

Linda and Dave Buysse
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Dear Florence Township,

We are owners of an airbnb located at 29023 Westervelt Ave, Frontenac, MN.

We have reviewed the proposed ordinance and would like to express our thoughts and concerns. I think there is a need for establishing an ordinance in order to protect our fellow residents of Florence Township. We want to be good neighbors and still provide a service to visitors and friends.

We would like to recommend the following:

1. Limit the size of the short term rentals to less than four bedrooms.
2. Keep Short term rentals to under six adults. This would limit the impact on the local residents.
3. **Please allow 2 night rentals. This makes up the majority of our rental guests.** We only have a limited amount of people wishing to stay for a week at a time. Most of our guests come to attend weddings, family reunions or weekend get aways with friends. Most people stay for two nights, sometimes three nights. **Please do not limit to total number of days we can rent per year. We have enough government controls already.**
4. We believe we need to deal with the individuals that abuse the situation and the neighbors. Having an simple application process would help with this. Allowing people to have a process to deal with problem properties. Having the ability to revoke the short term rental application, would limited the problem properties. I have had wonderful guests. Everyone has on their best behavior because of the rating system. I rate the guests, and they rate me as a host. People can lose their right to rent on airbnb and I could lose my airbnb listing because poor reviews.
5. We agree that the Short Term Rentals should not be used for events such as weddings or big group celebrations. We have that stated in our airbnb agreement.

Please consider our concerns when you draft an ordinance in Florence Township. We are part of this community and we want to protect our beautiful community and neighbors. We do however wish to continue our airbnb and provide a place that works for everyone. We try hard to keep our property in excellent condition for the benefit of our guests and Frontenac, but at the same time we want to be respectful of our fellow neighbors.

Sincerely, Linda and Dave Buysse

Should the township choose to legalize Short Term Rentals (STR) - contrary to the existing ordinance that currently prohibits them - the rules that other communities have painstakingly formulated should be closely heeded to and applied to our new ordinance revision.

1. Stillwater defines a commercial enterprise as a rental not the owner's primary residence.
2. Afton does not allow events.
3. With respect to Events:

In 2020 Air B&B enacted a global party ban on all vacation rental properties. To emphasize this ban they removed the terms, and I quote, "Event Friendly" and "Parties and Events Allowed" from their listings to filter out search engine results looking for such facilities.

4. Roseville & Crow Wing County state minimum stay requirements from 7 to 30 days to target party houses.
5. Prior Lake states that rental or lease of a dwelling unit for less than 60 days is prohibited in all residential districts.
6. St. Louis Park & Edina state in R1 Districts a residential or accessory unit cannot be rented for less than 1 month. Interestingly enough, a homeowner can rent a room in an owner-occupied home on a nightly basis.
7. Spring Lake Park states that locations of any STR must be away from quiet neighborhoods.

The township offers many opportunities to promote commerce and share the local amenities with the general public. Some examples are:

1. Villa Maria will be opening as a hotel and event center soon,
2. We have a marvelous public beach area with a dock and boat launch,
3. Frontenac State Park and Hok-Si-La Municipal Park,
4. The Sportsman Club is available for rent
5. Plus the local parks right here in Frontenac that are available free of charge.

We do not need to infringe on local residential areas to provide additional access to this wonderful area. Mitch Johnson 29476 Lake Ave

Currently, the Frontenac Township Zoning Ordinance does not state that Short Term Rentals (STR) are allowed. (PERIOD)

4.1

“If any use within a zoning district is not expressly permitted or allowed by a conditional, interim or other permit in this ordinance, such use shall be considered prohibited. All permitted and allowed uses shall be expressly identified in this ordinance.”the Ordinance goes on to say: “No land shall be used for any purpose other than a permitted use expressly allowed under this ordinance.”

For example:

The ordinance does specifically state that Bed and Breakfasts along with customary home occupations, as per 8.1 - K, are allowed.

8.1 – K:

customary home occupations are permitted in this district provided that such occupations shall be carried on in the main residence structure and provided further that not more than 25% of the floor space of the residence is used for that purpose, and that no articles for sale shall be on display so as to be visible from the street. Home occupations shall not be c---- in the district unless a conditional use permit therefore has first been obtained. Bed and Breakfast facilities are permissible as home occupations provided they are operated in accordance with all applicable regulations.

Why are we now taking steps toward legalizing a land use that is detrimental to the historical nature of use of the community, unwanted and highly regulated in most other communities and has clearly become a rip in the fabric of Frontenac TWP.

