

From: [Lee Montgomery](#)
To: [Audra Caler](#); [Jeremy Martin](#); [Tom Hedstrom](#); [Shenley Neely](#); [Stephanie French](#); [Christopher Nolan](#); [Alison McKellar](#); [Sophie Romana](#)
Cc: [Holly](#)
Subject: Email for the Planning Board meeting 1/18/24
Date: Wednesday, January 17, 2024 5:19:09 PM

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Good Afternoon Jeremy,

I'll be tuning in on the Planning Board meeting as I'm out of town and can't attend in person.

Please share this email at the Camden Planning Board meeting on 1/18/24. This is the email I sent to the Camden Select Board on January 9th in hopes my perspective on rentals in Camden would be helpful.

This is Lee Montgomery writing some thoughts for consideration in deciding whether or not Camden should have a Short Term Rental registration and license ordinance. My sister, Holly Rutland, and I are the owners of Camden Harbor Properties, LLC which owns 4 commercial buildings on Main Street (11-17 Main and 23 Main) and 1 commercial building at 58 Bayview Street. We currently have a mix of office, retail and residential uses in these buildings and all are currently long term rentals.

I have been following the Camden Planning Board's meetings so I've heard the discussions and thoughts of what could be presented to the Camden Select Board. Once presented, I understand the Select Board will then consider whether or not to put this in front of the citizens of Camden for a vote to adopt it as a Short Term Rental Ordinance. My 36 year career as a Real Estate Broker included listing property, selling property and managing long and short term rentals. My experience included handling these services in the mid-coast area of Maine. I decided to inquire how other brokers in other coastal Maine towns were handling their town's regulations while providing these same services.

The most in-depth conversation I've had is with a broker from the Kennebunk area. They have a Rental Ordinance in place which she and her clients are bound to. She feels the regulations hurt both the potential tenants and the property owner in that the freedom of conducting business is hindered by the regulations and the possibility of ultimately not even being able to conduct any business because of the licensing lottery set-up. The town's philosophy of having the right to create such limitations is actually infringing on one's deeded property rights. This in itself is wrong and ultimately will harm the atmosphere and charm of our coastal Maine town for visitors. This is what the Kennebunk Broker feels has happened in Kennebunk. I believe this will have a negative domino effect to not only the retail sales for shops and restaurants but also to the real estate sales and ultimately the vitality of a small Maine town.

I'm hoping my experience and knowledge as a Real Estate Broker in the local rental industry gives some insight to each of you on both the Select Board and the Planning Board. My recommendation is not to regulate any short- term or long- term rentals.

Thank you,

Lee Montgomery

Sent from my iPhone

Lee Montgomery
Camden Harbor Properties, LLC
207-596-3689 cell

From: [Edward Hansen](#)
To: [Jeremy Martin](#); [Shenley Neely](#)
Subject: Economic Impact Data
Date: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 8:03:34 AM
Attachments: [MOT_GovCon_HighlightSheet_2022.pdf](#)

Hi Jeremy and Shenley,
I thought you might be able to use this summary data from the Maine Office of Tourism. Visitors to Maine spend on average \$698 per person, per day of overnight stay. This should be a metric used in Camden's STR regulation cost impact assessments.

Ed

https://motpartners.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/MOT_GovCon_HighlightSheet_2022.pdf

Edward Hansen
Managing Partner
NordHavn Partners LLC
440 Belfast Rd.
PO Box 642
Camden, ME 04843
+1 (207) 706-9547

From: [Jeremy Martin](#)
To: [eshaw_vt@msn.com](#); [Chrisso Rheault](#); [Mark Murray](#); [JohnColepdx@gmail.com](#); [Patt Chen](#); [Lucia deCordre](#); [Matthew Wolf](#)
Cc: [Shenley Neely](#); [Tom Hedstrom](#)
Subject: FW: Camden rental
Date: Thursday, January 4, 2024 7:04:33 PM

FYI

-----Original Message-----

From: dan deluxelightingllc.com <dan@deluxelightingllc.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 5:04 PM
To: Christopher Nolan <cnolan@camdenmaine.gov>; Sophie Romana <sromana@camdenmaine.gov>; Alison McKellar <AMcKellar@camdenmaine.gov>; Tom Hedstrom <thedstrom@camdenmaine.gov>; Stephanie French <sfrench@camdenmaine.gov>; Audra Caler <acaler@camdenmaine.gov>; Jeremy Martin <jmartin@camdenmaine.gov>
Subject: Camden rental

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from dan@deluxelightingllc.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

I own a camp on hosmer pond but don't live in Camden it is a shame that you all are considering limiting my use of my property. The people that come to rent bring money and it is spent in Camden that is a fact. I have bought and sold another home in Camden and witnessed 1st hand the prices and availability of homes in town and to think that limiting short term rentals in town is going to fix your housing situation is ridiculous. This has been tried in near by towns and has failed, what it does is slows real estate sales the prices don't go down Camden is a destination and the market has moved away from hotels/motels and wants more of a home setting. The lottery system is unfair way to pass out a ticket to rent my own property. We are against any kind of short term rental limitations and will be on the zoom tonight to voice our opposition Dan and Angela Janssen Sent from my iPhone

From: [Jeremy Martin](#)
To: eshaw_vt@msn.com; [Chrisso Rheault](#); [Lucia deCordre](#); [Patt Chen](#); JohnColepdx@gmail.com; [Mark Murray](#); [Matthew Wolf](#)
Cc: [Shenley Neely](#)
Subject: FW: Meeting tonight- STRS
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 3:44:35 PM

From: tiffany@onthewaterinmaine.com <tiffany@onthewaterinmaine.com>

Sent: Thursday, December 21, 2023 2:09 PM

To: Audra Caler <acaler@camdenmaine.gov>; Alison McKellar <AMcKellar@camdenmaine.gov>; Christopher Nolan <cnolan@camdenmaine.gov>; Stephanie French <sfrench@camdenmaine.gov>; Sophie Romana <sromana@camdenmaine.gov>; Tom Hedstrom <thedstrom@camdenmaine.gov>; Jeremy Martin <jmartin@camdenmaine.gov>

Subject: Meeting tonight- STRS

You don't often get email from tiffany@onthewaterinmaine.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello All,

I have been meaning to email you all, but had thought tonight's meeting was postponed until January and didn't want to bother you all with the holidays approaching if that were the case.

For those of you that might not know me, I own On the Water in Maine Vacation Rentals, On the Water Real Estate, Trapt Escape Rooms and some other unrelated businesses.

I wanted to give my 'two cents' regarding the issues at hand since it directly affects me and a lot of people I employ, but also the rights of my current owners.

