

The Dalles City Council
313 Court Street
The Dalles, Oregon 97058

May 8, 2023

Dear City Council,

We are residents of The Dalles who live south of West 14th Street and west of Sorosis Park in a section of the city that is zoned as Low Density Residential.

Within areas zoned as Low Density Residential, the City permits outright the primary use of single family residences, such as our own. Within areas zoned as Low Density Residential, the City permits outright the accessory uses of “Bed and breakfast and vacation rentals, subject to the provisions of Article 6.040: Bed and Breakfast and Vacation Rentals.”¹

In the past several years, our neighborhood has devolved, unexpectedly, into a short-term rental haven. There has been a purchasing spree by shadow limited liability companies² of former single-family homes in our neighborhood. In turn, most of those companies have posted the properties on websites including Airbnb.com which advertise and broker these homes for short-term stays. To the best of our knowledge, no long-term residents live at these vacation rentals. Since the posting of these properties on websites like Airbnb.com, our neighborhood has experienced increased noise, decreased parking space, general crowding, increased traffic, increased criminal presence, lack of awareness of children playing in the neighborhood, and general disrespect for community norms. Additionally, we can no longer maintain any kind of Neighborhood Watch program because we can no longer discern short-term renters from trespassers and drug traffickers. Finally, our region is experiencing a long-term housing shortage driven, in part, by the prominence of short-term rentals. We have observed companies now buying properties that historically were owner-occupied single family residences. The result is that the number of owner-occupiers – folks who would otherwise have a personal stake in where they live – is dwindling. The number of single-family homes that are available for sale is so small as to squeeze a middle-class family with children out of our community.³

The City’s current zoning provisions are permissive of these short-term rental properties being located in Low Density Residential neighborhoods. The majority of the City’s code addressing short-term rentals is contained in Chapter 8.02, which really only addresses licensing and limiting the stay of guests to 30 days maximum.

In order to minimize or limit the multiple negative aspects of short-term rental activity in our zone, we propose the City to take the following actions:

¹ Per City Code 10.2.030, an accessory use is a use on the same lot with and of a nature customarily incidental and subordinate to the principal use.

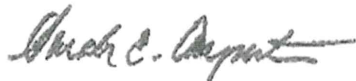
² For example, according to the Wasco County Public Basemap (viewable at <https://public.co.wasco.or.us/gisportal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=80a942ec81da4dd2bcc16032cc329459>), the property at 303 West 20th Street is owned by “TD 303 W 20TH^h LLC.” The property at 322 West 20th Street is owned by “TD 322 W 20TH LLC.” The property at 300 West Scenic Drive is owned by “1121 SE LINCOLN LLC.” The property at 416 West Scenic is owned by “TD 416 W SCENIC LLC.” The property at 318 West 20th Street is owned by “TD 318 W 20TH LLC.”

³ See, for example, the United States Census Bureau data for Wasco County at <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/wascocountyoregon/INC110221#INC110221>

- (1) Establish a minimum period of stay of 30 days in any short-term rental property sited in a Low Density Residential zone. In addition, set a maximum number of total rental contracts that may be formed per year for any short-term rental property sited in a Low Density Residential zone.
- (2) Require a person who owns or operates a short-term rental property sited in a Low Density Residential zone to reside on the premises being rented.
- (3) Establish a limit for how many short-term rental licenses the City will grant per year in Low Density Residential zones. Maintain the licensing provisions of City Code 8.02.030. Establish a lottery to determine which licenses will be extended each year. Establish benchmarks which each property must meet before having its license renewed.
- (4) Change short-term rentals from being an accessory use to being a conditional use within a Low Density Residential zone. Ensure the City notifies all neighbors about each conditional-use application and subsequent hearing.
- (5) Fund increased police patrols in neighborhoods with short-term rental properties.
- (6) Evaluate making each of the above actions apply to all residential zones.

Our greatest concerns are community safety, affordable housing, and maintaining the livability and family-friendly nature of our city. We encourage all city residents to share in these concerns.

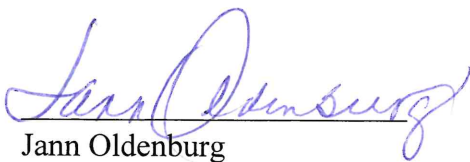
Sincerely,



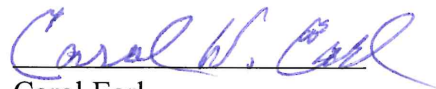
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