

April 4, 2023

To: Kawartha Lakes Mayor and Council

RE: Short Term Rentals

This is my plea to Mayor and Council; please help your city's Seniors to feel safe in their houses and enjoy their properties with no stress of dealing with transients and the hassle of dealing with enforcement agencies.

I attended the Committee of Whole meeting on April 4<sup>th</sup>, and heard the presentations and deputations.

I strongly agree with the municipalities that pass the law that Short Term rentals are allowed in primary residence only. Having an owner on site will reduce the many issues that we are encountering.

We all agree that Short Term Rentals are businesses and as such must be licensed, inspected and taxed. I think we will also all agree that not all properties are the same. A secluded cottage on a lake (similar to the picture of one that was on the front page of STR survey), properties on large acreage, with no neighbours around, should also be allowed to be used as STRs. Their business is not negatively impacting any neighbours and are not introducing any issues to the community. These types of properties are not the same as houses on an average residential street. I live on O'Reilly Lane and I don't know if it is considered medium or low density, but I know that we are just an average street, with neighbours on each side as well as across the street. In a standard residential neighbourhood, STRs **should not be allowed**; this is where the majority of complains are coming from.

We all agree that STRs are a hospitality business, no different than Bed & Breakfast, motel, Inn or hotel. However, for some reason a STR can be opened and operated anywhere. STRs are being compared to businesses that bring tourism to the city and add to our economy. (I did not see any actual numbers to support that.) than shouldn't it have a designation and be allowed only in properly designated areas? Why STRs are allowed on residential streets/communities?

There needs to be a mechanism to distinguish which properties are suitable to be used as Short-Term rentals and which ones are not. We should not be issuing a license to everyone who applies. The owner needs to show that operating his business will not have a negative impact on the residents around him. That is why I agree with the municipalities that allow STRs in primary residence with owners on site. Everyone else needs to be vetted.

Also, a proper mechanism/designation will allow a potential buyer who wants to buy in Kawartha Lakes to be informed which streets or neighbourhoods allow STRs and which don't. An investor buyer will know which property to buy for STR and a buyer looking for a quiet street will know where to look for his dream retirement home.

I was one of the people who participated in the survey and I was happy to hear the results; however, what was missing from the survey and what is very difficult to quantify are the feelings of anxiety, stress levels and mental health wellness. So, when I heard the deputations of residents who are affected by the STRs it is hard not to hear the angst in their voices.

We owned a cottage in Kawartha Lakes for over 20 years. It was a small seasonal cottage on a street with many family-owned seasonal cottages. We never rented out our cottage because we were afraid of damages from renters. We liked it so much that we decided to move permanently to Kawartha Lakes.

We sold our cottage and bought a house on O'Reilly Lane. This is going to be our dream retirement home on the lake, our sanctuary away from the busy city. O'Reilly lane is a small quiet street of mostly permanent residence and a friendly community. A dead-end street with very low traffic of cars and people. The neighbours are nice and friendly, know each other and look after each others property. Most of the houses are on similar 100x200 lots, zoned as residential. We decided to retire by the lake in a quiet and tranquil community.

It changed last year, when 7 houses on our street sold and turned into Short Term Rentals. The mood on the street changed. One could feel the stress and anxiety before every weekend. (That was not measured or reported anywhere)

These 7 houses (that I know of) were purchased by business people for business use. The owners (either private or corporations) have no ties to the community and are not interested in the well being of the neighbours. They advertise their STRs on multiple social media platforms and their houses are being used as gathering places and event venues for large groups. They have no control on how many people actually arrive, stay and use the property since they are not on-site.

I found out that O'Reilly Lane is not the only such community that is now under stress. I plead with the council to introduce by-laws that will allow all Kawartha Lakes residents be safe and feel safe in their houses, and continue enjoying their homes, and preserve their beautiful communities and environment.

Sincerely,

Liba Radovski-Levin