I have been renting homes for my owners going on 18 years now in Camden and the surrounding towns. While I live in Rockport, we are a community first and foremost and both of my kids have gone to Camden-Rockport schools. I love it here as do my thousands of guests who come to visit annually and spend a lot of money in town. Without the visitors, our town will no longer be the town it is today. It is already a very fragile economy which relies on 4 months of spending to exist the remainder of the year. People visit and come back year after year because of its idyllic setting and charm. If we don't have patrons going on the schooners, eating at the Waterfront or buying precious one of kind items in the shops, it won't

exist.

So, now off my soap box here are some facts/points regarding what I do and what I know, in detail, about this space:

1. Safety is not a concern if the rental is run by a company or caretaker. I preform a detailed, two page, safety check on all properties ahead of the season and myself or staffing is at the property at each turnover to clean and make sure nothing has occurred to make the property unsafe. We are also on call 24/7 when people are in residence if there were any issues. To my knowledge, there have not been any incidents that have occurred that were not immediately fixed or resulting in harm.
2. Parking or noise- no complaints and if there were, it was handled immediately because neighbors are my highest concern, as well as, their peaceful enjoyment.
3. Trash- trash is picked up by my vendors ON turnover day and has not been an issue.
4. We already have a 7 day ordinance which I strictly adhere to so we are not competing with the B&Bs or hotels. My guests are families, sometimes visiting their families in the area, and wouldn't choose those other accommodations. They need larger homes and stay for longer than 3-4 nights.
5. If you mandate a 27 day minimum or anything over 7, then people won't be able to afford to come visit, but it also doesn't solve the problem of affordable housing either by placing the restriction it in the first place.
6. If you go the way that Rockland did with issuing permits and having the town responsible with inspecting them, you set the town at risk of a lawsuit IF something does happen. How often is the town going to inspect them? Are you going to annually make sure they are properly insured? Are you going to go back and inspect again if there is something you find ahead of the owner renting it? How is the town going to manage it because it will be someone's full time job? Who is in charge of policing people that already rent on AirBnB and for less than 7 days? Those aren't monitored currently and happen a bit, I am told and others will go around the permitting and

then someone will need to be in charge of fines?

7. Limiting or stopping STRs will not create affordable housing. I agree it is badly needed, but not one house I have ever rented for an owner would ever allow it to become a year round rental. They use it for themselves and family throughout the year and only rent it some of the time to help offset the taxes and maintenance. Some homes have been in their family a very long time and being the next generation they want to be able to keep up with the bills to pass it along to the next generation. Not only would they never be rented on an annual basis, but they would never be affordable because they would have to be rented at 4-6K a month to break even.

I guess it begs the question, why do we need more regulations? Mainers hate change in general and we ARE Vacationland per our license plates and the huge sign when you come into Kittery. Most people only come to the Midcoast and Camden specifically because its in every magazine as one of the places you have to go before you die and named the 4th prettiest harbor in the country. Lastly, if we get rid of the tourists, we get rid of the jobs needed to service the tourists and then there is no need for the affordable housing. Catch 22, and there needs to just be another way to build some apartments outside of town or something so we can all exist and the town can stay as we all know and love it!

I am happy to answer any questions if need be, but I hope my comments above might also help with decisions as well.

Happy Holidays,
Tiffany

Tiffany Ford

Business Owner

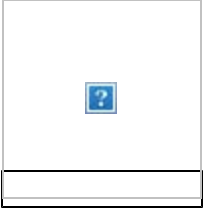
207-236-7710 Ext 9

M: P.O. Box 100, Rockport, ME 04856

P: 195 Commercial St, Rockport, ME 04856



[WEBSITE](#) | [FACEBOOK](#) | [INSTAGRAM](#)



From: [Jeremy Martin](#)
To: [Kerry Leichtman](#); [Shenley Neely](#)
Subject: FW: Planning Board Workshop
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:09:15 AM

From: Barb C Ohland <barb.callanan@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 21, 2023 7:37 PM
To: Jeremy Martin <jmartin@camdenmaine.gov>
Subject: Planning Board Workshop

You don't often get email from barb.callanan@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I do not have the Planning Board's email address... so please forward this to them if you want.

Although, I couldn't stay for the whole meeting (I had an injured dog alone at home) so I watched the rest of the meeting on Youtube.

WOW!

I just wanted to say I think you and the Planning Board did the town proud, with your professionalism and knowledge on the "hot topic" of short term rentals.

Clearly the room was filled with ~~some very entitled~~ people who are making good money with this.

Who was NOT in the room, is the hotel owners and B & B Owners who are licensed and losing money at times because of these rentals.

Also, not in the room are the people who would LIKE to live and work in our area, but have nowhere to stay, because of the lack of housing.

Please persevere with this topic and regulate these short term rentals. If it is THAT lucrative, then these people renting their homes can pay a license, etc.

Thank you for your work!

--

Barb Ohland
Harden Ave
Camden

From: [Jeremy Martin](#)
To: [Shenley Neely](#)
Subject: FW: STR
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:09:31 AM
Attachments: [STR Comparison Fast Facts Template.pdf](#)
[STR Comparison Template.pdf](#)
[feature-comparison-table-template.png](#)
[clip_image002.png](#)
[PastedGraphic-1.png](#)

From: mjsiegel <mjsiegelproducer@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 21, 2023 7:48 PM
To: Jeremy Martin <jmartin@camdenmaine.gov>
Cc: eshaw_vt@msn.com
Subject: STR

Hi Jeremy. Hi Ethan.
Thank you Jeremy for poking me to attend the CPB meeting.

Ethan, you did a swell job keeping the cats in line.
Not an easy task.

The three column or three designated "situations" approach will work.

With all the disinformation...

Def create a "Fast Facts" breakdown sheet for this project.
One column for each of your STR categories and 12-15 rows
of designations for each of those STR categories.

And keep it simple enough for a 6 year old to understand.

That way folks will not get bogged down in the ordinance language
and structure.
(That's for you guys to finalize and perfect)

In terms of your general public sales pitch...the STR ordinance change and its associated registration
and licensing is all about safety and community well-being.

I applaud your patience.

All the best,
Matt

Sample Fast Facts comparison template using coffee grinders instead of STRs...you get the idea.



[Feature Comparison Template](#)
vertex42.com

Matthew J. Siegel

Producer | Association of Independent Commercial Producers

Director of Photography | Int'l Cinematographers Guild IATSE, Local 600

(310) 722-8872

mjsiegelproducer@gmail.com



Edward Hansen
440 Belfast Road
Camden, Maine 04530

December 21, 2023

To the Members of the Planning Board of Camden, Maine,

Summary:

I have been following your workshops for some time on the potential regulation of the Short-Term-Rental (STR) market in Camden. In this letter I would like to bring light to some aspects of the short-term rental market that may prove useful in considering regulations. For example, I have observed that some concepts regarding STRs are used frequently in the Board's discussions but often with different inferred meanings and could benefit from a standard defined ontology. I would especially like to recognize the potential difficulties as well as the benefits that come with an increase in the practice of short-term renting. I would also like to recommend some approaches to management of this market that seem to me to be both measured in scope and targeted at the root problems in ways that may mitigate the worst consequential impacts that could come from abrupt and severe changes to town ordinances. Lastly, I would like to highlight the importance of recognizing truly "commercial" STR business as being distinct from and a risk to the traditional practice of seasonal rentals-by-owners that has long been an important part of Camden life.