Pam Pontzer - 29476 Lake Ave

In section IIIC, entitled Authorization, the new proposed short term rental ordinance recommends a minimum distance of no less than 1,000 feet between Short Term Rental Properties recognizing the nuisance created to the immediate neighbors having them spaced too closely. We currently live sandwiched between 2 Short Term Rental Properties, one of which has been in violation of the existing Florence Township Zoning Ordinance dated 5/18/15 as well as the revised Zoning Ordinance 2/18/20. Their neglect of the existing Ordinance as well as the numerous complaints that have been brought to the board and on file with VRBO has led to the current Cease and Decease order. Then why should this STR be “grandfathered in” when it has been in clear violation of the existing ordinance? They should be subject to the new proposed STR rules that are currently under review for adoption,

Jay Kouchich - 29402 Lake Ave

Short Term Rental Ordinance Discussion

First and foremost, Heidi Hartzell, a planning commission member and current member of the subcommittee for STR issues, is in a conflict of interest with regards to this proposed ordinance. She has recently purchased a property and is currently advertising it for use as a STR in Frontenac Station. The outcome of this ordinance will affect her running of this business. She has a vested interest in it. According to the planning commission bylaws, and I quote, “In the event that any member of the commission feels that he/she has a conflict of interest, he/she shall voluntarily excuse him/herself, vacate his/her seat and refrain from discussing and voting on the said item”. Heidi, must therefore recuse herself from voting and refrain from discussing.

I live on Lake Ave. I live sandwiched between 2 STR's and another longer-term rental that is within 200'. The STR's have completely damaged our neighborhood, as well as affected the overall community. I think we can all agree that Old Frontenac is a singular historic region that is recognized as such by the Federal Government, by placing it on its historic register years ago. We residents that chose to live here, and have CHOSEN to remain here, do so not just because of its historical significance, but because of its natural beauty, with all the trees, birds, wildlife, bluffs and proximity to the State Park and Mississippi River. Additionally, we live here and remain here because of the quiet laid-back lifestyle and sense of community amongst the neighbors. Indeed, at the 160 year celebration of the founding of Old Frontenac that was hosted a few years ago, many people said to us that they visited our area that day, as well as other days, because it was just like 'stepping back in time'. These people donated a lot of money to the township, many asking if this could be an annual event. The recent increase in STR's with its increase traffic, noise and light pollution is in exact opposition to this way of life we have been seeking to preserve. People who do not even live in or contribute to our community, are just simply trying to profit from what the rest of us have been striving to conserve and protect. One of our more active residents continually advocates for more volunteerism amongst our residents at our Park Meetings.

Do STR owners, especially those that live remotely, or the renters themselves, contribute in any manner to this spirit of volunteering in community projects? Once again, their only stake is for personal gain.

I had never lived in a neighborhood like Lake Ave before. We all know each other and look out for one another. Since these STR's have come into the neighborhood, we all feel uneasy. We dread weekends. Watching car after car after car pull into the driveways on Friday afternoon, 2,4,6,8,10 strangers unloading their groceries, their suitcases and their coolers. And then more non-renters coming in during the day for a party. Then loading everything back up on Sunday morning, only to be repeated the next weekend, with a new load of strangers invading the neighborhood. Overwhelmingly, the people who visit our area have been respectful of its civil war history and respectful of its residents. Our experience with the STR's is that it has been a convenient place to stay, boasting many beautiful vistas, but the increase in traffic on our road has demonstrated an increase in reckless driving despite the 'slow children at play' signs posted at either end. We have brought this concern to the township before. Especially, after a particular incident when one of our neighbors, mowing his front lawn, was practically clipped and had loose gravel thrown up in his face by a high speed driver who was staying at one of these STR's

When I have talked to other Frontenac residents, they all comment that they feel so bad for us on Lake Ave and that they sure don't want to have it happen to them. It should NOT have happened at all as STR's are illegal in our R1 district. They should all be banned. I fear it is too late for that to happen. Therefore, this proposed ordinance with regulations has become necessary to place control over STR growth and activity.

To me, the ordinance offers some good regulations. But I would ask the commission to consider some suggestions.

