

Transient Lodging Task Force Minutes

Tuesday, November 7, 2017

7:00 p.m. Town Hall Public Meeting

Draft

1. Members Present: D. Tucker - Chair, L. Robertson, Ellen Hoffman, Lauren Duh, Greg Renz, Dow Benedict, and Sonya Evanisko.

Absent: Jeanne Muir and Elise Baach

2. Visitors: Mary Stanley, Melanie Jestradt, Chris Cefiero, Amy ??, James Puglis, Carlos Niederhauser, and Elizabeth Wheeler.

3. Meeting called to order at 7:01 p.m. by D. Tucker.

4. Introduction of the task force – and read the mission statement: The Transient Lodging Task Force will evaluate, review and make recommendations to the Town Council on a position with respect to policies on Transient Lodging.

5. Definition of Transient Lodging:

Transient Lodging is defined as a short-term rental of less than 30-days and would include such types of lodging as hotels, B&B's, AirBnB, etc.

6. Review of Town Ordinances relating to Transient

Lodging.

D. Tucker – there are not too many ordinances that relate to transient housing, those that do are in Title 9, Chapter 2 (214) – this lists various zoning in town, Chapter 5 (504) – lists exceptions via R@ Zoning, Chapter 6 (602) –this explains that it is allowed already in Commercial Zones. Chapter 8 (8209) refers to Hotels/Motels, etc. We will be referring to R1, R2 & RC zoning. Off-street parking is referenced on pg. 11. For transient lodging, off-street parking is required. Any state rules will apply to Shepherdstown. Currently, there is no transient lodging allowed in zones other than commercial.

7. Input from visitors. Task force members will take notes, as purpose of this meeting is to gather information from town residents.

Q - Why do residents not like transient lodging (TL)?

A – research from other cities has shown that residents worry about homes being bought up and turned into TL. One city had many rental buildings being bought and turned into TL-taking the long-term rentals off of the market. There were serious concerns about the owners of the TL homes not being present if there were noise issues and no one being accountable. The owner

needs to be available. Some residences being rented as TL had new people daily, the sidewalks weren't shoveled and the leaves weren't raked if the owner was not around. Colorado lost affordable rentals due to no restrictions on TL, so teachers and cops lost affordable housing. Concern of investors coming in and buying up single-family homes and losing the single-family home residential base.

Q – can a building that isn't attached to the home be rented?

A – if the owner is in the main home it is a possibility.

Q – possible rules?

A – can restrict wedding parties, have high deposits, and strict house rules by the owner. The owners can have a strict screening process (AirBnB's live and die by their reviews).

Q – some pros?

A – many cities cited extra income for renovations, to help pay the mortgage, and to help pay taxes. It does not take away from the local hotels and B&B's, it can allow for people with pets, people want to stay in town, and be able to walk downtown. Hotel/motel tax coming from the TL rentals going to the town.

Q – would require a business license?

A –from the town and from the state.

Questions to look into for the task force: will the owners have to pay a higher property tax? Can a single room be rented based on sq. footage? How long do we allow TL to be rented out-6 months, 9-months, or for the whole year (30 days at a time?). Can the owner live on the lot or do they have to live in the TL home? Can there be a vetted/approved manager? There could be a minimum standard that everyone has to adopt - vetting process, smoke detectors, fire extinguisher, clear egress and ingress.

Parking – do we limit blocks, the number of TL on a block, owners have to have a driveway, or let the current parking ordinances address it? Guest pass can be used for the renter for one car/one room. Perhaps the homeowner can park elsewhere; Lot A, Sara Cree.

Should there be an inspection requirement, and by whom? The county?

Members feel that owner occupied is critical. The task force needs to be diligent. There is a great need for more housing during events like CATF, Street Fest,

DogFest, the Film Festival, etc. L. Duh looked at the stats during April-October and our lodging was 75% occupied. There are good opportunities here; we want to be thoughtful to have transient lodging. There is room for more lodging.

To police the TL, have 3-strikes and out policy? If there are legitimate complaints about noise, trash, etc., can have the business license revoked.

In order to make a recommendation, we need to vet this out more.

D. Tucker – if there are no objections, the meeting is adjourned at 8:19 pm. No objections noted. Minutes respectfully submitted by L. Robertson.