

DRAFT OF SHORT TERM RENTAL PROGRAM

Planning Commission's Recommendation On Short Term Rentals

Planning Commission's Guiding Principle

"Owners of property in a residential area can expect courteous behavior and show care for the wellbeing of their neighbors. Not all property is the owner*s primary residence, but in those cases it should be viewed as an extension of his and/or her residence. The owner should not allow behavior or actions that they would not allow in their principal residence. Similarly, actions not natural to a concentrated residential neighborhood should not be allowed. The property owner is at all times responsible for the care and use of the residence.

Synopsis of Recommendation

This recommendation is made in response to the City Council's request for analysis and recommendations dealing with short term rentals. This program is intended to quell any potential negative impacts short term rental properties can have on the quality of life of a surrounding residential neighborhood. The recommendation is for a multi-pronged approach focusing on the areas of: ensuring civil behavior of visitors to the island, reducing the debris and visual clutter created by trash and recycling containers being left on the edge of the road and in public view, avoiding visual clutter and traffic flow problems associated with an excessive number of vehicles at rentals, avoiding potentially unsafe conditions including the overcrowding of rentals.

As evidence from their guiding principle, the Planning Commission believes that the ultimate responsibility of the use of rental properties lies with the owners. Therefore, a key component of this program is including the owner in the application process and educating them through that process about the requirements of the rental program and the consequences associated with not complying with the program.

The program includes a recommendation for the adoption of new regulations, a series of property inspections including an initial inspection and subsequent renewal inspections and additional documentation (including floor plans, site plans and proof that all fees and taxes are being correctly paid).

Because of these additional requirements, it is contemplated that the existing staff could not handle the increased work load and that additional staff would need to be added.

New Requirements

1. The maximum occupancy of a residence should be limited to: two people per approved bedroom (minimum of 150 square feet, with a closet and a full bathroom accessible directly or through a hallway) plus two people; or one person per 250 square feet of gross heated floor area in the entire house, whichever is greater, with children under the age of 8 years old not counted.

For example a three bedroom house would have a occupancy based on bedrooms of eight people (2 people x 3 bedrooms = 6 people + 2 = 8 person maximum); however if that same house is 3200 square feet, the total occupancy would be 12 people (3200/

250= 12.8).

2. The maximum number of cars that a rental property can maintain overnight should be limited to one car per approved bedroom or one car for every 2.5 people allowed under the maximum occupancy. In no instance shall the number of cars allowed be less than two.

3. A violation of Section 3-2-8 (Roll Out Carts) will constitute a violation to this section and be subject to the same punishment. If an owner of a rental fails to comply with this section twice, that owner should be required to show proof that a contract has been executed which would provide for roll out trash carts and recycling bins to be placed on the edge of the road for dumping on the day of collection or the night before and promptly returned to the house out of the view of the public after dumping. And if four violations occur, that owner will lose the ability to rent the property for the following calendar year.

4. An owner should be required to show proof that one trash cart has been acquired for every two bedrooms in the rental, with a minimum of one cart.

5. A notice, that will be provided by the City, should be posted conspicuously in the rental that includes:

The maximum occupancy of the property;

The maximum number of vehicles allowed on the property;

An emergency egress plan;

A synopsis of the City's codes dealing with noise, fireworks, dogs, alcohol, littering, waste removal and turtle-friendly lighting;

6. The owner should be required to provide the City with the phone number inside the rental unit and a 24 hour phone number for the owner and the property manager.

7. The owner should be required to provide proof that a letter has been mailed to every adjacent property owner that gives notice of the maximum capacity and overnight limit and provides the City's code enforcement phone number and the 24 hour on-call number.

8. The owner should be required to provide proof that all appropriate City, State, and County taxes and fees have been paid.

Application Process

The following paper work will need to be filed and approved prior to the issuance of a rental license:

1. A floor plan showing the dimensions of every room and all proposed bedrooms and emergency escape routes;
2. Proof that all appropriate City, State, and County taxes and fees have been paid;
3. Proof that the property is appropriately categorized by Charleston County

Assessor*s Office;

4. Proof that the information page provided by the City is posted in the rental;
5. A 24 hour contact number;
6. Owner*s signature acknowledging that he/she has read and understands the rules and penalties associated with renting the property (including initialing each paragraph).

Initial Inspection

An initial inspection will be conducted to verify the accuracy of the application and establish a maximum occupancy and parking limit.

Annual Safety Inspections and Renewals

Random safety inspections will be conducted to verify that no conditions have changed since the original application. Additionally, the documentation required originally showing proof of payment of proper fees will need to be resubmitted each year.

Penalties/Revocation

An infraction of any of these provisions is punishable of a fine \$500 per incident. If a single property accrues four infractions in a 365 day period, the Code Enforcement will have the ability to revoke that property's rental license