Having grown up in the Camden area, left for many years and now returned to become a permanent resident of Camden, I can attest to the natural beauty, rich culture and wonderful people who make this a place that people want to live in or return to. I can also attest to the challenges that can make it a difficult place for ordinary folk to live. We know that Camden's population more than triples in the summer months. As a place with a high dependence on tourism and seasonal populations and yet also with few counterbalancing industries, significant employers or other commercial centers, the stresses on our residents from tourism and seasonality can be exacerbated.

I have no doubt that short-term rentals (STRs) can have a deleterious effect on tourism-intensive communities like Camden. When poorly managed, STRs can reduce the quality of life for those living in these communities through the excessive

noise, vehicles, trash, and rudeness that can come with transient neighbors. They can also contribute to escalating property values and high costs of living.

I am a local businessperson with a vested interest in ensuring that seasonal residents are welcome in Camden, so I can also see the benefits to this community that can come from well-managed STRs. Benefits like supplementary income for homeowners, higher capacity for accommodating visitors and the positive effects of more shopping, dining, entertainment, boating and other activities which support a vital downtown and harbor area. This vitality that seasonal residents and tourists bring to Camden is an important part of its appeal as well as its economic wellbeing.

Our new residential development, NordHavn Camden, is the first major development in Camden in some time and the first to employ cluster housing and modern ideas for low-impact, environmentally sensitive construction of compact-footprint housing specifically designed for those seeking to right-size their permanent residence or to acquire a second home in this community. The opportunity to offset some costs of ownership through short term rental is an important factor in our residents' decision making as it was in our decision to choose Camden for our investment. Caps on the number of allowed short term rentals will be particularly problematic for businesses like ours as well as for our residents. Few developers or home buyers will be interested in participating in new developments in Camden if the economics of their investment depend on the outcome of a lottery, an auction or an annual limit adjustment by a town body. Capital markets and buyers require dependability.

As a taxpayer in Camden, I am also concerned about the potential impact of excessive controls on the allowed uses of property in town. Much of the recent appreciation in values is due to the lack of available inventory but a portion of the increase is related to the perception of Camden as a good investment value regardless of market conditions. This perception could be affected by a significant change in the regulation of uses. Any resulting across-the-board decline in property values would have a proportionate impact on the taxes needed to maintain the same level of municipal services and this would affect all Camden taxpayers.

So, I have put together a summary of my perspective on Short Term Rentals. I hope that this helps to clarify what I see as the nature of some of the problems as well as some of the potential solutions to the particular challenges surrounding Short Term Rentals.

Definitions: (adapted from [LawInsider.com](https://www.lawinsider.com) and Airbnb.com)

- **Hosted Rental-** an activity whereby the owner hosts guests in the homeowner's home, for compensation, for a period of 30 or less consecutive calendar days, while the homeowner lives on-site in the home throughout their stay.
- **Un-Hosted Rental-** the short-term rental of a house or property without the host/owner/permanent resident residing at the property while it is being used as a short-term rental.
- **Co-Hosted Rental-** the short-term rental of a house of property where a Co-Host helps the listing owners take care of their home and guests. They're often a family member, neighbor, trusted friend, or someone the Host has hired to help with the listing. Co-Hosts can always be contacted by the Owner, the Guest and local authorities by phone or email and is available for quick response to on-site issues.

Need for management of STRs:

- Poorly managed Short-Term Rentals can result in:
 - Noise and disturbances
 - Uncontrolled guest behaviors
 - Declining maintenance of grounds and structures
 - Excessive vehicles, parking, and trash
 - Potential life and safety risks from poorly maintained properties and inexperienced guests
 - Erosion of neighborhood relationships
- High STR density can turn neighborhoods that had been populated by locals with a vested interest in their community, into transient populations of renters without such interests.

Potential Impacts of Regulation on Camden Property Owners:

- Camden's Planning Board estimates that 10% of 3,800 total homes in Camden are owned by non-residents.
- Camden's population more than triples during the summer months.

- Camden has one of the oldest populations in the country with a large proportion of seasonal residents and many seasonal residents who are permanent residents of other states.
- Many existing homeowners depend on rental income to continue to own and maintain their property.
- With increasing property values and costs in Camden, apartments, ADUs, and other short-term rental uses can be essential for maintaining affordability for existing residents and their families.
- Restrictions or elimination of short-term rentals would be detrimental to some existing residents and could result in forcing them from their properties.
- Severe STR restrictions could negatively impact property values in Camden, affecting all property owners and sending a message to investors that Camden is “closed for business”.

Resident vs Non-Resident Owners

- Resident and non-resident owners can be very similar in their time and involvement in the community (e.g., 183 days vs 182 days of residency).
- Both resident owners and non-resident owners can, and often are, out of the area when their units are rented (leaving them "un-hosted").
- Both can be good hosts or poor hosts and cognizant or negligent of their properties.
- The residency status of owners is difficult to establish and is not a good indicator of how their property will be managed.
- Both permanent and non-permanent residents are entitled to equal treatment under the law and crafting ordinances which treat them differently can be problematic.

Hosted, Un-hosted and Co-hosted Rental Properties

- Hosted properties
 - Generally, this applies to rentals within, or on a common lot with, the primary residence of the owner.

- This arrangement can result better management of the property and in lower impact stays due to the proximity of the responsible owner.
- Owners, however, are often not present leaving the rental "un-hosted" in their absence.
- Un-hosted properties
 - Un-hosted rentals reflect a wide spectrum of rental situations ranging from primary dwellings where the owner is temporarily absent to investment properties where the owner is rarely or never present.
 - The lack of a responsible party locally available to resolve issues in a timely manner and to ensure proper upkeep and maintenance of the property make this type of rental situation the most problematic and the source of many complaints about short-term rentals.
- Co-hosted properties
 - Co-hosting is a common way to provide similar levels of accountability and control as an Owner/Host, to properties where the owner is unable or unwilling to provide hosting services themselves.
 - This is sometimes done informally using friends and family but is often performed by professional property managers.
 - Camden has a long history of successful professional property management of seasonal properties, generally, and of rental and leased properties specifically.

Root Problems for Towns Like Camden:

- Poorly hosted or managed properties
 - Poorly equipped and maintained properties.
 - Overcrowding of residences with associated overuse of waste systems, parking, etc.
 - Disruptive uses and noise disturbances at rentals
- Un-hosted properties where there is no employment of professional property management services.
- Property management services performed by individuals or entities who have no local presence.

