

FIFTEEN ROPE FERRY ROAD
WATERFORD, CT 06385-2886



PHONE: 860-442-0553
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**AGENDA
PUBLIC WORKS, PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT STANDING COMMITTEE OF
THE RTM**

Special Meeting

Wednesday, August 23, 2023

7:00 P.M. - Waterford Town Hall

BOE Conference Room

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call
4. Public Comment
5. To consider and act upon the minutes of the July 13, 2022 meeting.
6. Consideration and possible action on items referred to committee:
 - A. Short Term Rentals, RTC 12/06/21
7. Adjournment

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MINUTES

PUBLIC WORKS, PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE RTM

Special Meeting

Waterford Town Hall – Louise Appleby Room

July 13, 2022

Public Works, Planning & Development Standing Committee Chair Michael Rocchetti called the July 13, 2022 Special Meeting to order at 7:01 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Ryan Healy, Michael Rocchetti, Greg Attanasio, Ted Olynciw.

ABSENT: Mike Bono

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT: RTM Member Susan Driscoll, RTM Moderator Paul Goldstein

ALSO PRESENT: Town Clerk David L. Campo; Town Attorney Nicholas Kepple, Planning Director Abby Piersall.

ITEM 5 – June 15, 2022 Meeting Minutes.

MOTION by Olynciw, seconded by Healy, to approve the June 15, 2022 Meeting minutes.

MOTION PASSED: Unanimous

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ann-Marie Andriola – Waterford Resident, 33 Niantic River Rd; formerly of 9 Waterview Dr. spoke in regard to her experience with the current owners of 9 Waterview Dr.

Nadine Pica – Waterford Resident, 5 Overlook Dr., spoke in regard to residential locations being used essentially as commercial property.

Juanita Durham – Waterford resident, 3 Overlook Dr., spoke in regard to residential properties acting as hotels and requested the town help to resolve the situation.

ITEM 6 – Short Term Rentals, RTC 12/06/21

Discussion ensued around community engagement between the committee, the public, Town Attorney Nicholas Kepple and Planning Director Abby Piersall. Director of Planning Abby Piersall submitted a draft survey (See Attachment) that would be distributed to members of the community who are opposed, for, indifferent and operate short term rentals. It was discussed that the survey would be used first to get to the heart of the issue and then plan how to engage the community in person. The survey would be distributed by email, website, social media, school handouts, word of mouth and press release.

Estimated survey launch is end of July, beginning of August. It was noted by resident John Morgan that the town should use tax and sewer bills in the future to engage the public on issues of interest in town.

MOTION by Attanasio, seconded by Healy, to authorize Planning Director Abby Piersall to release the survey with agreed upon changes.

MOTION PASSED: Unanimous

The committee agreed that September 21, 2022 would work for the first community engagement.

MOTION by Olynciw, seconded by Attanasio, to adjourn at 8:17 P.M.

VOTING IN FAVOR: Unanimous

Respectfully Submitted,

Mike Rocchetti

Chair

David Campo

Abby Piersall

Wednesday, July 13, 2022 2:26 PM

To: MICHAEL ROCCHETTI; Nicholas Kepple; David Campo
Subject: Draft Short Term Rental Survey
Attachments: DRAFT Short Term Rental Survey.docx

Hello,

This is for your consideration/discussion purposes at tonight's meeting. Possible next steps for public engagement on this issue include:

- Consider whether the Committee supports doing a survey. If there is support:
 - Refine the questions
 - Review the timeline for launching the survey, closing it, and sharing results
 - Discuss an outreach strategy to get as many people as possible (and with a range of ideas) to respond
- Consider whether Committee supports hosting a community forum on the topic
 - Discuss timing of the forum. I recommend using the forum to share survey results. Results can be used to guide the structure and goals for the forum.
- Possible timing of next steps:
 - July-August: Survey
 - Early September: End survey and review results, refine topics and structure of community forum
 - Mid/End of September- Host forum and compile community feedback
 - October: Make recommendation to the RTM about whether to proceed with drafting an ordinance.

If after receiving balanced community feedback the Committee decides to pursue an ordinance, I would recommend the December/February timeframe for review and adoption so that it could potentially be in place by April of 2023.

I'm happy to discuss!

