



**Transient Lodging Task Force (TLTF)
Tuesday, Oct 3, 2017
Meeting Minutes**

Attendees: TLTF Members--Deb Tucker (Chair), Dow Benedict, Ellen Hoffman, Jeanne Muir, Lauren Duh, Lori Robertson, Sonya Evanisko. And in the audience Bob Mitchell.

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm.
2. The members of the task force introduced themselves including their involvement with various Shepherdstown activities and affiliations.
3. A mission statement was discussed and edited. It is as follows:

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.

4. There was discussion on the title "Transient Lodging" as to whether it could be something else, perhaps more recognizable and friendlier. It was pointed out that Transient Lodging is included in existing ordinances. This is something that should be revisited with the review of ordinances. It was decided to include a definition that clarifies what it means. Suggestion for future discussion:

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

5. As half of the group had participated on an AirBnB Task Force that was formed by the Planning Commission, there was some discussion on the work that had been done. Copies of documents will be forwarded to the new task force in advance of the next meeting. A brief overview of the findings included the incorporation of the following as important to eliminate some of the issues that other towns have had with transient lodging. If we do it we want to "do it right" if we do it:
 - a. Owner Occupied
 - b. Must have parking – off street or a resident's visitor pass
 - c. Restrictions on number of rooms that can be let
 - d. Must have inspection process
 - e. Must register with town and pay taxes.
 - f. Leverage other existing ordinances such as parking, sound etc
 - g. Would apply to all types of zoning

6. There is no preconceived notion that the group will recommend in favor of Transient Lodging in town. But there is a necessity to address this issue as the Ordinances currently allow for this to occur in Commercially zoned areas, with no restrictions or requirements.
7. There were topics raised that are out of scope for this group like inspections for long term rental units and allowance for residences to be purchased by Non-profit organizations. The request was made for a census to be done to know the status of buildings that are either rentals, owner occupied, businesses etc. The group thought this was a good idea.
8. There was some discussion on why Transient Lodging should be allowed.
 - a. A need for more lodging in town
 - b. It will allow for visitors to stay in an historic home and walk to downtown to shop as opposed to staying in a commercial/franchise hotel.
 - c. Can help residents pay for renovations/ flood insurance, pay their mortgage, supplement their income to maintain their historic homes per town HLC guidelines
 - d. Diversity in lodging, good to have different types of lodging - for families and pets.
9. First step is to get input from the community on this topic. It will be information gathering only. We will hold a Public Meeting at Town Hall.

Tuesday, Nov 7 starting at 7:00pm.

Amy should advertise and post on door, website and FaceBook. The handout for the meeting will be copies of current rules and ordinances relating to transient lodging, B&B and hotels. Lori took the action to get copies of that from the zoning officer. Deb will draft an agenda.

10. The task force agreed to hold its meetings on the first Tuesdays of every month. So, the next meeting will be Tuesday, Dec 5 at 7:00pm at Town Hall. Please mark your calendars.
11. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm.