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**Subject:** Vacation Rental Ord.  
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**Attachments:** [2021 Nov 18 SC Draft letter to notify neighbors of intended Transient Vacation Rental.docx](#)

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## EXTERNAL

Hello Gary Helfrich

I am contacting you regarding the Transient Vacation Rental Ordinance and proposed changes. I hope to join the meeting on-line today. In the event I am not able to do so, I offer the following comments, concerns, suggestions.

First I'd like to begin with stating that I am opposed to vacation rental homes in residential neighborhoods. We have a shortage of housing in Sonoma County and allowing vacation rentals just depletes the inventory of homes for families to move into on full-time basis.

As for my area, we have one street (Moriconi Drive) with about 17 single family homes. We had one homeowner come in from SF and apply for a vacation rental, which was later withdrawn due to neighborhood pressure and our CC&Rs. A second homeowner, from SF, has now applied for and been approved by PRMD for a vacation rental business. We have a third house on our block that will be sold soon. There is concern that it will also be used as a vacation rental operations. This would be almost 18% of housing stock on 1 block going to vacation rental use instead of single family homes for regular family living.

We understand there is a trend of persons or entities in SF enjoying our neighborhood and wanting to convert single family homes to vacation rentals to pay the cost of owning property in Sonoma County. This is not in line with the general plan and destroys the peaceful family way of life we have known for the past 20+years, that I have lived in this beautiful neighborhood.

We ask that Sonoma County stop issuing permits or licenses for vacation rental properties in family neighborhoods. I don't think it is fair or ethical for the County to approve a "Transient Vacation Rental" permit to a "newcomer" that has no intention of living in the neighborhood where they buy property. The new property owners file an application with Sonoma County PRMD and pay a small fee and can get approval within 30 - 60 days with no advance notification to neighbors affected by the vacation rental property. Neighbors only within 300 feet of the property are notified. Not all neighbors on the same street receive notice.

The existing residents "old timers" of the neighborhood are not provided advanced notice or opportunity to object to applications for TVRs. Instead the existing residents are forced to spend a great deal of time to research and a great deal of money to battle the TVRs. Existing residents can apply to Sonoma County for a change in

zoning and be part of an Exclusion Zone which takes an excess of one year to process and in excess of \$10,000 to fund with no guarantee that it will be approved.

Why should it be easier for someone to buy a house and put it up for short term vacation rental in a neighborhood where the owner does not live?

Why should it be more difficult for existing neighborhoods to fight to keep their homes as single family residences and keep out the TVRs?

I understand you want to use the Tobacco Licensing Regulations to improve the current vacation rental permitting process. I applaud the County for reviewing the TVR ordinance. However, I am still very concerned on the loss of housing stock to such operations and believe this should not be allowed to continue.

I offer the following points for consideration:

- 1) Sonoma County should at a minimum require homeowners of proposed TVRs to file applications with PRMD that include prior notification to neighborhoods where the TVR property is located. Notification and hearing of such operations should be paid for by the applicant of the TVR.
- 2) Sonoma County in conjunction with TVR owners should provide written notice to each homeowner on the blocks where the TVR is located (to include the blocks on each side of the TVR within .25 miles).
- 3) A Sonoma County public posting sign should be posted at the intended TVR property to notify intent and ability for public comment.
- 4) Sonoma County should have a check list to include if the TVR property owner has formally notified neighbors of intent of TVR operations prior to securing any permit/license. Why not have the TVR owner prepare letter and send to all neighbors. A copy of those letters can be part of the application packet to the county. This would be at the owner's expense. There could be a formal template letter prepared by So.Co. I am sending you a copy of a draft idea of a letter.

Mrs. S. Loehrer

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