

From: [Gary Helfrich](#)
To: [Alisa Sanders](#)
Subject: FW: ZCE23-0001, Vacation Rental Rezone
Date: Wednesday, March 15, 2023 10:12:16 AM

From: Scott Rusty Miller <rusty@rustymiller.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2023 8:23 AM
To: Susan Gorin <Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org>
Cc: Gary Helfrich <Gary.Helfrich@sonoma-county.org>
Subject: ZCE23-0001, Vacation Rental Rezone

EXTERNAL

Dear Supervisor Goren at Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org

I am writing in opposition to the Vacation Rental limitations and exclusion proposed for the Chicken Colony (Schellville). I cannot attend the Planning Commission meeting tomorrow, but as a resident of the Chicken Colony, I want to register my opposition to the proposal. No vacation rental problem in the Chicken Colony needs to be addressed. The proposal will likely drive rentals underground, eliminating the benefit of current safeguards and making it more difficult for the residents to afford and care for their property.

There is no Vacation Rental Problem to Address at the Chicken Colony - I live in the Chicken Colony, and although I do not rent my home as a vacation rental, my neighbors to the south and southwest are licensed and rent through Airbnb. There are multiple other rentals within ½ mile of my property. Using these several properties for vacation rentals has not created any unreasonable problems. Vacation rentals have not resulted in concerns regarding safety, the use of housing stock, noise, parking, or trash. In contrast, vacation rentals have allowed owners to afford to stay in their homes and improve their properties without unreasonably impinging upon the enjoyment by the neighbors of their property.

I recognize that parking and noise can be a concern in other suburban areas, where houses are built on standard lots. However, the parcel sizes in the Chicken Colony are much larger than most. As a result, parking is not an issue and noise is significantly reduced by separation and distance. Yes, I have heard parties in the property immediately behind me and from other nearby homes, but it is no more problematic than the birthday, anniversary, New Year's Eve festivities equally enjoyed by my resident neighbors throughout the year. The proposed restriction is unnecessary as it does not consider the unique size and nature of the Chicken colony parcels and you should resist the use of a "blanket approach" to regulation

where the facts do not support it.

Restrictions will Drive the Process Underground and Remove Current Safeguards – The current licensing system for vacation rentals provides standards for the proper operation of vacation rentals. The permit requirements have been successful in ensuring that the vacation rentals in the Chicken Colony are operated reasonably and that neighbors, like myself, who live next door to vacation rentals, have recourse when a vacation rental is not appropriately managed. The current permits regulate the number of guestrooms, the maximum number of guests and visitors, parking, noise (including quiet hours and amplified sound), and fires, and they require a certified 24-hour property manager. These requirements, especially a known and reachable resident contact person, are helpful and valuable in promoting and ensuring reasonable use.

If you prohibit licensed vacation rentals in the Chicken Colony, it is unlikely that you will stop all vacation rental activity, instead, you will drive the rental practice underground. In that case, the County and the neighbors affected will lose the benefit of the regulations, including access to a known 24-hour property manager. This will create more issues than we currently experience. In addition, the county will lose the benefit of the Transient Occupancy Tax.

It is better to allow licensed vacation rentals with established and known rules and a responsible property manager than to prohibit the practice altogether in a manner that will increase the number of unlicensed vacation rentals.

Vacation Rentals Are Beneficial – When my daughter was married, we found accommodation for several guests in nearby vacation rentals operated by neighbors.

Those neighbors have indicated that the revenue from vacation rentals allows them to own and maintain their homes. Vacation rentals have played a role in the improvement of several derelicts and damaged homes in the Chicken Colony to the benefit of the neighborhood and the county as a whole.

In the absence of a clear problem and having regard to the ability of the Chicken Colony to accommodate vacation rentals, I urge you to refrain from applying the proposed prohibition and restriction to our neighborhood.

Scott Miller
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