

MINUTES - DRAFT  
**Ad Hoc Advisory Committee on Short Term Rentals**  
JUNE 30, 2022, 6:00 PM, via Videoconference

Committee Members present: Branis Buslovich (BB), Travis Fyfe (TF), Tom O'Quinn (TO), Megan Shea (MS), Marianne Remy (MR), Lara Demberg Voloto (LV), Jennifer Zwarich, Chairperson (JZ).

Committee Members absent: none

Invited guests: Mayor Kathleen Foley (KF)

Meeting began 6:03pm.

*KF had difficulty connecting so item moved agenda item #1 to further down in meeting and instead began with introductions. Agenda items below retain numerical order from agenda but are shuffled to represent the chronology of discussion.*

OLD BUSINESS – none

NEW BUSINESS

3. Committee member introductions

All members introduced themselves, stating their number of years as residents in the village, their profession or relevant skills, their involvement or non-involvement with STR operation, and their records, if any, of volunteer service in the village or other stakes/involvement in the community such as local businesses or children in local schools. Members are residents of the village and ranged between 2 and 24 years living in the village with broad diversity of professional experience. 3 of 7 members currently operate or recently have operated an STR or STRs in the village. 4 of 7 do not operate an STR in the village but of these 4, 2 operate an STR in their vacation home out of state and 2 do not operate STR at all. Prior village volunteer experience included first responder, Zoning Board of Appeals member, Tree Advisory Board member, prior Ad Hoc advisory committees members, VCS Chamber of Commerce members, local home-based business owners, local non-profit board members. 5 of 7 committee members currently have kids in local schools. There was brief discussion of background/experience not represented on the committee, such as lifetime residents of the village, residents aging at home on fixed incomes, local resident renters, etc that would yield blind spots and of the need to seek out and gather information from these other groups of stakeholders where necessary.

1. Summary of assignment/goal of committee: Mayor Foley

KF joined the meeting, apologized for her videoconference connection problems and thanked the committee members for volunteering for this work. She noted that STRs are

here and that the task before them was to help the Village Board of Trustees (VBOT) make changes to the current law that will help get a handle on them. How can regulation encourage responsible operation that does not diminish the community character that we all value. There needs to be a solution that allows STRS, because they are likely here to stay and to grow, but that protects public safety and community character and is workable and enforceable. She advised that the committee's main task was to suggest an edited version of the current law to the VBOT. She asked them to begin with the suggested edits made in May by the VBOT as a jumping off point for discussion. Two deliverables– 1) Mid-work presentation to the VBOT on suggestions where the committee would get feedback from the board and 2) an edited version of Ch. 100 submitted to the village clerk and presented in concise summary to the VBOT at a public meeting. She again thanked the members for giving their time to this effort and she hoped that results could be delivered by end of autumn. TO asked her to clarify the status of the 5% occupancy tax bill and KF replied that it passed and is on its way to governor.

## 2. Policy on open meetings, public comment and minutes: JZ

JZ noted to fellow members that the Ad Hoc committee's meetings are not technically subject to NY Open Meetings Law because of its citizen membership and advisory purpose. However, she indicated a desire to run the meetings as adherent to the law's intent as possible by keeping them open to the public with public comment welcomed at the close of each meeting, and with meeting agendas and minutes deposited with the Village Clerk for the public record. There was brief discussion of public comment policy and how best to ensure public input to committee's work in most efficient manner while preserving meeting time for committee work. TF discussed ways to organize public comment to encourage a diversity of opinion and input and keep work on track. Group discussed public comment as one way to "take the temp" of fellow citizens in regard to CH. 100. JZ mentioned the possibility of undertaking an informal survey as another means to understand the general desires of residents on this issue. TO liked the idea of an efficient mechanism whereby the committee could take the public temp, but cautioned that the committee's job is not to please all groups but to understand concerns and improve the law so it definitely addresses top level concerns in an enforceable way. He suggested that distinguishing between which concerns are "real" or "perceived" should be one of the areas of committee work. BB noted that there has been public input at multiple previous meetings. MR suggested that an accurate survey is difficult to undertake properly and is beyond the scope/expertise of the committee. She seconded TO's concern to distinguish facts from fears and suggested that perhaps collecting representative anecdotal information from different stakeholders might be more productive. Suggested for example that the noise concern would not be an issue with resident-hosted STRs where host is on site– suggested that the actual number of police noise complaints related to STRs could be gathered. MS suggested that police complaints may not accurately represent the problem as neighbors often address

complaints to owners first. BB suggested that the AirBnb business model is continually evolving and is not necessarily counter to our community goals and agreed with the idea that factual info is needed. She added that regulations should be easy for hosts to comply with. JZ respectfully expressed skepticism of the idea that any hundred billion dollar corporate business model has a concern for our community besides a financial stake in it's resources and BB replied that the important thing to note is that the business model is based on positive community traits that we should remember such as being welcoming to others, supporting tourism etc. JZ noted that part of the purpose of the law is protective as well as remedial and suggested that the committee should not just look at where we are now but must also look forward into the future as STR numbers may grow and anticipate a change in scale of operations in the village imparting a change in impacts that may or may not be desirable. She noted that other small communities who are ahead of our current level of tourism growth provide evidence of impacts that may reasonably be expected here.

#### 4. Set up regular meeting schedule

The group agreed to next meeting at 8:00pm on July 13 at Village Hall and tentatively set their 3rd meeting date at July 27th 8:00pm at Village Hall. Lara and Megan will share secretary duties.

#### 5. Divide up preparatory info gathering tasks in prep for first working meeting

Brief discussion. JZ noted she set up interviews with CS Officer in Charge Larry Burke and with Philipstown Building Department to gather enforcement advice and information. MS and TF advocated for inclusion of first-responders like CS Fire Company No. 1 and the Ambulance Corps on list of interviews since safety compliance is currently a main purpose of the law. It was agreed that these were prudent suggestions and that a basic framework was needed to guide the interviews. The specifics of these info-gathering tasks were tabled for a future meeting. JZ suggested that next meeting begin with consideration and editing of the PURPOSES section of CH. 100 as a way to get all members on common ground regarding higher-purpose goals of the law before digging into details of the mechanisms to support those goals that we may or may not disagree about. Concurrently, at next meeting we can further discuss info gathering. JZ stated she will circulate the following: text of the current law, VBOT suggest edits document and a worksheet to guide our PURPOSE section discussion.

#### 6. Public Comment

None offered.