1. In the definitions section, you have STR property is one containing 3 or less bedrooms. Does that then eliminate the Greseth property immediately next to ours since they have 4 bedrooms?
2. Please consider making the minimum rental time no less than 7 days. The suggested 2 day rental, invites a "party", which we have witnessed all too many times. Increasing the minimum days for renting would perhaps deter these 'one day' all out partying events.
3. This leads to another consideration...there is no reference in the ordinance about having events. Other community STR ordinances restrict events and even the VRBO & Airbnb websites state that properties shall have no events. Events would be things such as large parties i.e birthdays, showers, retreats, where non-renters come to the property but not stay overnight. These events are very disruptive in a residential neighborhood weekend after weekend. Having this in the ordinance as a violation would make it more enforceable.
4. IUP or interim use permit – annual review. Will neighbors within a certain distance be able to have a say at the annual review?
5. Number of STR properties – how will permits be allocated? Will the existing STR's, whether

they are conforming or nonconforming, always get 1st chance for these permits?

6. Will the existing STR's be "grandfathered" in forever? When an annual IUP renewal is applied for, would the legal nonconforming STR then have to comply with the new ordinance uses?

7. In Section IV – conditions of use, part D Quiet time. Currently, the ordinance states that quiet time for STR's should be between 10:00 pm and 7:00 am. We have experienced aerobic classes and loud deck breakfasts both with blaring music at very early hours. I propose the quiet time to extend to 9:30 am. After all, that is the same time as the DNR's regulation for PWC ie jet skis and wave runners, on the river due to the excessive noise that those particular watercraft create.

Cathay Kouchich 29402 Lake Ave

David Chris toffel <davidchris toffel2247@ gmail.com>

To Florence Township,

It's been brought to my attention that the home I have stayed at is in jeopardy of not being able to offer this service to us because of changing rules. This seems really heavy handed only letting just a couple into old Frontenac. Shouldn't owners have the right to do what they want with the property? They own the title. During our stay the hosts were clear about rules and neighbors, we had a great experience. We were there to ice fish at a leisurely location and take in the quiet, peaceful scene of winter. Neighbors shouldn't fear or keep us out, know we have been properly screened, had conversation with the owners and understand clearly we are guests in a neighborhood. Our family would like to come back. Please, allow owners the option to have short term rentals if they'd like to. I urge you to not be overly restrictive and to change what is being currently proposed. It is not fair to the current owners nor to us the community who want to come.

Thank you,

David Christoffel

David Aas e <david@ revivalcre.com> Fri, Apr 8, 11:55 AM

To Florence Township Board,

I recently read the proposed ordinances. I am a licensed realtor and have been a guest at a local STR. I'd like to offer an outside perspective.

In my profession I have seen many STR ordinances and license requirements. I would tell you that what you are proposing is among the most restrictive and prohibitive I have ever seen. I don't believe this is good for the everyday citizen nor for a community. Heavy restrictions are understandable when a community needs to protect an economic driver like the hotel industry but this is not the case in Florence. I believe it to be a best practice to allow all owners the opportunity to have an str and to have a simple str process. A few examples of what is being in

my option too restrictive would be:

1. Number of str's allowed and distance between them: Allowing so few and such far distance between them takes away the general freedom of owners and can drive up a monopoly keeping many guests out of your community because of exorbitant costs. Communities should be open to all no matter the socio-economic factors. Allowing more rentals ensures you're not pricing out anybody on the socio economic scale. Additionally, home owners may need to or want the additional income of a STR, why take this away from your citizens? This is why distance between them shouldn't be a factor. Many family cabins are sustained this way and many families get a supplemental income from this. Without this they might lose the property or it falls into disrepair then devaluing a whole neighborhood/community. It's in the communities best interest to let all have an str. Some communities limit the amount the general public can rent as an STR(180 days as example), then allowing those who do it more as a business can apply for business use with higher requirements and over-site.

2.Exorbitant requirements and review process: This should be much easier. Most communities have a simple process and use the MN Department of Health's already established process as the vetting. Why go beyond this? It just creates more work for board members and delays things for citizens. MN Department of Health has the research, knowledge base and experience, let them do it. You do not need to go beyond this.

There are other things I could cite but in general, I urge you to reconsider what you are proposing as it severely limits the everyday person and your communities opportunities. Many of your surrounding communities have a simple process allowing all to take advantage of the opportunity, not just a few. I hope to come and stay in the area in the years to come. Thank you for your work on this.

