From: Kevin Fairchild
To: CD STRComment
Subject: STR public comment
Date: Saturday, August 15, 2020 12:42:13 PM

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Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback for short term rentals.

I believe your proposed code is a good start but it either over-corrects or under-corrects the real issue at hand, thereby angering a lot of people. I think adding a fourth tier of STR to the code will make finding the balance much easier.

By reading previous comments from others regarding this issue, it seems that most of the problems stem from rentals that host medium-to-large groups of unruly guests. In your draft code, Tier 2 allows up to 12 occupants. That is a sizable group, certainly more than most single-families. This suggests multiple groups/families are encouraged to rent together. This is where the majority of problems arise. Large multi-family groups that disturb neighbors in residential areas.

What is missing in your code is a tier for very small capacity non-owner-occupied. To avoid confusion with the current draft code, I'll label my proposals as Tiers A-D.

Tier A. Owner occupied. Owner occupied lots are unlikely to cause much interference with neighbors. I certainly know I wouldn't cause a loud ruckus if the live-in homeowner were trying to sleep in the next room. These should have very few, if any, restrictions and should not count towards the county's cap on STRs.

Tier B. Non-owner-occupied, small capacity (maximum occupancy 4). This small size helps retain tourism and promote the local economy by still allowing two couples or a small family to visit. Small groups are much less likely to be a nuisance to neighbors and should be allowed in all zoning.

Tier C. Non-owner-occupied, medium capacity (occupancy of 5-12). Sunset on smaller zoned lots in 3 years, at which time the owner may choose to discontinue use as a STR or convert to Tier B by voluntarily reducing the occupancy to maximum of 4. This approach phases out the nuisance properties in residential areas while still allowing existing owners/operators to recoup investment. Larger lots should continue to allow up to 12 guests.

Tier D. Large occupancy (13+). Restrict on small zoned lots.

To recap, I believe adding a fourth tier to the code will better align with your original intent "to protect the character of residential communities across the county, while allowing for property-owner income from short-term rentals". The best way to meet your desired outcome is with limiting occupancy, not by forcing STRs out of business based on zoning. Smaller occupancy = fewer problems.

Finally, I believe your effective date should be no sooner than December 31, 2021. There are some projects that were delayed or put on hold because of the uncertainty surrounding the outcome. Sufficient time should be provided to those who have already invested, regardless if they have yet begun construction or permit status.

Thank you,
Kevin Fairchild