

Town of Wolfeboro
Short Term Rental Subcommittee
Planning Board
Monday, July 12, 2021

Present: Cindy Melanson, Geordy Hutchinson, John Thurston, Kathy Barnard, Tavis Austin.

The meeting was called to order at 8:01 AM in the Great Hall.

The chairman changed the order of the agenda and allowed the public an opportunity to address the committee.

The public comments were as follows;

An owner-occupied resident stated she has 2 bedrooms that are available for short term rentals. No stoves are available but a microwave and coffee pot are available for use. She indicated she has been doing this for many years.

A property rental agency has a list of issues people need to address before renting. Many of the tenants work in Wolfeboro. He has short and term long term rentals.

A property owner mentioned she rents her property for several weeks. She is concerned because she uses the income to pay the taxes. This issue was also expressed by others. Here property sleeps 12 and is usually rented to families.

A property owner said this is a tourist town so the renting of residential properties is consistent with this purpose.

A property owner indicated that she has a house and it indicates in the deed that the house can be rented. She also screens tenants carefully before renting and uses the rental income to pay her taxes. What is the definition of short-term rental?

A property owner said it seems some rentals are owner occupied and that is a positive.

A property owner has had a family home since the 1960s. He said it was never his intention to rent, but now they rent to pay the taxes which have increase over the years. His rentals are usually one to two weeks. He has "house rules" and rent to up to 10 people.

A property owner said the problem seems to be in the summer and some places rent in the winter also.

It was mentioned that some places are used as party houses.

It was also mentioned that much of the information is "hearsay" without facts.

What issue is the committee trying to solve?

The public session was then closed.

The June 7, 2021 minutes were reviewed. A motion was made and seconded accept the minutes as written. All present voted in favor of the motion.

Planning Director Tavis Austin then explained the issue of grandfathering. If a property owner has been renting, he/she is then considered a legally existing nonconformance of the regulations and can continue. In order to determine if it is short term or long term rental, the Planning Board would need to come up with a definition of these terms.

Our Town attorney has said that renting of a residential property by a property owner (or his/her agent) is consistent with our regulations.

There was then a discussion about what other Towns are doing.

It was asked if we have addressed everything in the Purpose statement.

The review of the Purpose statement is as follows:

Differentiate between short-term and long-term rental – this has been discussed but no recommendation yet.

Study the trend of short-term rentals – it was agreed that the committee has done this by listening to both sides of the issues from property owners

Determine the impact on Town agencies – no increase from fire, building and police.

Determine if this use leads to commercialism of neighborhoods – there is some commercialism in some neighborhoods (North Main Street)

Determine if this has impacted the quality of life in Wolfeboro – this needs further discussion.

Uphold the integrity of the zoning ordinance – the Town attorney seems to indicate that we are upholding the zoning regulations and other sections of the zoning ordinance can be used if the Town receives complaints.

Make recommendation to the BOS and PB – we have made a recommendation to the PB, who then forwarded it to the BOS about noise complaints.

The committee then determined the next meeting will be August 16, 2021 (Monday), 8:00 AM in the Great Hall.

The meeting then adjourned at 9:30 AM.

Submitted by Kathy Barnard