Regards,
David Aase
To whom it may concern,

I recently inquired about a short term rental in Frontenac that we regularly visit. My family and I did this last year and had such an amazing time, its such a beautiful area. Much to my surprise I was informed that it may not be an option due to the proposed changes to ordinances for STR's in the area. I must say, this is extremely disappointing for my family. We have been looking for convenient places to stay in or close to the water in Frontenac for years. In recent years some new options have opened up that have been an amazing experience for our family. The reality is that the hotel options do not work for our family size. They aren't close to the park or the water, and frankly they are just not a place you want to spend quality time with your family for a week during the summer. As guests we've always been respectful of the house rules and surrounding neighbors. In fact it is often a pleasure meeting the neighbors and feeling like we're a part of the community when we stay.

I would argue that eliminating short term rentals is a disservice to the community. It's a disservice to those that want to visit and create memories with their friends and families by

enjoying the beautiful Frontenac state park and the lake. Please do not punish good guests for the sins of a few. Please do not restrict those that want to offer quality short term rentals. I imagine Florence understands that this is of benefit to the local economy, when we stay we pay rent, tax, part of the license fees, eat at local restaurants, ect. I know these kinds of properties employ a lot of local cleaners and grounds people as well. I just can't understand why the township would want to restrict this kind of thing? After reading what has been proposed I feel that the ordinances are overreaching by allowing so few STR's. This should be changed. As a guest I am requesting that owners be given the right to rent out their homes in a responsible way. If changes need to be made to the rules then so be it, but the restrictions that are being proposed come from an poorly informed position. These ordinances do not seem collaborative. I feel that it is the duty of the those making these rules to work hand in hand with local hosts to create effective ordinances that solve problems and create a win-win for all. I ask that these ordinances are reconsidered so that my family can continue to make memories for years to come in one of our favorite places to visit.

Thank you,

Brad Cornell

507-254-9884

bradcornell13@gmail.com

Good Afternoon,

I'm writing this note in regard to the Short Term Rental Ordinance, and the potential impact this moratorium has on our fellow neighbors and property owners. Due to my inability to attend the meeting this coming Monday, I am sending this letter to be taken into consideration by the Town Board. My first concern is in reference to this section of the moratorium document:

Whereas, short term rentals have potential negative impacts on residential areas not originally anticipated, including but not limited to nuisance impacts such as excess garbage, insufficient parking, excess noise, trespassing, infringement upon privacy, lack of septic capacity, increased fire risk, zoning code violations, inadequate insurance coverage, excess demands upon law enforcement, and other negative impacts on the peaceful enjoyment of neighborhoods and public health, safety, and welfare, and

What constitutes a "significant amount of public input" and is this coming from only a handful of township residents? If that is the case, why is a resolution needed to impact all of our township? The second concern is in reference to this section of the moratorium document:

Whereas, the Florence Township Planning Commission has received, since February 2021, a significant amount of public input, complaints and urgent requests for consideration of regulation for short term rentals and has received testimony and documentation of said concerns and complaints, including multiple appeals by affected neighbors to the owners of properties being used as short term rentals; and

In particular, "excess demands upon law enforcement"? Where is this documented? Are there logs from the County Sheriff's Office to reflect how many times they have been contacted to intervene or respond to complaints? Again, are these complaints only coming from a select few?

Short Term Rental Property Owners are our neighbors, friends, and some of them are even family. I feel the vast majority of them treat their neighbors like a good neighbor should - with respect and friendliness. If this proposal is a result of a select few who are not happy with their neighbor, it shouldn't be up to those people to penalize the rest of the township. In short, this moratorium should not be passed by the Board.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this feedback.

Respectfully,
Chris LaBonte
31579 Vista Path

It has come to my attention that you are planning a ordinance in your township for short term rentals. We are the owners of a VRBO and I am proud to say we take good care of our home and guests with many coming back each year who have become friends of the neighborhood. Some of the items listed in the ordinance are nearly impossible to police, such as number of guests visiting and or staying. Who will be able to check the number of people staying, is there a committee that will be going to each registered short term rental to ensure that numbers are correct with bedrooms, do sofa beds count? Will you be able to ask all home owners to limit the number of cars parked at home, or on the street.

Please be sure and research how this ordinance will affect all people involved and not react to someone who may have had a bad experience with a rental. Not all short term rentals are bad and can bring wonderful families into our beautiful area.

Sincerely,
Nancy Rigelman

I appreciate all the work of the Planning Commission on the Florence Township Short-Term Rental Ordinance. After reading the draft of the ordinance being proposed, I would like to offer my input for a change to the draft. I would prefer the number of short-term rentals allowed in the Historic District of Old Frontenac be less than five.

