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I want to start off by thanking Bob Barnett for his efforts to understand the concerns of other residents of the town while crafting the additional rules for non-hosted short-term rentals (STR). Bob reached out to me and we had a lengthy discussion so he could better understand my concerns and we could attempt to brainstorm solutions to address them.

We have been neighbors to an STR for a little over a year now. The owner lives out of state and owns of another property in Ledyard, along with 2 properties in Norwich.

I have no issues with hosted STRs. I believe the owner will have a vested interest in the well being of their neighbors, their home and the overall community. I would also expect a resident of a hosted STR to have some relationship with their neighbors to address issues as they arise.

Our main concern with non-hosted STRs comes from the transient nature of the home. We are fortunate to have approximately an acre of land so that we are not right on top of our neighbors, but that land still does not prevent us from seeing and hearing much of what goes on in the STR next door to us. While we have not had any major issues with the house, it is a matter of when, not if, a more significant event occurs.

We often see weekends with 5 or 6 cars staying overnight, with up to 8 vehicles overnight one weekend. With this transient nature of the home, we feel it brings a higher risk of people speeding and drunk driving down our block, given that people are generally visiting on vacation or to visit the local attractions, primarily the casinos. We personally watched someone driving significantly over the speed limit and passing cars illegally on a one lane road, only to see that they were guests in the house next door.

The home next to us has a fire pit in the back yard. The property manager makes the fire pit appealing for guests by stacking firewood in a large pile in the pit. Thankfully most of the guests have been smart enough to take most of the wood off before they start a fire, but there are some who have had rather large fires going with woods nearby and a lawn covered in leaves. There were also guests who left the fire burning overnight and we woke up in the morning to see the fire smoldering in the pit from our house. Not only are we concerned that a guest will start a serious fire, we've experienced a group of young men drinking and burning beer boxes that rained ash down in our backyard one afternoon while our son was playing outside. There is also the potential for more serious issues, like sex offenders renting next door without us being aware. A permanent resident would appear on a sex offender registry. A short-term renter does not.

As parents of a 4-year old child, we look anxiously at our neighbor's home each week as a new set of "neighbors" arrives, not knowing what may be in store for us during their stay. As I stated above, we have generally been fortunate that we have not experienced significant issues like large house parties, but there have certainly been days where we needed to hurry our son into the house while he was playing outside, in order to prevent him from hearing music playing from the house or adult language that is not appropriate for a 4-year-old.

While these events could happen with a permanent neighbor, the frequency at which it occurs is something that is unique to an STR. STR tenants are generally there on vacation and to have a good time. When it is a standing neighbor, this might happen a few times a year, but with an STR, it is nearly every guest that stays – weekends and weekdays. And while they may not need to get up the next morning while they enjoy the deck or fire pit late at night on a nice summer evening, we need to get our son up for school the next day and head into work ourselves.

Due to these issues and the anxiety, we feel each time a new set of guests arrive, we are sincerely considering selling our home that we have lived in for the last 10+ years, invested in significantly and hoped to raise our family in, and moving elsewhere. We love our town and our home, but the stress and anxiety associated with living next to an STR has created outweighs that enjoyment. We have already decided not to make any further improvements to our home until this issue is resolved and we are assured that the investment is worthwhile.

While I believe Mr. Barnett is a responsible host, and I respect the effort and concessions he has and is willing to make to minimize the impact to neighborhoods, I cannot support the allowance of non-hosted STRs in our town. While there is some financial benefit, it does not seem like it is enough to offset the serious risks and inconvenience associated with non-hosted STRs to the permanent residents of the town.

While we would prefer for these to not be allowed in our town, if the town so chooses to allow them, we would like to see further restrictions in addition to those that Mr. Barnett is recommending. We would like to see:

- 1) Restrictions on the number of non-hosted STRs allowed on a block or in a neighborhood (no STRs within some pre-determined distance of each other) to prevent possibility of homes being surrounded by non-hosted STRs
- 2) Requirements for noise monitoring equipment (www.noiseaware.com) both inside and outside of the home
- 3) Requirements for STR owners to put up privacy fencing on their property at their own expense, if requested by the permanent residents that neighbor the property
- 4) Requirements that STR owners are financially liable for any damage to neighboring homes and property arising from inappropriate behavior by their guests
- 5) Requirement that owner or designated representative live within a reasonable distance from the home to address issues that arise, provide their contact information to the neighboring homes and be available 24/7 while the property is being rented

We also fully agree that there should be a limit on the number of renters allowed in the STR and believe 4 adults should be the maximum occupancy. That said, we still feel non-hosted STRs should not be permitted in Ledyard as the restrictions being proposed by Mr. Barnett along with the ones above will still not solve all the concerns and potential problems associated with non-hosted STRs.