Abby Y. Piersall, AICP

Planning Director
Town of Waterford
15 Rope Ferry Road
Waterford, CT 06385
(860) 444-5813

July 13, 2022

**Public Works, Planning & Development Standing Committee
DRAFT Short Term Rental Survey**

INTRODUCTION

Waterford is a fantastic travel destination. More and more, visitors are looking to short term rentals like Airbnb or VBRO when they come to stay. As demand for lodging increases, so do the number of short term rental properties in Town. For some, this trend is a benefit. For others, it is a cause for concern. This survey is intended give people on all sides of the issue a chance to participate in the conversation about how Waterford should think about short term rentals.

The Waterford Representative Town Meeting (RTM) referred the question of whether to regulate short term rentals to its Public Works, Planning & Development Standing Committee. Our Town does not currently have a regulation that governs these rentals. The Committee is considering the matter, and is asking the Waterford community for feedback.

This survey is a first step. The Committee also plans to host a community forum to discuss the survey results and talk more about whether there is a need for regulations. After hearing from the community, the Committee will make a recommendation to the full RTM about how Waterford should proceed.

SURVEY

1. Which of the following best describes you? (Choose all that apply)
 - a. Permanent Waterford Resident
 - b. Seasonal Waterford Resident (1-6 months of the year)
 - c. Visitor (stay in Waterford less than 30 days in a year)
 - d. Owner
 - e. Renter
 - f. Commercial Property Owner
2. Do you advertise your home for short-term rentals?
 - a. No, and I don't plan to
 - b. Not yet, but I plan to in the future
 - c. Yes, I have or am currently advertising it
 - d. I do not own residential property in Waterford.
3. If you answered yes, what type of property have you advertised as a short-term rental?
 - a. Single Family Home
 - b. In-law apartment
 - c. Detached apartment (garage apartment, carriage house, etc.)
 - d. Room(s) (i.e., not the whole dwelling)
4. If you answered yes to question 2, please describe why you chose to rent your property on a short-term basis.
5. If you answered yes to question 2, what platforms do you use to advertise?
 - a. Airbnb
 - b. VBRO

- c. Home Away
- d. Facebook
- e. Other (please describe)
- f. I do not advertise

6. Have you ever been disrupted by short term rentals (noise, parking, traffic, security, etc.?)

- a. Yes
- b. No

Please explain.

7. How would (or do) you feel about having a short term rental property or properties in your neighborhood?

- a. I do not have any concerns.
- b. I am somewhat uncomfortable.
- c. I am very uncomfortable.

Please explain.

8. Do you believe there are benefits to Waterford having short term rentals?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Unsure

Please explain.

9. Do you believe that Waterford should consider regulating short term rentals?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Unsure

10. What timeframe do you consider to be "short-term?" (check all that apply)

- a. 1 night
- b. 2 nights
- c. Less than 1 week
- d. 1-2 weeks
- e. Less than 30 days

11. If Waterford were to consider regulating short-term rentals, which requirements are the most important for the Town consider? (Consider a matrix for responses: Very Important, Somewhat Important, Not Important)

- a. Maximum days in the year when the property can be rented.
- b. Minimum length of stay for renters.
- c. Yearly licensing for short-term rentals
- d. Inspections for basic fire and building safety
- e. Maximum number of renters allowed at one time
- f. Requirements for off-street parking
- g. Requirements for trash pickup
- h. Penalties for violations

- i. Application fee
- j. Owner or property manager living on site when while a property is rented
- k. Ability for the Town to contact owner or property manager 24/7 when the property is rented in case any issues arise
- l. Limits on where in Town short term rentals can be allowed (Areas within Town, Distances between licensed short term rentals)

12. Is there anything more you would like to share with us about this topic?

ORDINANCE
REGULATING SHORT-TERM RENTALS IN THE
TOWN OF GROTON

Be it ordained by the Town Council of the Town of Groton:

SECTION 1. PURPOSE

This Ordinance shall be known as the "Short-Term Rental Ordinance."

It is the intent of this Ordinance to accommodate the desire of some property owners to rent their residential dwelling on a short-term basis but to establish appropriate requirements to mitigate the disruption that short-term owner-occupied and vacation rental dwellings may have on neighboring properties and a neighborhood.

It is found that all types of Short-Term Rentals may be rented under appropriate measures so as to make them of low intensity and not generate a nuisance to any neighbor or cause any detrimental impact to the surrounding residential neighborhood.

SECTION 2. DEFINITIONS.

For the purpose of this Ordinance, the following words and phrases shall have the meaning respectively ascribed to them:

Dwelling Unit: Any single unit providing complete independent living facilities for one or more persons, with permanent provisions for living, cooking, sleeping, bathing and sanitary facilities.

