

From: [Karen Gunderson](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Subject: Fwd: Input on Vacation Rental Ordinance - Jan 20, 2022 Meeting
Date: January 20, 2022 12:46:55 AM

EXTERNAL

Hi Planning Agency-

Please include my comments in the record for the Planning Commission Meeting today (January 20). I sent this email on January 17th, but had the wrong email address and was just notified by gmail tonight. I hope it is not too late.

Thanks,
Karen Gunderson

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Karen Gunderson** <karen@gunder5.net>
Date: Mon, Jan 17, 2022 at 9:31 PM
Subject: Input on Vacation Rental Ordinance - Jan 20, 2022 Meeting
To: <PlanningAgency@sonomacounty.org>
Cc: <Greg.Carr@sonoma-county.org>, <caitlin.cornwall@sonoma-county.org>, <larry.reed@sonoma-county.org>, <Pat.Gilardi@sonoma-county.org>, <gina.belforte@sonoma-county.org>, <jacquelynn.ocana@sonoma-county.org>, <kevin.deas@sonoma-county.org>, <Shaun.McCaffery@sonoma-county.org>, <Eric.Koenigshofer@sonoma-county.org>, <Lynda.Hopkins@sonoma-county.org>, James Gore <James.Gore@sonoma-county.org>

Dear Planning Commissioners:

I am writing to you regarding the proposed changes to the vacation rental ordinance. I want to make you aware of how rural residents on the many short dead end streets are being affected by vacation rentals .

I live on a dead-end street (0.25 mile long) of half to one acre parcels in rural Sonoma County close (2 miles) to Santa Rosa and near vineyards in the Willowside Road area. Our homes are 1960's ranch subdivision homes on large lots that cost slightly more than city subdivision homes. They are not fancy, but attractive to families who like to garden and have kids that like to run and play outside. Now also they are attractive to Bay Area residents who buy them as second homes/vacation rentals or groups of people who buy them as time shares.

Three of the last three sales on my street (Moriconi Drive) were to San Francisco Bay Area

residents and 2 of 3 sales were bought for vacation rental purposes...none were for full-time Sonoma County residential use. Our neighborhood, just because it is near grape vines, is converting from a family neighborhood to a tourist zone! **I urge you to prohibit vacation rentals in higher density, truly rural residential neighborhoods that are not located near a beach or ocean, like mine (Willowside/Moriconi Road area).**

Having unattended vacation rentals on dead end county rural residential streets is undesirable for the following reasons:

1. Changes character of neighborhood to tourist zone with different groups of partiers every weekend. Noise, traffic, parking issues, people impaired with alcohol or cannabis.
2. Unaccountable tourists/outsideers tend to speed on dead-end streets, risking families and children that recreate on the usually quiet street.
3. Empty homes during the weekdays mean there are no neighbors to ask favors, borrow an egg from, trick-or-treat at, or pick up our newspaper when we are gone.
4. Every home sold as a 2nd/vacation rental home is one less home for a Sonoma County family. This lowers the housing stock.
5. Allowing 2nd/vacation rental home business model creates higher demand for these homes to be bought by people outside Sonoma County for high prices; this contributes to high home prices and reduces affordability for local residents to buy a home here.

Here are my issues with the proximity issues suggested in the Vacation Rental Ordinance Update (ORD21-0005), dated 11-18-21, by Gary Helfrich

1. **Proximity of 300-500ft** – My dead end street is 1320 feet long with 18 residence (acre and half acre lots). For 300 feet separation, that would allow 5 homes (28% of neighborhood). With 500ft, we could still have 3 vacation homes (17%). Either of these options is not acceptable and would change the character of the neighborhood to a tourist zone.
2. **Concentration Proposal of 10%-** First how do you define the given area? Would it just be the dead end street? What about the houses that are behind our houses? We are equally impacted by vacation renters (partiers behind our home as on our own street). Rural Sonoma County has varying lot sizes, I am not sure how you will choose “given areas” in rural Sonoma County that are not near a particular tourism destination like a beach or river access. On a quiet country dead end street, even one vacation rental affects the whole neighborhood as cars zoom by and affect our safety.
3. **Rental Day Limit of 90 Days-** Let’s do a little math, there are 52 weekends in year, so on our dead end street we can expect 45 party weekends. If we count them as 3-day weekends, it is still 30 party weekends per year. That is a lot of strangers, partiers, noise and traffic on dead end rural streets each year and it will affect family neighborhoods, safety, and quality of life.

Given the negative impacts to rural residential neighborhoods, please ban vacation rentals in

higher density, truly rural residential neighborhoods with many dead-end streets that are not located near a river, beach or ocean, like mine (Willowside/Moriconi Road area).

Please put a stop to the un-hosted vacation rental business model that allow people to buy neighborhood homes and essentially convert them to tourist hotels, generating revenue for non-occupant owners, at the cost of neighboring homes and families.

Sincerely,

Karen Gunderson

Moriconi Drive Neighborhood

(Willowside Road area, west Santa Rosa)

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