As a resident of Old Frontenac, I would prefer that the dwellings in the village be occupied by homeowners rather than promoting more visitors and tourism to our quiet village, residential village.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed ordinance.

Laurie Hodgson
29100 Westervelt Ave Way W
Frontenac, MN 55026

Please consider my concerns when reviewing the short term rental ordinance.

1. I think 5 short term rental properties in the Old Frontenac historic district is too many. Especially when that number is added to the additional 15 properties in Florence Township. The focus for most renters will be the lake and the Frontenac bay, even for those renters in greater Florence township outside of the historic district. This places too much pressure on our tiny historic village and beachfront. The tourist traffic has increased dramatically in recent years making it sometimes difficult for us villagers to use the boat launch and beach. While kayaking, my family members have been buzzed and nearly swamped on more than one occasion by boaters with huge motors heading into properties in the bay. Unfortunately, short term renters are likely to be less inclined to be respectful of our village spaces.

Please consider reducing the number of short term rentals allowed both in Old Frontenac historic district and township wide.

Most of us have moved to Frontenac for the quiet, the dark, the wildlife, the beauty of the lake..... and we are in danger of losing these aspects of Frontenac that we treasure. 2. I find the "Distance Between Short-Term Rental Properties" Section III - C. unclear. If there are short-term rental properties already registered as such, how long does grandfathering last? Will comments from neighbors in these property hot spots be considered before renewing grandfather status? What recourse do residents have if the rentals are noisy and unwelcome?

3. Please consider addressing 'events' on these properties which could bring large crowds/noise/etc. A renter could fit the short term rental criteria but then have an large, disruptive event on the property.

I think the potential for absentee buyers to try to buy property in Florence Township in order to have a lucrative rental income is huge. This is antithetical to our historic village which is already a tourist destination and under stress from 'progress.'

Thank you for creating an ordinance to address short-term rentals. Thank you for considering my concerns. Ellen Stewart 28733 Manypenny Ave. Old Frontenac

Florence Township Heritage Preservation Commission Statement to the Town Board Regarding Short Term Rental Housing in Old Frontenac

The National Historic trust for historic preservation supports and encourages the development of regulations that recognize the rights and needs of the residents in historic places. If allowed to grow unregulated Short-Term Rentals (STR):

- Price potential residents out of home ownership
- Owners and renters do not participate in the life of the community, i.e. vote, serve on local commissions, boards or subcommittees, help neighbors in need, attend local schools or serve in local churches
- Interfere with the quality of life and social fabric of the neighborhood
- Negatively impact the community with a party atmosphere, noise and increase of traffic and congestion on rural roads

Zoning is the foundation of local government land use protection. Zoning regulates the community's right to determine and preserve the character of the community in which we live. Florence township's current zoning ordinance states tier 1 & tier 2 businesses are the only businesses allowed in the R1 district. These zoning codes prohibit hotels/motels. When STRs are allowed to proliferate without regulation, then:

- Any residence can be turned into a STR
- Unfair advantage is given to STRs compared to the traditional lodging industry by not abiding by the regulations imposed on traditional lodging facilities for example taxes on lodging are not paid, restrictions on allowed locations, occupancy limits, security, parking, ADA facilities, etc. are not adhered to
- Lack of enforcement burdens the neighbors with the responsibility to report problems from party houses in their neighborhood

Given these concerns, the HPC recommends that no STR should be allowed in Old Frontenac unless the homeowner lives full-time in the residence. At present, all the STRs in existence in Old Frontenac are already operating in violation of the Florence Township zoning ordinance.

The HPC has the authority within their ordinance to recommend to the Town Board guidelines for utilization of property within the historic district, including issuance of permits and/or variances. The zoning restriction and our design guidelines lead the HPC to recommend to the TB either banning STR's all together or create and enforce carefully crafted regulations on STR's for the future. The STR ordinance that the planning commission is recommending thoughtful regulations on STRs that protect the historic district. Our HPC fully supports these regulations. Historic districts thrive when they consist of active communities of residents who respect and preserve the unique cultural heritage of the district. OUR HPC mission is to protect and promote the Florence Township historic district, and we are concerned that a proliferation of STRs in the district that are unmanaged will diminish the cultural and historic features of the district.

