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Email

City of Owen Sound
c/o Briana Bloomfield
808 2nd Ave E,
Owen Sound, ON N4K 2H4

Dear Members of Council, Senior Staff and Member of the Corporate Services Committee:

Re: Short Term Rentals in Owen Sound and Public Consultations

Thank you for your dedicated work as our city's leaders. I know that it can be unseemly for former councillors to weigh in on matters. That said, I had a real interest in STRS during my council term and just wish to take this opportunity to follow up now that formal consultations on the issue have commenced.

First, I am very disappointed in the pace of these consultations. Only now, a year after this issue surfaced, is the community being surveyed for its opinions on the topic. It was a year ago that staff recommended a study and council, in a split vote (3 wanted an outright ban in residential neighborhoods), acceded to that request. Residents and investors need clarity on STRs. Further, delays may well have legal implications, as those who are now running pop up residential motels (my word, but not an inaccurate one) may try to argue down the road that their use is grandfathered in as legal non-conforming.

Second, the survey is materially deficient in places:

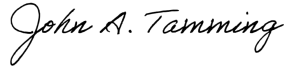
1. Question 3 lists a number of possible specified drawbacks for STRS. Missing in the list is the concern that they serve to aggravate local housing and rental shortages. The effect of STRs on rental supply has been a driver against STRs throughout the province. It should have been listed as an express drawback.
2. None of the questions allow for the position which many STR opponents hold, namely, **ban STRS in areas zoned exclusively residential, permit them in those areas zoned commercial or mixed use.** This is a fatal error in the survey.
3. Question 7 adds to the confusion: *"Do you believe that STRs should be restricted to an operator's principal residence?"* Many would want to see STRs so regulated in residential neighborhoods (no one objects to a traditional B&B) but are not opposed to a broader type of STR in areas which are zoned commercial or mixed use. The question does not allow for this viewpoint to be expressed, although it was the overwhelming feedback I received while a councillor.

4. Question 11 affords three options: *status quo*, *an outright ban on all STRs* and *an STR licensing process*. These options do not, again, capture the very popular opinion held by many - **allow STRs but not in residential neighborhoods**.

I urge the city to withdraw this survey and to modify it accordingly. As it presently stands, it cannot and will not elicit the full opinions held by ratepayers and residents, which is the entire point of such a consultative enterprise.

Thank you for your kind attention to this matter. Please email or call me if you have any questions.

Cordially,



John A. Tamming
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