

**From:** [Mary Gillespie](#)  
**To:** [PlanningAgency](#)  
**Cc:** [Lynda Hopkins](#); [Susan Gorin](#)  
**Subject:** March 16, 2023 meeting on STR exclusions  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 15, 2023 2:56:15 PM

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## EXTERNAL

Dear Planning Commission,

I am concerned that the zoning you are proposing/discussing may be at cross purposes with what Supervisor Linda Hopkins has been studying- which is carving out an exception to the limitations on short term vacation rentals in areas that historically have been comprised of vacation rentals. I currently have a short term rental on Riverside Drive which has historically been a vacation rental area, and while to the best of my knowledge after looking over the zoning exhibits, my neighborhood is not part of today's discussion, since there may be future discussions affecting my property here are my comments. \*

When the supervisors voted to limit new Airbnbs, Supervisor Linda Hopkins and Supervisor Susan Gorin noted that they would consider different rules in neighborhoods that historically had a majority of vacation rentals. They were looking into carving out an exception for the limitations.

On March 16, 2023 the Planning Agency will consider expedited rezoning to place caps and exclusion zones on neighborhoods with high concentrations of vacation rentals. So while the Supervisor Hopkins and Gorin are considering exemptions for neighborhoods that "historically" had a majority of vacation rentals, the planning commission may be doing the opposite.

As part of her consideration Supervisor Hopkins has been trying to obtain data on neighborhoods that historically been comprised of vacation rentals from the Permitting Department. However, the Permit Department may be limiting the Supervisor to reviewing information only while she is physically in their offices. The Supervisor needs to have the Permit Department's cooperation. Please open the records to this public official for study purposes which may mean, among other things, having access outside of the permit offices. In addition, how was the Planning Commission able to receive data on areas with high concentration of vacation rentals, when the elected official was not able to review this information except in a very limited manner. Recommend the data the Planning Department is utilizing also be available to the Supervisors, to include any information on determining the history of the vacation rentals in specific neighborhoods. In addition since the permit or planning departments are experts in this area, recommend they assist Supervisor Hopkins and Gorin in compiling the data for their study so the Supervisors can carry out their public service

\*My neighborhood has historically been comprised of vacation rentals, probably since its existence. At the same time I believe, as many others who own vacation rentals, that there should be housing for moderate and low income people who live and work in the area, as well as housing for the homeless. Wouldn't it be beneficial if County officials worked with short term rental owners, as well as short term listing companies such as Airbnb and VRBO and other businesses to be part of the solution in creating a Sonoma County where we can be proud that we have low and moderate housing and where we assist the homeless. Why not look into creative solutions- SF has a worker tax that imposing an additional gross receipts tax on certain business where managers earn more than 100 times the median compensation of employees based in SF. It also has a mandate that funds restaurant worker healthcare. Recommend Sonoma County also look into creative and fair ways to address the housing crisis in Sonoma.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Mary Gillespie