Friday, April 8, 2022 To whom it may concern,

I am writing as a long time summer renter from the Wise family. (Lynn Wise Schmidt). As a family, we spent around 15 summers at their duplex cabin with our family, friends and employees of our business. We have such fond memories of each summer and the joy being about to experience waking up to Lake Pepin every morning. In all of those years, we did not have any problems with the owners or neighbors whatsoever. I now have other friends from Iowa who spend a week at the same cabin we did all of those year because I was so excited for them to experience the same things we did. They shop locally at many shops, eat locally at the establishments in Frontenac and Lake City and also use the Lake City and Hansen's Harbor Marina facilities. They fill up their gas tanks in Lake City or Frontenac and attend and support out local festivals like Water Ski Days and the Fireman's Dance. This is a win win for our communities and wonderful exposure for those out of town guests who go back and tell their friends what a wonderful time they had here. I fully support the Short Term Rentals in and around the area and so should you. Putting people into our communities and areas keeps our communities alive and thriving. To deny these rentals would certainly be detrimental in every way.

Sincerely~

Jennifer Tepley 50 year resident of Lake City

To the Township Planning Commission,

I am a homeowner in Florence and want to thank you for your work on the STR ordinances. I have attended several meetings and have read the proposed ordinances. I'd like to give my written comments as suggested in the newspaper.

I am of the view that there are two basic types of STR owners: the everyday citizen/homeowner and then the business owner. We should recognize that these are two different matters and I believe should be treated as such in the ordinances. The current proposal neither helps the everyday home owner who many want/need to rent for a limited time nor the business operator who would need to rent a home more often as a business. My comments follow the ordinance structure.

Section I- no comment

Section II

- A. Why are we limiting this to 3 or few bedrooms? All homes should be included.
- B. - no comment
- C. - I don't believe I have a comment here unless we are limiting the size of a family. We should not.

Section III

A- Permitting- Permits should last longer than one year and should be easy to renew by payment not reapplication. We want to encourage compliance. Why have a high barrier to entry? Having to reapply every year is an unfair tax for all including the board in time and money.

B- Number of STR's- By restricting the number so severely, those that need it most will not be able to have a str. This should be changed. I propose all homeowners should have the right to rent their property for a limited amount of time, maybe 120 days? Conversely, limiting the number of businesses(those renting over the example of 120 days) can make sense but 10 or 5 are too few. Allowing so few will drive prices up and keep low income people out, this is not good for our community. Further advocacy for the everyday str owner, we don't know what the economic future is or what crisis may induce the need to rent one's home as an STR. All should be given this option.

C- Distance between STR's should not be a factor for the everyday homeowner and neighbor. My neighbor may need to rent their home to keep their home in time of economic downturn, illness, ect. They should have the right to do so. Again, the business rental could be treated differently but keep in mind the monopoly of allowing too few.

D- Health and Safety- Again, this done yearly is not in accordance with other Mn departments. Example being MN Department of health license is good for multiple years. Why are we requiring more? This should not be the case.

E- Why is the Township determining the liability coverage limits of the STR? Do they do this for other businesses or citizens? It seems this should be left to the homeowner, some be self insuring.

Section IV

A. Occupancy limits should be set by the MN Department of Health; this is standardized.

Why is the township restricting what MN Department of Health abides by, they have the data, research, history, expertise ect. Let's let them set it and let them change it as needed, they are the experts.

B. Rental period. Why limit this? There is no hotel industry to protect, this only limits the everyday citizen, the business person and those that do the jobs for str's. The business person who relies on the STR income needs more than 120 days as does those that service the property. We want the business person to do well so they will upkeep their property's well giving it due attention. This is their livelihood and the livelihood of those that work for them, don't restrict it so severely. Again, I propose a business level STR that allows for far more than 120 days and secondly an general home owner STR license that allows for up to 120 days or even 180 days.

C. No more than 3 cars makes no sense for those that have large driveways. I understand not allowing on street parking. Simply say all cars, vehicles, trailers ect need to be in the driveway. Additionally, the line about campers, recreational vehicles and tents should be

eliminated. If they are parked in the driveway why should the township care? D. No comment

E. It's not uncommon for a home owner to put garbage or recycling out the day before. It seems no more than 24 hours would be a better rule of thumb.

F. Lighting, this seems far overreaching. If regular homeowners don't need to abide by this then why should str's. I could see this being a recommendation but not law. G. No comment

H. No comment

I. Many current home owners have a home name or sign out front, this should be allowed within reason.

Section V

1. Injunctive Relief- there are often two sides to stories, both should be heard before restraining or "cease and desist" issued.

2. Suspensions A-F, Again, I state the same: there are often two sides to stories, both should be heard before restraining or issuing "cease and desist". Innocent until proven guilty is important to our judicial system. I would also add this affects people's livelihoods and should not be taken lightly.

