

PLANNING BOARD
Saturday, January 25, 2020
Listening Session at 10:30 AM
RW Black Center, 48 Lebanon Street, Hanover, NH

Present: Iain Sim, Judith Esmay, Brian Edwards, Nancy Carter

Alternates Present: Beth Esinhart, Paul Simon, April Salas

Staff: Vicki Smith, Rob Houseman

Others Present: Mary Brown, Kip Oberting, Kirsten Elin, Bill and Susan Boyle, Susan Edwards, Caroline Sim, Jim Kennedy, Peter Murdza, Don Derrick, Betsy McClain, Jin Chu, Sandra Hoeh, Ebrahim Shah

Chair ESMAY called the meeting to order at 10:30 AM. She introduced the Planning Board members and staff.

Rob Houseman spoke to the current situation regarding short-term rentals in Hanover, described some ideas the Planning Board had to address regulation of short-term rentals, and asked for public comment. Questions and comments were as follows:

- The Town must allow short-term rental (STR) for a limited period during the year (maybe during College reunion). That would have no impact on the neighborhood character and provides revenues for the homeowner to pay property taxes.
- What happened to enforcement of known STRs? A map showing STRs would be useful. Of course, any map is just a snapshot and would need to be continually updated. Enforcement is complaint-based. The goal is to permit, then regulate. Compliance is not long-lasting at present.
- The proposal to regulate STRs should have an additional category: single-family homes that are purchased solely for STR use should be allowed, i.e. regulate un-hosted STR. The absence of constant complaints means that there are not so many negative impacts from STRs. Property taxes have increased making STR income important.
- A long-term rental ordinance is a possibility. One has been drafted but not yet reviewed publicly. Staffing is an issue.
- Clarifying that rentals for more than 30 days need registration is moving in the right direction.
- I support STR. Long-term rental happens in my house. A dwelling used by the owner is not the same as an investor-owned dwelling. We are a sustainable community. It is sustainable to use vacant residential assets, especially those within walking distance to downtown. The Sustainability Committee should endorse STR.
- Create a downtown district to allow STRs that are walkable to downtown.
- Why is the proposal for un-hosted STR in the Goose Pond District?
- Owners are careful about to whom they rent.

- I am sure there are more complaints generated by long-term rental situations than STRs.
- The tradition of STR use should be continued and made legal. Maybe include in the regulatory scheme the rule that owner-occupied STRs may only be rented for a limited number of days per year.
- Is there funding for third party compliance? The registration fees would be set so that the fee covers the cost of monitoring and inspections. The cost of third-party compliance service is estimated at approximately \$5,000 per year.
- Long-term rentals should be better regulated. How can we regulate STR when there are significant short-comings in the long-term rental regulation?
- I disagree that housing prices will be impacted by allowing STRs.
- Enforcement would include a few steps: notice to the owner to correct the violation; confirm that the situation has been corrected and if not, issue a citation and fine. The Town must ask the Superior Court for the fine to be awarded to the Town. With an ordinance, adopted by the Selectboard, a ticket could be issued immediately without the need to make a request to Superior Court.
- Has there been research into what happens in other college towns? Hanover is unique in terms of size, its regional housing market, and prices of housing so other towns are not comparable.
- The words “continually present” require further definition to ensure that readers understand that an owner would need to be on the premises.
- Portsmouth has not changed its Ordinance since the Working Stiff case was decided.
- Rooms and meals tax is not required to be paid on rentals of twelve days or less.
- How can the Town expect better compliance with a third-party service?
- Zoning amendments take place in May.
- Un-hosted STR should distinguish between owner-occupied principal dwelling as compared to a seasonally-used dwelling.
- How can you require an owner to return if they are renting their property as an un-hosted STR? How can this regulation be tied to a principal residence?
- How are properties used for long-term rentals classified? Single-family and multi-family were suggested and forms of ownership were mentioned, e.g. condominium ownership.
- There is an article in a recent issue of *The Economist* that addresses the cost of real estate. One conclusion in the article is that STR diverts home ownership away from people and to investors. This inflates the cost of housing.
- Does STR change the assessed value of a home?
- People need STRs when coming to town for DMS and DHMC interviews and summer camps.
- There are benefits to hosted STR as someone can be an ambassador for Hanover.
- I prefer un-hosted. I don't want to chit-chat with the owner.
- How can there be a line drawn between un-hosted STR and investment property?
- We should only consider owner-occupied homes for STR.

- What about a neighbor watching your property during a STR?
- I am not a fan of the “Dartmouth Exemption”. There should be a limited number of days for rentals but not only in June.
- Maybe we need to regulate based on location in Town or based on the type of property. The temporal limit is also important.
- Should parking be required to be set aside or not?

Attendees were encouraged to come to the Planning Board meeting on Tuesday, January 28 when the Board will begin to process the information that they have heard, and to the zoning amendment public hearings once the STR amendments are ready.

The listening session was adjourned at 12:00 PM.

Submitted by Vicki Smith