

From: [Derith Smith](#)
To: [Maggie Bacon](#); [Linda Chase](#); [March Dye](#); [Sue Palmer](#); [Thomas Rademacher](#); [Meg Walton](#); [Chris Webb](#); [Alacia Acton](#)
Subject: Fwd: STR in Empire
Date: Sunday, February 4, 2024 4:40:21 PM

FYI

Derith A. Smith
Empire Village Clerk
11518 S LaCore St., PO Box 253
Empire, MI 49630
231-326-5466

PLEASE NOTE: All correspondence to and from this address is subject to the Michigan Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and may be disclosed to third parties.

----- Original Message -----

From: March Dye <marchdye@gmail.com>
To: Derith Smith <clerk@villageofempire.com>
Date: 02/04/2024 2:00 PM EST
Subject: Fwd: STR in Empire

Hi Derith,

This letter was sent to Meg and me on our personal emails.

I am forwarding it to you to be dispersed to other council members.

March

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Bill Blacquiere <bblacqu@gmail.com>
Date: February 4, 2024 at 12:43:04 PM EST
To: March Dye <marchdye@gmail.com>, Meg <mbwalton72@gmail.com>
Subject: STR in Empire

To: Short Term Rental Registration/Ordinance
Development Committee
Date: February 3, 2024
Re: Residents' Comments to the Committee

As long-standing, full-time residents of Empire who enjoy and value life in our community, we are offering our comments and concerns for consideration by the Committee. We attended the committee meeting on January 16, 2024, and found the meeting educational and enlightening. We appreciate your work and research, including the surveying of surrounding

communities and their regulations on Short Term Rentals.

In answer to the question raised about the necessity for regulations of Short Term Rentals (STR), we believe there are three comprehensive and compelling reasons for regulation:

1. Regulating Short Term Rentals prioritizes the wellbeing and cohesion of all members of the community.
2. Throughout Michigan, and the USA, communities have enacted needed regulations that require permits for STR and put caps on the number of Short Term Rentals allowed in their communities in order to preserve community life for its residents. Communities such as Suttons Bay and Holland are two exemplary examples of the positive outcome of adopting STR policies.
3. While STR may bring economic benefits to the community, regulation is needed to prevent and correct STR problems we have observed taking place in Empire.

The following is a list of reported problems with Short Term Rentals that we believe impact communities, including Empire:

Impact of STR on neighbors/neighborhoods

- Excessive noise, especially late-night parties and gatherings.
- Increased traffic and speeding.
- Increases in vandalism and disregard for neighboring properties and privacy.
- Using neighbors' trash receptacles without permission and trash left on the property and street.
- Problems associated in instances where the number of occupants exceed the allowed capacity of the house being rented, including tent camping and sleeping hammocks in yards.
- STR have been documented to increase the overuse and misuse of septic systems.

Long term impact of unregulated STR on community life

- Landlords converting long-term rentals to STR result in reduced housing options for locals.
- STR negatively affects the social fabric of communities.
- Absentee landlords are often nonresponsive to complaints, leaving residents without recourse.
- Unregulated number of STR in a community increases competition and drives down the rental price, which may result in lack of upkeep of rental property and increased risk of blight.
- Many STR exceed 14 days but income is not reported. The landlord benefits but not the community.

To be clear: we are not advocating for elimination of STR in Empire. We believe there needs to be a balance: protecting community life for residents and acknowledging home owner's property rights. We support enacting regulations, requiring permits with appropriate fees and, importantly, placing a percentage cap on how many STR can exist in our community. When a property is transferred by sale or inheritance, we believe it should lose its current STR permit and that new owners be required to re-apply.

Thank you again for your work to preserve our community.

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