

Amy Johnson

From: Leigha Gaynair <leigaynair@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 20, 2017 1:01 PM
To: Chuck Bennett; Cara Kaser; Tom Andersen; Brad Nanke; Steve McCoid; Matthew Ausec; Chris Hoy; Sally Cook; Jim Lewis
Cc: citycouncil
Subject: Re: Short-term rentals amendment, proposed changes, citizen input

May 20, 2017

To: Salem City Council

From: Leigh and Robert Gaynair, Ward 1

Re: Changes to proposed code amendment: Short-term rentals

- Line 21, Section 8 (700.006) b. Structure Types. Remove guest houses as a non-allowable. **Guest houses are different than accessory dwellings, as they are not intended for long-term rental.** The difference is simple for code enforcement and inspection as a guest house **does not** have an oven or stove for cooking.
- Create an exception for owners that already have buildings on their property. A grandfather clause or at least an avenue for those persons who already have appropriate structures to use them for short-term rentals. The perimeters for licensing and inspection are already in place in the proposed amendments.
- Short-term rental hosts are providing a service to our community, not taking something away. Please note: Per Airbnb there are only 75 active host members in Salem. Of these, I can locate only four that are guest houses or equivalent.

Dear Salem City Council Members:

It has come to my attention that there are some council members who are considering banning short-term rentals in guest houses in our community. (Line 21, Section 8, b. Structure Type in the amendment). I urge you to reject this portion of the amendment. In addition, I ask that an exception be added giving a path to application for properties with guest houses or suitable dwellings. It is reasonable to have exceptions and prudent to have a path in place.

First, a guesthouse is not an ADU. An ADU is a fully functional home that offers housing for long term renting. A guest house does not have a kitchen. In our case, we renovated our space on purpose to not have a kitchen, as we do not want to be landlords. We want to be proprietors and offer a service for short-term guests.

Next, I would like to tell you my story in hopes that it gives you some insight into the sharing community and short-term rental. I am 46 years old and a cancer survivor. It has been my dream since I was 21 years old to be a proprietor. I worked long and very hard to realize my dream. When we moved to Salem two years ago, we bought our home in the Highland Neighborhood due to the possibility of having an Airbnb rental. Our property had an old garage/barn in the back which I spent my nest egg renovating. In August of 2016 it was complete and we listed it with Airbnb and what has occurred since is a dream come true. We have wonderful guests and I am able to earn money. My cancer treatments left me with several challenges that make traditional employment difficult physically. Without our Airbnb income we will not be able to meet our finances.

A few important things to know about Airbnb- It is a platform for hosts and guests to connect and they have built in safe guards so I am able to screen guests and be very clear about rules and expectations. These safe guards and processes allow us to host people with confidence where expectations are mutually agreed. One of the many rules is quiet hours. Additionally, they address parking, parties and so forth. These concerns are already addressed in the host/guest agreement. Our neighbors have offered to answer any questions you may have about their experience living next to an Airbnb. You will find that their comments are positive.

We are dog friendly, which is in short...a wonderful service to dog owner's who often have a very difficult time finding places to stay with their pets. A few of the people we have hosted: A military couple with four dogs on their way to their next assignment, parents of Willamette University students, people visiting family for weddings, birth's, graduations, medical students doing their short term rotations at the State hospital, travelers wanting to stop between San Francisco and Seattle, couples looking to relocate here, individuals starting new jobs with the state, legislative staff, police academy candidates, and the list goes on and on. These are folks who want a *private* place to stay and cannot afford a hotel or are unable to stay at a hotel due to their pets or personal needs. I have heard countless times that the hotels are often booked or are too expensive or do not meet their needs. We are providing a service as hosts to not only the guests, but also the community. I offer locally crafted soaps, drinks and toiletries and do not have a full kitchen on purpose so guests will go to our locally owned restaurants. I have a full list of activities, venues and eateries. Our guests love this and I have many reviews thanking us for recommendations. We are doing our part to make Salem a destination and it is working.

I would urge you to listen to the people actually involved in the sharing community and their immediate neighbors and not hearsay or unfounded fears. I live in a city neighborhood and there are literally ADU's everywhere- Five in my block alone, that house long and short-term rentals and to be frank, many of these in our historic neighborhood's are owned by rental home collectors and are not well kept nor suitable living spaces. Short-term rental folks like myself take pride in our spaces and work hard to give guests a positive view of Salem, its neighborhoods and its residents. Airbnb has a review system and we exceed expectations becoming qualified as super hosts. This means we do an excellent job and have the guest reviews to prove it.

It is very important to me that you really hear what I am saying. This is my dream. This is my income. This involves me in my community on a positive level I hadn't thought possible. We look to you now. **I** look to you now to support hosts and guests so we can continue to be positive participants. Thank you in advance for your time and inclusion of the changes I have proposed.

Leigh Gaynair, Ward 1

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