

**TOWN OF WOODSTOCK
BOARD OF VILLAGE TRUSTEES**

November 12, 2019

6:00 pm

Woodstock Town Hall

Public Informational Meeting on Short Term Rental Ordinance
Draft Minutes

Draft subject to approval.

Present: Chair Jeffrey Kahn, Cary Agin, Keri Cole, Serena Nelson, Frank Heald, Beth Fish, Mary Riley, Butch Sutherland, Jill Davies, Allison Clarkson, Beth Finlayson, Susan Fuller, Joanna Garbisch, Nancy Hoblin, David Nixa, Neil Allen, Patrick Proctor, Mary Mayhew, Jennifer Falvey, Brenda Blakeman, Margaret Fraser, Sally Miller, Jennifer Raymond, Wendy Wright Merrinan, Brigitte Ambrose.

I. CALL TO ORDER by Chair Kahn at 6:00pm

II. PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING ON SHORT TERM RENTAL ORDINANCE

- A. Chair Kahn read the summary of the proposed Short Term Rental Ordinance.
 - i. The purpose of the Short Term Rental Ordinance is to regulate short term (i.e., less than 30-day) rental of dwelling units within the Village. The Ordinance seeks: (a) to balance the desire of property owners to rent their residential properties to short term rental guests for compensation against the desire of residents to preserve the traditional peace and quiet of their residential neighborhoods; (b) to preserve and protect residential neighborhood character and livability from the nuisance impacts that are often associated with short term rentals; (c) to limit or prevent long term rentals from being replaced with short term rentals; (d) to ensure the safety of occupants of short term rentals and the well-being of the community; and (e) to promote the public health, safety and welfare of the Village, its residents and visitors.
- B. Ms. Hoblin believes that the proposed ordinance is fabulous.
- C. Mr. Proctor had a question about waiver fees and civil penalties and what the difference is. Chair Kahn informed the audience that if you are to pay the fine without going to civil court, it is a waiver fee, versus the cost of going to civil court which is higher.
- D. Ms. Garbisch is in favor of the ordinance.
- E. Ms. Hoblin asked how the violators are going to be located. Fire Chief Green will be searching for unauthorized/unregistered STRs. People are encouraged to contact Chief Green if they believe that a STR is not registered or following the ordinance.
- F. Mr. Proctor verified that Section 6J is the current zoning regulation and there is no change at this time. He asked how Section 6J will be enforced. The STR owners must pay tax and this can be checked. If community members notice a lot of activity at a STR, notify Chief Green and he will follow up.
 - i. Ms. Mayhew believes that this is a great idea. She asked if this is going to rely on the neighbors turning in their own or if there is another way to track the rule breakers.
- G. Ms. Mayhew asked about the garbage section. The general idea is that there isn't trash left outside for an extended period or trash littering the property.
- H. Mr. Nixa asked about Section 6C and the response time to incidents. The ordinance doesn't specify the response time. The Trustees will look at this section and revise if needed, but the idea is that an owner would want to respond to ensure that they are not getting fined or losing money because the rental can't be occupied.

- i. Mr. Nixa would also like to see a commercial company used to assist with locating STRs and enforcing the limitations on rentals.
- I. Ms. Clarkson, a member of the Senate of Economic Development Committee commented that the State tax department could be a great partner for the Village on STRs. The senate will be working on STRs during this legislative session.
- J. Mr. Proctor – is support in this ordinance. He stated that this isn't changing what is permitted, it is just enforcing the rules already set.
- K. Ms. Marrinan is in support of this ordinance. She would like some clarification about the foliage exception.
 - i. Current STR owners already can do this, but now it has been made clearer as to who can take advantage of this. The STRs must be registered and be inspected.
- L. Ms. Miller asked how the STR Ordinance will mesh with the Zoning Regulations currently in place and changes in the future.
 - i. Chair Kahn informed Ms. Miller that the Trustees have the ability to make changes to the ordinance to reflect changes made on the zoning side and the goal is to make the ordinance and zoning regulations mesh.
 - ii. There aren't any differences between the Village Zoning Regulations and the proposed Ordinance at this time.
- M. Ms. Mayhew would like clarification on abusing the system. The fines are set so that it should deter people from abusing the system.
- N. Mr. Proctor asked about the notification process for notice of violations. The registration process will ensure that there is contact information and ways to notify violators.
- O. Ms. Falvey is in support of the zoning regulations and would like to see the enforcement done by a commercial company. Chair Kahn clarified that this ordinance will not be regulated through the Zoning Office, but by Chief Green with support from the Municipal Manager's Office. There has been no change to how often STRs can be rented, but the Trustees are putting everybody on the same page and allowing for enforcement.
 - i. Ms. Falvey clarified that she is reacting to a Planning Commission meeting that she attended.
 - ii. Chief Green has stated that he thinks that this is a reasonable task for the enforcement, and this is an ordinance that can grow and change with the needs of the Village.
- P. Ms. Mayhew believes that it is great that the trustees don't want to get rid of STRs. The Trustees have done a great job and likes the plan that the Trustees have to be able to come back and adjust if necessary and take in public feedback.
- Q. Ms. Ambrose informed the Trustees that since she has started STRs there have been drastic changes in the fees associated with STRs and the restriction of times allowed for renting doesn't allow for the owners to pay for their property taxes and costs.
 - i. Ms. Blakeman agrees with Ms. Ambrose, that it is difficult with the regulation for the amount of times that a person can rent per year. She asked why there is a limit to the amount of times a person can rent within the year.
 - 1. Chair Kahn responded that there has been a big increase in unregulated STRs in the Village. Once the ordinance has been around, it will allow for further input and allow the Village to get an idea of how many STRs are out there, so that the ordinance and regulations can best be managed.
- R. A resident spoke up and said that there needs to be a balance of STRs, rentals, inns, and residential homes. Many are very good STR owners and guests, but the ordinance is to enforce those who are not in compliance and to look at how many STRs are in the village.
- S. Ms. Fraser would like for people to come and enjoy the Village of Woodstock. The people who have taken part in the previous regulations and those currently participating

have taken the time to think about the Village of Woodstock and the attraction that needs to be regulated to ensure that the Village keeps that attraction.

- T. Ms. Falvey stated that some people must run a credit card every night for a STR and would that count as each time they can rent. Chair Kahn informed Ms. Falvey that if that is the case, it could be presented to the Trustees and Chief Green and an exception could be made.
- U. Mr. Proctor pointed out that the STR owners might be able to increase their rates if the non-compliant STRs decide not to comply.

III. ADJOURNMENT

- A. The meeting was adjourned at 7:00pm by Chair Kahn.