-I don't see spelled out how or where a dispute or hearing would take place.

Timelines would also be helpful. Please consider adding.

In closing, STR's are a need in our community. I have seen the demand first hand. I will end these comments stating the above again, I believe we should allow the everyday citizen/homeowner the ability to rent their home if they need to or so desire. The economic future is uncertain and all should have the opportunity if needed or desired. For the business entity they need to thrive not just survive, let's not restrict them unreasonably. The proposed ordinances do need to change. I trust that you will do what is best for all not just a select few. Lastly, I would remind the commission that Florence has a long history of hospitality and welcoming the guest from its earliest history with guest houses and a hotel. Though its future will look different from the past, STR's are an extension of that legacy.

Thank you,

Chris Greseth 952 221 8862

I am a concerned citizen of Frontenac:

I am concerned that there are not clear ordinances for our village. I was under the impression that the only business that was allowed in our small community was long term rentals.

I am concerned about the Air B & B's that are now in our community.

This would also be a business to me - Such as a motel.

I do not pretend to know what should be done about this, but I would hope that the township would not let any more into our area and put some things in place to limit the capacity – and make the owners more responsible for any problems in real time. Short term rentals disrupt our streets by increasing traffic, Parking concerns, loud parties, increase in strangers in the neighborhood; all are reasons to certainly limit & put regulations on the number of these allowed in old Town.

Our world is changing and I believe that our community needs to address these issues before they get out of control. Clear concise ordinances that protect the atmosphere of our community.

Amy Benson

Planning Commission and Florence Township Board,

I support implementing regulations to limit and monitor short term rentals in Florence Township.

I am especially concerned about the recent increase and disturbance short term rentals have caused in Frontenac.

Lorry Wendland

28535 Lake Avenue Way

Frontenac, MN 55026

507.491.0445

Good afternoon everyone,

I just wanted to touch base and provide some thoughts on major changes to policy on vacation home rental/use.

My family has owned a cottage in Frontenac for over 60 years. It was built in an era when only cabins lined the lake with the exception of 1 home that was year round. By this time the Lakeside Hotel has been converted to The Methodist Campus summer retreat and camp where hundreds of kids would come for a week and enjoy our community. Just a few blocks away Camp Pepinoak was filled each week with girls who were enjoying a week away at Girl Scout camp. Cottages along the lake were busy with friends, family, and guests providing a wonderful energy of people coming together to enjoy Old Frontenac at its best. A wonderful summer resort that has been known around the world for over 150 years. In fact its very founding was that of a hunting camp and then Summer resort. So famous in fact that it was called the Newport of the West.

The research and documentation confirming this fact can all be found in official township, county and state ordinance and support paperwork.

While it can be tempting to create some policy based on new development pressures, in my opinion it would go against everything we had been attempting to preserve. As Chair of the FTHPC for 13 years I have studied historic districts and policy extensively. And one key point others often miss is that it is not just a building we hope to preserve, but allowing the historic use of properties to be preserved. Now I don't envision we will ever return to having 5 excursion boats full of guests arriving each week, I do think Frontenac can and should continue to welcome weekly visitors to our community, exactly as the founder himself did over 150 years ago.

[Sent with images, excerpts from Frontenac Histories that did not copy]

Thanks

Cory Koplín

Since I am unable to attend the meeting, the following are my issues and concerns.

There should be no more than five short term rentals in Old Frontenac. This is a realistic number based on STR research. Stillwater only allows 15 in their R-1 neighborhoods, and it is a much larger community.

Events should be specifically banned. If not, the only recourse would be to rely on public nuisance and noise laws which are hard to enforce during the night, and even more difficult to control the large daytime parties we experienced last year. Afton does not allow STR's to have events. Stillwater only allows 2 per bedroom and an additional 3 daytime visitors.

VRBO caps rental capacity at 16 no matter the size of the house and does not allow events. If we do not ban them in the ordinance, it will be an ongoing enforcement problem and we do not have an enforcement process or officer. This is a big quality of life issue for a neighborhood.

Stillwater notifies the community when someone applies for a STR license. If a resident objects, a public hearing is required so the community can have input.

A limited number of permits will cause issues with how they are allocated. I think it's important to define how the permits are allocated, and I would advocate for community notification and input.

