

April 21st, 2024

Attn: Members of Short Term Rental Registration Ordinance Development Committee

Dear Members,

I have not been involved in Village politics since I left the Village Council about 12 years ago. As you know I did stay involved in the betterment and beautification of this lovely Village we are all lucky enough to live in. Since Leigh and I have both had some health issues lately, it has brought back many memories of when Leigh's mother was still alive and experiencing her own health issues here in this same house we now live in. She, like us did not have any close relatives living nearby, but she had something many of our residents do not have and that was neighbors. If she wasn't seen out or around for a few days, a neighbor would check on her. If her cat was outside in the rain, a neighbor would open her door and let it in. If her dog got out of his pen, her neighbors would help her find it. If things just didn't seem right a neighbor would call us downstate and report their concerns. We could always ask one of her neighbors if she needed help before we could get there from our home downstate.

Even as late at 2005 when Leigh and I permanently moved here, we still felt the neighborly connection. Don Fradd lived across the street from us. If his two black labs were not out by 9:00 am each morning, either Leigh or I was over there to make sure Don was ok. If the power went out, we checked on Don. Many times we as neighbors as well as other such as Diane Alyswoth looked in on Fay Shalda. Of course both of these homes are now weekly rentals. It dawned on me that we are pretty much surrounded by empty houses most of the year. If something happened to us inside our home, who would notice?

As you know I recently resigned from many of my leadership roles in the Village because of my health. I was so pleased that in every case a resident of Empire volunteered to take my place. These new replacements are all about ten years younger than I am. Who will take their place when they want to resign? I suspect all of you on Village Council and this committee will someday like to move on and hand this job on to a younger generation. With a village so saturated with weekly rentals, will there be enough residents left to run our beautiful village? Already, we see as Museum members die, there are no new young residents taking their place.

I agree with the fact that we have not had much if any complaints about the conduct of weekly rentals and it is fun to meet new people from so many interesting places all summer long, but I felt it important to express my concerns from many of our residents that are not surrounded by family that live here in the Village and business owners that must cringe when they see their cliental diminish with each new winter.

Please read my letter as communication at your meeting and provide a copy for each member of this committee. We know all of you have the best interests of the Village in mind and Leigh and I truly appreciate all the hard work you put forth to do a good job for the rest of us. We thank you for your hard work and dedication.

Sincerely,

Linda Payment