- Excessive density of STRs in in-town neighborhoods to the extent that they can change the character of neighborhoods.
- All these problems can occur at properties with both non-resident and resident owners.

Potential Solutions:

- Level 1: (reasonable to enact now for all of Camden)
 - Establish standards and licensing for all Short-Term Rental properties.
 - Require that all STRs be either Hosted by the Owner or Co-Hosted by a qualified Property Manager (effectively banning un-managed or un-hosted rentals).
 - Establish proximity, availability, and performance requirements for Property Managers using a registration and licensing process.
 - Set a minimum rental period which is long enough to mitigate the occurrence of “party rentals” (typically 3 days or more works).
 - Require that all listings match the CEO-approved bedroom and occupancy records for properties.
 - Suspend or revoke licenses if repeated violations occur without reasonable efforts at remediation.
 - Establish licensing fees commensurate with the cost to the town of managing STRs.
 - With these steps implemented, it is my opinion that there is no need to distinguish between permanent resident owners and non-resident owners in the regulation of STRs.
- Level 2: (enact only if necessary and only where necessary)
 - Establish STR permit density limits by neighborhood (e.g., lower density in key in-town neighborhoods; higher density in neighborhoods with largely seasonal residences) and control of the number of licenses issued in only those areas where it is necessary to do so.
 - Enable the recognition of residential communities, condominiums or homeowner associations which, by character, design or tradition, are tolerant of seasonal residencies and short- and long-term rentals. Understanding that the town has an interest in common health and

safety rules and in the registration of all STRs, allow these residential communities to establish their own regulations on quantity, density, frequency and duration of rentals according to their own operating bylaws. (See Town of Kennebunkport's STR Regulations for this type of accommodation)

- Finally, we see an emerging trend toward acquisition of existing housing by external investment firms solely for the purposes of operation as short-term rental properties. In the long term, this may present the most significant risk to the quality of life in Camden. I believe that this should be addressed separately from the rest of the STR situation and warrants separate measures to manage. It is possible, and desirable, to address this emerging business practice without unnecessarily impacting the traditional rental-by-owner practice that is as old as Camden itself. Measures like requiring the exposure of ownership and intended uses of property during the registration and licensing of STRs can help to identify such situations. Requiring some modest level of annual owner occupation as a pre-requisite for an STR license may be one way to help preclude such purely commercial uses.

With Best Regards,



Ed Hansen

TO: Town of Camden, PO Box 1207, Camden, ME 04843
RE: Un-Hosted Short Term Rental Property Registration
Little Loon Cottage, 385 Hosmer Pond Rd., Camden, ME 04843
FROM: Margaret E. Barclay & John B. Scholz, PO Box 1091, Camden, ME 04843-1091
(Legal Residence: 374 Hosmer Pond Rd., Camden, ME 04843)
DATE: 1/25/2024

Dear Town of Camden Administration, Select Board, and Planning Board,

With this letter we are submitting our application and fee for our un-hosted short-term rental. This cottage lies across the street and one house down from ours. It was derelict, and in 2016 we restored and furnished it at great expense with the intention of using it as a short-term rental.

We have always been clear of our rental intentions with the town. The property is registered as a Camden business, Little Loon Cottage, and we have been paying Camden Business Personal Property Taxes on the furnished contents of the cottage. The type of business has been listed as "Vacation Rental." (2023 form attached).


In the past, whenever Camden has made a zoning change, existing uses which were non-conforming as of the adoption of the ordinance have always been grandfathered until such time as the use changed. We find it shocking that Camden is considering adopting a change to Camden's long-standing one-week minimum rental standard without automatically grandfathering existing short-term rental properties, be they owned by Camden residents or others. People have made investments based on current zoning, and to make a change without grandfathering amounts to a taking, which will open Camden to lawsuits.

We are in favor of the registration of short-term rentals, the requirement that they meet life safety standards, and enforcement of the one-week turn-over rule, as we believe a higher rate of turn-over adversely impacts residential neighborhoods.

However, requiring rentals to be a minimum of 30 days does not address the needs of most vacationers, who generally have only a one- or two-week vacation window, unless they are both wealthy and retired. Many of our renters are families who want shared but private spaces to congregate, separate sleeping quarters for parents and children, and space for their bikes, kayaks and other toys. A rental cottage provides this desired combination, and you will drive this younger demographic of visitor out of the Camden market if you restrict rentals to 30 days.

Respectfully,


Meg Barclay and John Scholz





Town of Camden, Maine
 Assessing Department
 PO Box 1207, Camden, Maine 04843
 207-236-3353 x 7110
 Kerry Leichtman, Assessor
 Caitlin Thompson, Deputy Assessor
 cthompson@camdenmaine.gov

Acct Number: 5
 E R

2023 BUSINESS Personal Property Schedule Form

NOTICE: This schedule is required under MRS, Title 36 §601 and §706-A, and must be returned to the Assessor's Office no later than **May 1, 2023**. **Businesses that do not comply may forfeit their right to appeal.**

Please complete the following Ownership information:

Business Name: LITTLE LOON COTTAGE
 Business Location: 385 HOSMER POND RD., CAMDEN ME 04843
 Type of Business: VACATION RENTAL
 Type of Ownership: Corporation / Partnership / LLC Sole Proprietor
 Owner Name: JOHN SCHOLZ & MARGARET BARCLAY
 Mailing Address: P.O. BOX 10911, CAMDEN ME 04843
 Contact Name: MARGARET BARCLAY Phone Number: 207-446-3114
 E-Mail Address: NUTMEG@SCHOLZANDBARCLAY.COM

★★★ CHECK A BOX AND PROCEED ★★★

- New Business** – Use the reverse side to submit a complete and itemized listing of all machinery and equipment, furniture and fixtures in your possession as of April 1, 2023, extra pages as necessary
- Existing Business** – Consult enclosed record card and use the reverse side to submit any changes.
- NO CHANGES** – Consult the enclosed record card, please return form or growth will be estimated
- Did you Move? Go Out of Business before April 1, 2023?**

Effective Date: _____ Explanation: _____

- TAX \$ RELIEF -

Non-Retail Businesses (BETE)

An application was included if any of your business items are eligible. **You must sign and return** the form to receive the benefit.
BETE application is DUE May 1, 2023.

Retail Businesses (BETR)

Please check this box to be added to the queue. Applications for this program are available in the fa

This isn't a joke; we will help you reduce your tax burden or get reimbursed for what you've previously paid eligible items. **BETR** applications will be available Aug. 1 – Dec. 31, 2023. **BETE/BETR** applicants still must submit this schedule form in its entirety. Please contact our office if you have further questions.

Having carefully read the above, I hereby certify that the information reported hereon is full, true, and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. Forms that have not been signed may be returned for completion.

