket for example
- An annual fee or additional STR tax that would find affordable housing incentives
- A maximum number of allowed STR by percentage of housing stock permits are nontransferable must be reapplied for after a sale
- Require owner occupancy for at least nine months for most STR's
- No STR residential zones unless occupancy rate is below a certain percentage
- Require a minimum declaration of proof of full-time residency in Sitka 2+ years before granting STR
- Must be part of the primary residence
- Must be a resident
- Do not allow non-residents to apply for conditional use permits limit these two Sitka residents only
- Example of incentivizing LTR look at Summit County Colorado
- Cap number of STRS per neighborhood based on consensus of owners in that neighborhood
- Limit number STRS per neighborhood less neighborhood that are walking distance downtown
- Let me number of STRS per owner and household

- If landlords whole multiple units require a minimum percentage of long-term to short-term rentals units three to one for example
- Not allow CUP's to transfer with the sale of a house
- Distinguish between a STR and a mother-in-law apartments and full house apartment find ways to fairly minimize STR's from displacing long-term rentals
- Allow all platforms should require STR permit numbers and all STR should have permit regardless of zoning
- Consider requiring permits renewed annually pending a clean non-complaint record
- A permit requires the process that does not rely on feedback from neighbors
- Redefine STR to 28 days
- Permit for less than three years
- Do not transfer permits with house sale
- More options for refusing permits when planning commission members consider wrong
- Best practices in other places for coming to community is like ours for example Hawaii STR's in certain zones not others, examples in SELC document, second address report
- Density in commercial zones residential of neighborhood how is it determined and regulated and defined density usually done by zoning district and in the number of streets and area
- If we made code changes, make sure community is aware sale of property
- Tackle the issue in a structural manner zoning permitting standpoint personal decisions have bigger impacts zoning and permitting should balance collective good
- Density and commercial areas potential for a ride to impact look at both areas
- Report back how the CUP is used see how use changes over time

SURVEY RESULTS 2021

- Developers get around this by forming LLC is registered with an attorney it's unforeseeable
- Citywide Distorts the value of pre-existing units that run within the land driving their value much higher
- No cap of number of LTR's don't treat them like I ask you that we were the first people and prevent others and latecomers from the opportunity to establish a STR

- Planning commission to drive three options with they go to help solve STR issue and broader affordable housing
- Incentivize long term rentals

Priorities

- 1) Limits around number of units owner occupied.
- 2) transfer on sale of property
- 3) fee for dedicated support of affordable housing initiative
- 4) Incentive for creating and building LTR's at cons from additional fee on STR's 5) bed tax and code enforcement