The ordinance allows 2 renters per bedroom. Does that mean STR's can rent up to four bedrooms for a total of eight? Will the resort definition of five or more bedrooms prevent any more than eight renters? If not, I think the ordinance should put in a cap of 3 or 4 rental rooms. I would prefer a 3-bedroom cap but it should be clarified. Smaller groups make for less neighborhood disruption.

The 'quiet' hours are 7am to 10pm. We have experienced early morning noise and I think a more reasonable window would be 9am to 9pm. Thank you

Jean Pontzer **Sent:** Wednesday, March 30, 2022 2:16 PM florencezoning@gmail.com

Dear Planning Commission Members and Township Supervisors,

Thank you for the time and energy you have committed to developing an ordinance to regulate short term rentals (STRs) in Florence Township.

After reading extensively about how communities across the U.S. and the world are managing STRs, it is clear that they are difficult to regulate, and the longer communities wait to regulate them, the greater the problem becomes. Once they have proliferated in a community it is difficult to rein them in. Now is the time for Florence Township to pass an ordinance to guide their management.

The current draft of the STR ordinance in Florence Township is thoughtful and relatively comprehensive. I support it.

Some specific thoughts on this ordinance, formulated after reading dozens of STR ordinances:

Positive aspects of the Florence Township draft STR ordinance that stand out to me as important:

- 1). **Requiring owners to apply for an IUP is imperative** to having leverage to rein in owners who are not properly managing their property. We witnessed the need for an ordinance last summer, when new owners did not properly manage their STR on Lake Avenue in Old Frontenac.
- 2). **Requiring a property owner or manager to live nearby**, so that when problems occur neighbors are not left with the task of managing issues that arise, is important.
- 3). **Requiring a large distance between STR properties**, so that sections of the township don't become Airbnb Row, severely disrupting the lives of the remaining neighbors is necessary. In a village as densely populated as Old Frontenac, with people living on small lots, at least 1,000 feet between STR homes is needed to protect established neighbors and community.
- 4). **Downlighting** is important to help protect the dark skies that are valued by so many who live here.
- 5). **Significant fines levied for infractions** of the ordinance, so that there is serious consequence to disregarding it, is essential.
- 6). **Limiting the number of cars allowed** will help to lessen chaos for neighbors.

Concerns with the Florence Township draft STR ordinance/ changes needed:

- 1). **The ordinance would be stronger and prevent more problems if it prohibited renters from hosting events.** Airbnb says that events and parties account for more than 90 percent of the complaints they receive, leading them to now ban all events in STR homes.
- 2). **The number of people allowed to rent should be limited to six, in no more than three**

bedrooms. Larger groups of renters lead to more noise, chaos and complaints. A limit should be placed on how many visitors are allowed, as well.

3). **The definition of families is needlessly complicated and difficult to understand.** This needs either to be cleaned up or eliminated.

4). **5 STRs in Old Frontenac is too many in a small village with homes so close to one another.** Having 10 STRs in all of Florence Township makes sense, given the geographic size, but I'd recommend a limit of 3 or 4 in Old Frontenac and the rest scattered across the township. This historic village is unique in MN and needs to have its rural and historic essence protected.

5). **Limiting rentals to a minimum of two days is too short a time,** leading to noise and chaos for neighbors to endure. When towns and cities revise STR ordinances, they frequently increase the number of minimum rental days allowed in order to try to lessen problems. (In Minnesota, examples of towns that have revised ordinances and increased the minimum number of rental days to lessen problems include Prior Lake, St. Louis Park, Hopkins and Eagan; all require a minimum STR stay of 7-30 days. Aiken County only allows one group of renters to check into a STR every 7 days). If people want to come to Florence Township for 1 or 2 nights, they can stay at the Villa Maria.

One resident commented at the Township Short Term Rental Informational Meeting that she didn't want the township to implement an ordinance. Prior to 2020, I would have likely agreed with her. But after witnessing and experiencing the subsequent upheaval caused by the improperly managed STR home on Lake Avenue in Old Frontenac in 2021, it is clear that leverage is needed to manage these rental homes. Passage of an ordinance will help to protect residents, neighborhoods, and properties.

Thank you again for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Jane Lorentzen

I support an StR ordinance that has fewer STRs in Old Frontenac due to closeness of lots and houses, no more than three STRs with a distance of at least 500 ft between. Any STR that is not 6 yrs old or older would not be Grandfathered in but must apply. I support no events, three cars parking to be on property. No parking on boulevard as Old Frontemac has no sidewalks therefore roads are used for walking, biking hiking.

Thank you.

Lynne Staker