Signature

Date:

3/21/23



2022 MAINE OFFICE OF TOURISM HIGHLIGHTS

BY THE NUMBERS

In 2022, tourists spent more than **\$8.6 billion** in Maine. As one of the state's largest industries, tourism supported 151,000 jobs and contributed nearly \$5.6 billion in earnings to Maine's households. Visitors to the state also saved every Maine household \$2,172 in state and local taxes in 2022.

MAINE OVERNIGHT VISITORS

Direct spending on tourism-related trips by overnight visitors to Maine totaled nearly **\$8.5 billion**. 78% of visitors stayed one or more nights in Maine on their trip in 2022 (+6% from 2021).

Overnight Visitation:

Non-residents = **11,431,200**

Residents = **567,800**

Overnight Visitor Direct Spending:

Non-residents = **\$8,068,273,000**

Residents = **\$400,759,800**

Total Overnight Visitor Spending = **\$8,469,032,800**

Visitors spent 12,138,100 nights in Maine accommodations throughout 2022, up 18.4% from 2021.



MAINE DAY VISITORS

Day travelers to Maine accounted for more that **\$175.1 million** in direct expenditures. Maine hosted nearly 3.4 million day visitors in 2022.

TOTAL VISITOR DAYS

All visitors to Maine spent 68,769,800 days in market throughout 2022, up 10.2% from 2021.

VISITORS & JOBS

Every 102 visitors support a new job in Maine.

MAINE CANADIAN VISITORS

In 2022, Canadian visitors spent **\$413 million** in Maine. Canadian day and overnight visitation in Maine in 2022 accounted for 734,100 visitors.

TOTAL VISITATION

	2021	2022	Change
Visitation	15,601,800	15,363,600	-1.5%

DIRECT TOURISM EXPENDITURES

	2021	2022	Change
Restaurants	\$1,479,077,500	\$1,972,353,200	33.4%
Shopping	\$1,404,976,300	\$1,458,303,100	3.8%
Accommodations	\$1,874,899,800	\$2,145,627,000	14.4%
Transportation	\$982,932,100	\$934,373,400	-4.9%
Groceries	\$849,218,100	\$767,326,300	-9.6%
Activities, Attractions and Recreation	\$908,595,300	\$1,072,157,000	18.0%
Other	\$353,395,600	\$294,005,000	-16.8%
Total	\$7,853,094,700	\$8,644,145,000	10.1%

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TOURISM

	2021	2022	Change
Jobs Supported	143,100	151,000	5.5%
Total Earnings	\$5,050,181,600	\$5,557,607,900	10.0%
Total Taxes	\$1,147,884,700	\$1,240,445,900	8.1%
Total Economic Impact	\$14,451,155,200	\$15,851,046,200	9.7%

Source: Downs & St. Germain Research with IMPLAN economic modeling. Calculations include only direct impact from tourism.

Planning is something that can be of significant use to a community. Among other things it can anticipate future problems and try ~~and~~^{to} avoid them and can correct unanticipated problems that appear due to changing times. This board has determined that short term rentals may be an unanticipated problem and are promoting this proposed ordinance.

This ordinance as written seems to have the sole purpose of ending short term rentals in Camden. It even begins with false statements. If the ordinance is so concerned with the “public health and safety of the residents and their visitors” why are long term rentals, motels, inns, and B&B’s excluded from it’s onerous provisions.

Also, “the town continues it’s dedication to exploring innovative solutions to the apparent lack of available housing and longterm rentals.” Really? The town has no affordable housing committee and has put forth no initiatives to create affordable housing.

If the board wanted to key health and safety issues to short term rentals it should have put together meaningful statistics on the number of

Camden basically saying we don't want you to come here.

The board has consistently said that their motivation is to expand the housing stock in town. It seems not much thought has been given to the unforeseen consequences of this ordinance. Given all the proposed fees and the time and effort involved to obtain and maintain this license the first consequence is going to be an increase in short term rental rates.

Because these properties now gross more money there will be a subsequent increase in the selling price of any property that becomes available. Because of the high cost of owning property in Camden the likelihood of any of these units becoming long term rentals is minimal. Even ADU's on one lot would be salable through recent relaxed zoning ordinances or by making them condos or coops.

In conclusion this proposed ordinance does a significant disservice to property owners, the

police, fire calls, or disturbances at short term rentals. I'm sure they would not reveal a problem.

This ordinance intends to create a new bureaucracy called a licensing board. Given the numerous responsibilities of applications, reviews, inspections and continuous monitoring required this sounds like one or two new employees for an already fully occupied town staff. The board claims these costs of salaries, taxes, benefits, pensions, and annual raises will be covered by the fees. I doubt it. This sounds like Snow Bowl economics.

The ordinance proposes a ridiculous level of micro managing short term rentals. In the 35 years I have been in Camden I have seen the Select Board issue hundreds of licenses for restaurants, inns, motels, bars, daysailors, windjammers, and even festivals. I have never heard them even ask about insurance never mind dictate an amount. Or maintain a three year list of who stayed where and when and how to contact them. Whatever happened to privacy, does the rest of the hospitality

community have to do this? Uploading a calendar to all advertising is impractical.

Probably the most onerous and absurd provision of the ordinance is the inspection process and then the denial that it really happened.

The board proposes to inspect STR's on at least five points concerning smoke detectors, exits, fire suppression, electricity, and general property safety, but not limited to those. Issuance of a license depends on satisfying those conditions. You then turn around and state:

THE ISSUANCE OF A LICENSE TO OPERATE A SHORT TERM RENTAL IN THE TOWN OF CAMDEN DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A FINDING BY THE TOWN OF CAMDEN THAT THE PREMISES ARE IN COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE BUILDING, ZONING, FIRE PREVENTION, LIFE SAFETY, OR OTHER APPLICABLE CODES OR REGULATIONS.

And insist that that be printed in all advertisements.

But by issuing the license requiring such inspections you did say it meets standards.

What a great marketing tool. Why would you want to introduce such a negative concept if not to discourage potential renters. The message here is

business community and the local schools that bring so many students here from away.

**Rebecca M Hodge
28 Old Middletown Rd
Cobalt, CT 06414-0217**

Dear Camden Select Board members, and to whom else it may concern,

Thanks to my local property management company, On The Water In Maine (OTWIM), I have become aware of a misguided proposal from the Camden Planning Board (CPB) to limit short-term rentals (STRs) in Camden to nothing under 30-days. Camden already restricts STRs to no rentals less than 7-days, which has a negative impact on rental income for property owners. Although I do understand the restrictions to allow STRs (less than 7 days) are meant to flow business to the local hotels and B&Bs in Camden (even though many renters go to alternative property rental locations outside of Camden). Most concerning, however, is that the CPB is presenting this concept under the guise of having a positive impact to affordable housing, of which there is absolutely no evidence.