Off-Street Parking Area: An area located entirely within the real property upon which the STR is situated. The area may be within or outside of a building or structure, and shall be designed and used for the parking of motor vehicles. The area may include all-weather surfaced off-street parking spaces, garages, or private driveways.

Property Owner ("Owner"): Each and every record title owner of the subject property and improvements thereon.

Short Term Rental ("STR"): The use of a dwelling unit, in whole or in part, for transient lodging for compensation by Renters, for no more than thirty (30) days.

Short-Term Rental Guests ("Renters"): Persons who rent an STR.

Town: The Town of Groton.

SECTION 3. REGISTRATION.

- A. The Owner of STR must register annually with the Town on a form or platform specified by the Town. A registration is required for each STR.
- B. STR registration must include the following information about the STR:
1. Name of the Property Owner(s). If the Owner is a business entity, the name of the statutory agent.
 2. Address of the STR.
 3. Phone number and email address of the Owner or Owner's agent who has the authority and responsibility to respond to complaints in person, over the phone, or by email at any time of the day.
 4. Sworn statement from the Owner that the STR will contain at all times operating smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
 5. A plot plan depicting the Off-Street Parking Area to be used by Renters, or if no Off-Street Parking is available, the owner shall identify areas where parking may be available.
- C. The Town will provide a STR registration number for each STR registered by an Owner.
- D. If there is a change in the information required in subsection B of this section, the Owner must complete a new STR registration within ten days.
- E. The Owner of the STR must display the phone number and email address of the Owner or Owner's agent who has authority and responsibility to respond to complaint in person, over the phone, by email, or text at any time of the day. The information required under this subsection must be displayed in a conspicuous place within ten feet of the primary entrance inside of the STR.
- F. The Owner must pay the annual registration fee in full at the time of application. If an application is denied the fee shall not be reimbursable. The fee shall be established by resolution of the Town Council from time-to-time.

SECTION 4. STANDARDS.

- A. The following information shall be made available at the STR by the Owner and provided to the Renter in writing:
1. Information on maximum occupancy, which shall not be more than two (2) persons per bedroom, excluding children under the age of 12.

2. Applicable noise and use restrictions.

3. Location(s) of off-street parking.

4. Location of trash receptacles and not be stored within public view, except within proper containers for the purpose of collection, and information concerning the Town's trash collection schedule.

5. Contact information for the Owner or agent.

6. Emergency information, including but not limited to, Groton Police Department address & directions from the property and phone numbers (emergency and non-emergency); Directions to nearest medical facilities such as hospitals & urgent care centers; Evacuation routes.

7. A statement that the Renter shall not trespass on private property or to create disturbances.

8. The Town short-term registration number.

B. Renting, or offering for rent, a STR without complying with the registration requirement in Section 3 is prohibited.

C. When requested by a police officer or town official, the Owner or Owner's agent whose name appears on the STR registration must be on the STR premises, or be available over the phone or text, within 120 minutes after receiving a request. Failure of the Owner or Owner's agent to be on the STR premises, or be available on the phone or text, within 120 minutes after receiving the request by the police officer or town official is a violation of this Ordinance.

D. For purposes of this section, the online lodging marketplace is not responsible for any violation committed by an online lodging operator that advertises on the online lodging marketplace's platform.

SECTION 5: PENALTIES

A. The remedies herein are cumulative and the Town may proceed under one or more such remedies.

B. Any Owner, agent, or Renter who causes, permits, facilitates, aids, or abets any violation of any provision of this Ordinance or who fails to perform any act or duty required by this Ordinance is subject to a civil sanction as follows:

1. First offense on the property, written warning sent by certified mail, personal service, or first class mail.

2. Second offense within 12-month period, \$100.00 per offense.

3. Third offense within 12-month period, \$250.00 per offense.

4. Fourth and subsequent offence within 12-month period, \$500.00 per offense.

C. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this code, the STR Owner, agent, or Renter who causes, permits, facilitates, aids, or abets the use of the STR in violation of any provision of this Ordinance shall have committed a public nuisance.

D. Notwithstanding any provision in this Ordinance, a STR Owner is not liable for any violation of this Ordinance if the Owner: (1) identified on the STR registry an online lodging operator who will be responsible for complying with all applicable requirements of the Town code; and (2) submitted to the Town a signed agreement with an online lodging operator who will be responsible for complying with all applicable requirements of this Ordinance. The online lodging operator who signs the agreement will be liable for any violation relating to any violation of this Ordinance.