In fact, no support has been provided to corroborate that the CPB proposal to limit STRs would have any impact whatsoever to the availability of affordable housing. The affordable housing crisis is not restricted to Camden or Maine, or even to the Northeast. The CPB should focus their efforts on building affordable housing, either in Camden or in the region. This is the approach many communities have taken in Connecticut and throughout the Northeast and is proving effective.

My family homestead on Bay View Street has been in our family since 1910, over 110-years. We have been able to keep our property by having the ability to get income from STRs which assist in paying for both the taxes and maintenance of the property. Our family history in Camden is extensive.

Horace Leadbetter purchased the property at 109 Bay View St in 1910 and ran Leadbetter's Machine Shop, located where The Waterfront Restaurant currently resides. Gilbert Leadbetter, Horace's son, subsequently purchased property at 85 Bay View St and ran Leadbetter's Machine Shop and served on the Camden Select Board, later retiring to a home on Curtis Ave. The property at 109 Bay View St passed from my Great-Grandparents to my Grandparents, Ernest, and Ruth (Leadbetter) Norton, who resided in Camden for the month of August every year, and I spent every summer in Camden, at one place or another, since I was an infant. In 2000, my mother, Linda Norton, and my uncle, Gilbert Norton, inherited the property. For years, Linda Norton served on the Camden Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) and opened an Art Studio, Linda Norton Studio, where she welcomed locals and tourists alike. Her art was shown extensively in the US, from museums on the west coast, to NYC, to the Bagel Café and Bangor Savings locally. When Gilbert passed, my mother inherited the property and was able to reside, then retire at the property for 18-years, thanks to her ability to get STRs (without which, she could not have afforded the property taxes). Sadly, Linda passed in 2018, but fortunately, my sister, Rachel Steer and I have been able to retain the property through both LTRs and STRs. Without STRs, it is unlikely we could keep the property as we are not wealthy people, but middle-class folks like our family before us.

Although not currently residing in Camden, my family and I continue to support the Camden community through the employment of **only** local businesses and individuals to oversee rentals, maintain and improve the property. We continue to make investments yearly and donate annually to many local charities such as PAWS, Camden Visiting Nurses, Mid-Coast Habitat for Humanity, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, etc. My goal is to retire to Camden, but sadly, if this misguided proposal by the CPB to limit STRs is approved, retiring to Camden will not be possible. I implore the Select Board to have more research done in this space regarding the correlation between STRs and affordable housing as I believe a decision to limit STRs would be catastrophic to the existing community. I appreciate your time and consideration in reading the above and welcome you to contact either of us as you wish.

Thank you and kind regards,

Rebecca Hodge

Cell 860-267-1009

Email rmkh10@icloud.com

Rachel Steer

Cell 860-573-0333

Email rsteer@sbcglobal.net

Sent via email 12/27/2023

TO: Chris Nolan (Camden Select Board Member), cnolan@camdenmaine.gov
Alison McKellar (Camden Select Board Member), amckellar@camdenmaine.gov
Sophie Romana (Camden Select Board Member), sromana@camdenmaine.gov
Tom Hedstrom (Camden Select Board Chair), thedstrom@camdenmaine.gov
Stephanie French (Camden Select Board Vice Chair), sfrench@camdenmaine.gov
Audra Caler (Town Manager), acaler@camdenmaine.gov
Jeremy Martin (Town Planning & Development Director), jmartin@camdenmaine.gov
CC: Rachel Steer (Property Owner), rsteer@sbcglobal.net
Elaine Milardo (Property Owner relative), elaineinct@hotmail.com
Tiffany Ford (OTWIM), Partners@onthewaterinmaine.com

Articles & Studies on STR's and Available or Affordable Housing Supply

<https://granicus.com/blog/are-short-term-vacation-rentals-contributing-to-the-housing-crisis/>

<https://harvardpolitics.com/regulating-airbnb/>

https://journals.law.harvard.edu/lpr/wp-content/uploads/sites/89/2016/02/10.1_10_Lee.pdf

https://repec.umb.edu/RePEc/files/2016_03.pdf

https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3006832

<https://www.epi.org/publication/the-economic-costs-and-benefits-of-airbnb-no-reason-for-local-policy-makers-to-let-airbnb-bypass-tax-or-regulatory-obligations/>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/garybarker/2020/02/21/the-airbnb-effect-on-housing-and-rent/?sh=6eb8654a2226>

<https://www.purdue.edu/research/features/stories/short-term-rentals-make-housing-less-affordable/>

From: [Shenley Neely](#)
To: [Jeremy Martin](#)
Subject: FW: STR proposal concerns
Date: Wednesday, January 17, 2024 10:48:00 AM

Just saw this, did you get this, too???

From: Kerrie Tisdale <ktisdale1962@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 8:55 PM
Subject: STR proposal concerns

You don't often get email from ktisdale1962@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

My name is Malcolm Tisdale, and I, along with my four brothers, own the property at 699 Hope Rd. in Camden. I am writing to express our concern to the Planning Board and the Select Board of Camden regarding the policies the Planning Board is drafting for commercial short term rentals (STR).

Six generations of the Rich family have enjoyed living and visiting in the Camden area. Over the years, the property has been a central gathering place for my four brothers, their families, and especially my mother to spend time with her grandchildren and great grandchildren. I am sharing a brief family history so you understand that our property was never purchased to generate short term commercial rental income. On the contrary, we would prefer not to rent it; however, we have to rent short and long term to cover property expenses, with our 17k annual property taxes being our largest single cost.

Our concern with the thought process and rules you are considering as detailed from your January 4, 2024 Workshop are as follows:

-
-
- Because you have suggested limiting the number of permits, if we are
- not chosen, this will negatively affect our ability (and many others in Camden) to rent short term, which will most likely end in the family having to sell the property because of the costs to maintain it.
-
-
-
- Limiting the supply of short term rental properties in Camden will,
- over time, lead to an increase in rental rates as demand outstrips supply. People choose to rent in Camden because it is a beautiful place to visit. Higher rental rates will make it more difficult for people seeking lodging to visit local family or work at

- seasonal jobs. Many of our renters fit into those two categories.
-
-
-
- Charging a licensing fee will only increase the cost of renting, which
 - will force property owners to charge higher rental fees or rent to more tenants, so they can cover the licensing fee.
 -
 -
 -
- Permit/licensing should not be a “one size fits all” approach. Our home
 - has provided available housing (both LTRs and STRs) for such tenants as seasonal workers, teachers, lodging for families getting married in Camden, to name a few. Not all weekly rentals rent in the same capacity. If you require excessive fees for owners who
 - might only rent a few weeks, it will not be worth it. This will only create a need to increase prices for LTRs; thus decreasing affordable LTRs.
 -
 -
 -
- When defining commercial property, Ethan Shaw stated, “We [the town]
 - can leverage those rentals [STRs] to benefit the town rather than just the individuals.” This implies that somehow property owners are short changing the town. On the contrary, don’t our property taxes benefit the town? As well, property owners, like us,
 - support local businesses and our tenants spend money in the Camden economy too.
 -

It is my hope the Town Planning Board and the Select Board read these and other concerns of property owners and take into consideration the devastating effect these regulations will have on Camden locals and property owners.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
Malcolm Tisdale

February 21, 2024

Elaine Milardo
272 Keene Neck Rd
Bremen, Maine 04551

Dear Select Board Members,

I am writing to let you know I am very concerned about the future of Camden Maine after becoming aware that the Planning Board (PB) has been working on (apparently for a few years unbeknownst to many folks) establishing more stringent ordinances and/or outright banning un-hosted Short Term Rentals (STR's) in town.

Currently, there are both hosted and un-hosted STR's in Camden. From what I understand, the PB's main claim is that the lack of "available housing" in Camden has been created by the overabundance of STR's, specifically un-hosted STR's, which is causing long term rental and workforce housing shortages and taking away single-family housing stock available to the real estate market! I would like to know exactly where the PB retained such data to support their overzealous, misguided and unfactual claim. I think the public has the right to know.

Camden Maine is very special to me! My Mother, Carol Leadbetter, grew up in Camden. Her parents, Gilbert and Catherine Leadbetter, owned 85 Bayview Street and later moved to Curtis Avenue before their passing. My Great Grandparents, Horace and May Leadbetter, owned 109 Bayview Street. My Great-Aunt, Ruth Norton, inherited the property and passed it onto her two children, Linda and Gilbert Norton. My Cousin's (Linda's children), Rebecca Hodge and Rachel Steer, of CT, are the current owners. This property has been in our family for over a Century. They are able to keep the family property because they rent it as an un-hosted STR. After four generations of family ownership, they are at risk of losing it due to these outrageous claims and proposed ordinances.

With that being said, our family has a long-standing history in town. My Great Grandfather and Grandfather owned and operated Leadbetter's boat shop where the Waterfront Restaurant is currently located. My Grandfather, Gilbert Leadbetter, also served on numerous boards and committees in town and was a Selectmen.

After listening to the PB and Select Board (SB) workshop meeting from June 28, 2023, I was made aware that many of the un-hosted STR's are not currently registered with the town. However, my cousin's property is. They work with Tiffany Ford, owner of a local property management company, On the Water in Maine (OTWIM.) They abide by the local ordinance set forth in Chapter 215; Rentals, Short Term. However, that's apparently not the case for other STR's throughout town which was one of the issues brought up by the PB. After reviewing the ordinance, it appears that only un-hosted STR's are required to register with the town. All STR's, including hosted STR's, should be required to register in my opinion.

It seems that most of the Planning Board, especially the Chair, are against allowing un-hosted STR's owners continue renting their property and if they are allowed, they could be subject to more stringent oversight! During that meeting, the PB stated their primary goal was to "go after un-hosted STR's, who are the biggest bite of the apple, and to outright ban or limit them." The PB Chair stated that, "he sees Camden as a vibrant year-round community from a Planning perspective."

I'm not exactly sure where the PB Chair is originally from or some of the other members for that matter. I can tell you first handedly, after having family in town and spending a considerable amount of time here since I was born, this town has always been a bustling vacation destination. Many people from away have owned and/or still own homes in this community. Whether they are utilized as year-round properties should be their decision. Camden has never been an exclusive year-round community. Again, the PB Chair stated he sees Camden as a "vibrant year-round community." That seems like a personal goal not a realistic goal for the town. Of course there are certainly year-round residents, some of whom work in town or the surrounding area, but from an economic standpoint, it seems to me the PB needs to realize a large percentage of the business community rely on tourism as their primary means of sustaining. Completely banning or severely restricting un-hosted STR's will have a tremendous economic impact on both the un-hosted STR property owner's as well as the community. It will also impact the economy of the surrounding area. That's common sense!

During the meeting, one of the Selectmen asked, "why are we doing this and when are we going to present this to the voters?" That's a great question! She went on to say that the PB should stick to addressing the safety issues they were discussing and that every time the issue of "changing the character of Camden" comes up, it's not received well. I would certainly agree! She also mentioned she didn't think the economy is in a good position to try this. The other intelligent question she asked was, "do we have data, we don't." The PB Chair said, "he was curious of the resistance to the economic argument that taking out these STR's (meaning un-hosted STR's) and putting them into the regular housing or long-term rental market." He went on to say, "it seems logical, that he wasn't an economist, but if you carry on, we can look at that but it seems logical to me." Logical it is NOT! There is positively no logic in his convoluted theories nor is there any data to support it. It's simply just his opinion!

The current ordinance allows un-hosted STR owners to rent not less than 7 consecutive days to a family. The proposed ordinance language would restrict renting to only 28-30 consecutive days!!! That's outrageous! During the same meeting, one Selectmen asked, "if keeping the current 7 consecutive day restriction was warranted because there is no "enforcement." Apparently, as the current ordinance stands, as long as there is only one family renting within a 7 consecutive day period, an un-hosted STR owner can rent for a shorter time frame as long as two different families are not renting within that same specified timeframe. Why isn't this clearly defined in the current ordinance? I think that's a complete disservice to the un-hosted STR property owners. I don't believe any STR should be restricted on the number of consecutive days they are allowed to rent. If an STR (hosted or un-hosted) is registered with the town, I

don't see what the issue is. It's bringing business to the community and surrounding area which is positive for the overall economy. Again, Common Sense!

If this outrageous proposal gains further steam and becomes part of the existing ordinance, my cousin's might not be able to keep their property, along with other un-hosted STR owner's for that matter!! That would be completely tragic after our family has maintained ownership of 109 Bayview Street for over a Century.

How can any un-hosted STR owner possibly afford to maintain (my cousin's hire several local businesses) their property and pay the high tax rate if they are banned or severely restricted by outrageous ordinances and absurd theories? Seems to me these people want to completely decimate the possibility of any unhosted STR owner from keeping their property, forcing them to sell. I also heard a round table discussion during that same meeting about setting other restrictions in place for "dark properties." Again, in my opinion, the PB is targeting private single-family homes not occupied as a "primary residence." If such ordinance passes, they discussed raising taxes as a means of preventing "dark properties" in town. This is absurd.

Regardless of whether people own an STR, Bed and Breakfast, Inn or Hotel in Camden, each and every one of those properties offers people from away the opportunity to choose which property is better suited for their family. I thought we still had the "right" to make choices in this country?

In my opinion, what's currently being proposed by the PB sounds exactly like what the current Administration is trying to do to our Nation; force people to conform to their overzealous requirements and abide by their absurd laws and theories! Seems like the PB wants to "have complete control" over what a property owner in town should rightfully be able to do; rent their property if they so choose and enjoy it when they return if they do not reside here primarily. As a matter of fact, the PB Chair referenced Bernie Sanders in the June 28th meeting. Now I understand where his crazy and outrageous ideas and theories are coming from. Political preference should have NO bearing in making local town ordinances. Anyone who sits on a board or committee should not be forcing their party's "political agenda." I believe that's exactly what's currently happening right now in Camden, and it needs to cease!

There was also mention in that same meeting about preventing large, private investment firms and companies from coming onto town and purchasing property for use as un-hosted STR's. I do believe it's prudent to take a closer look at that matter. I don't believe it's positive for Camden to allow that to occur. That's completely different, in my opinion, from someone who might have inherited a property or decides to purchase a property in town and offset their mortgage and taxes with rental income when they are not living in town as a "primary resident."

I was a code officer and Registered Sanitarian (Health Inspector) in CT for twenty years. I am very familiar with regulations, ordinances, policies, and town politics. That said, I'm not a fan of over-regulation. I am also personally not a fan of people who sit on committees and try to force

changes in beautiful communities such as Camden because they have their own ludicrous theories and agendas.

I believe it's important to have all STR's registered with the town. That seems like a reasonable goal. However, I don't believe it's a good idea to start setting stringent requirements on one group. That creates animosity, shows bias and is not equitable. I also believe the current STR ordinance was initiated after a group from the local lodging industry complained to the town. Sounds to me like they were afraid people from away would have more choices and patronize un-hosted STR's; taking away business and creating competition. Again, people should have the right to choose where they want to stay in town. Competition is good. It brings business to town which stimulates the local economy and carries over to the surrounding area.

During the meeting, the topic of Accessory Apartment Units (AAU) was brought up. Apparently, the town now requires that an (AAU) serve as a primary residence for the occupant(s.) That requirement also pertains to the owner of the original dwelling on the same lot. I'm confused! If the PB is claiming the stock of "available housing" is low, why would they create more stringent ordinances on AAU's? That clearly takes away "available housing" for the "work force" or others who might be interested in staying in town for several reasons. That is one of their concerns! My cousin's mother, Linda Norton, while living at 109 Bayview Street as her primary residence, renovated the former attached workshop. She complied with all applicable ordinances and rented that unit on a weekly (or longer) basis. Now the new ordinance would prevent that. Some folks are on limited incomes and need the extra funds to assist in keeping their property.

Why is it that someone might be forced out of their property because one small group of people, in power, who sit on a volunteer committee (I believe the PB is volunteer), think they can dictate what you can do without sufficient data just because one person thinks it's "logical"? Furthermore, these un-hosted STR properties are well over the average market price for anyone in the middle to lower income tax bracket to be able to purchase or rent year-round. Again, that's common sense. We are talking about properties that, on average, are at least million-dollar properties. Again, it seems to me this group wants to force property owners into selling so they can get more politically "like minded" people in town. That way they can have complete control of everything.

The PB also brought up that they want to ensure un-hosted STR's are safe, not creating nuisance conditions and ensure they are keeping up with the character of the neighborhood and community. I don't have a problem with any of those goals but again, the town should not be overregulating one group of STR's. Discussion was made about requiring un-hosted STR's to be inspected to ensure they meet life-safety requirements set forth by local building and fire safety codes. Apparently, those requirements would be based on current single-family requirements. The claim made at the meeting was that people who rent STR's are "transient" and not familiar with the dwelling unit therefore creating a greater safety risk. Does the town have adequate staff to ensure their proposed goals are met if this ordinance passes? That's going to increase the budget, therefore taxes, to sustain such qualified personnel. I don't believe taxpayers want to fund that. Nor do I think it should be required if it's a single-family

building. I would at least give some good "safety recommendations" but not require an inspection. I also believe OTWIM, who is the property management company for my cousin's, enforces compliance with a safety checklist for their rentals.

This brings up the topic of fees and inspections. As a former code officer, our department set forth reasonable fees that would help cover a portion of the costs associated for personnel when an inspection was performed. Right now, I was told that un-hosted STR's pay a \$100.00 dollar registration fee. Currently, they are not inspected. How much do hosted STR's pay? Oh, that's right, they are not even required to register, they don't pay a fee nor are they inspected. It was mentioned in the meeting that most of the Inns, B&B's and other lodging facilities are inspected by either the code enforcement officer and/or fire chief's office. I looked up the fee for lodging facilities in the town ordinance and they were ridiculously low. I believe it was \$10.00 dollars a bedroom and \$1.00 dollar for each additional bedroom. That does not contribute much to help cover costs associated with the code officer's salary. The town is charging more for un-hosted STR registration fees (inspection reserved) versus year-round facilities who are supposedly inspected. That's outrageous and certainly not equitable. However, it was brought up by a Town Official that lodging facilities fees needed to increase in the future. I would certainly agree!

The topic above brings reference to the following section of the "Purpose Statement" referenced in Chapter 215 for Rentals, Short Term. Why is "providing equity with other residential and commercial uses" referenced? What does that mean? Everyone is treated equal or the same? That's my interpretation. It appears that's not the case as the PB is trying to set forth harsher restrictions and/or outright ban unhosted STR's! How is that equitable? Hosted STR's are not required to pay a registration fee. That's not equitable. Why is the town charging minimal fees to the lodging industry, who are inspected, and charging \$100.00 registration fees to un-hosted STR's who are not inspected? Is that equitable? Why is the PB discussing raising un-hosted STR's registration fees to \$300.00 dollars and hosted STR's are not currently required to register or pay a fee. Is that equitable? Shouldn't fees be based on recovering a portion of a code officer's salary when an inspection is required and performed? Let's stop with the "equitable" nonsense! Again, in my opinion, the current political "terminology" and agendas they are trying to push right now need to stop.

Another concern the PB brought up in the meeting is that un-hosted STR's may not be maintaining their property. I can't imagine there's a tremendous amount of STR's, whether hosted or un-hosted, if any, that are not maintained or where their property is creating nuisance conditions (garage, litter, overgrowth, excessive noise, dog waste or any unsightly conditions) in Camden! I made a FOI request to the Assistant Town Manager and copied the Planning and Development Director in Camden and specifically requested a copy of all complaints made to any town department regarding all STR's from 1-1-2014 through 1-8-24. I submitted my request via email on January 8, 2024 and to date, I have not received any correspondence confirming receipt of my request nor have I received a copy of any complaint!

In my opinion, many of the PB members, specifically the Chair, are allowing their personal feelings, goals, and political preferences to take precedence over what's best for this

community. That is outrageous and frankly needs to stop. The Town of Camden has always been a vacation destination and should be allowed to function in the same capacity moving forward without their overzealous and outrageous claims regarding why there is a housing shortage in town. This is not just a problem in Camden, this is a problem throughout Maine and the entire country. My recommendation is that local officials and committees work together regionally and try to help solve the problem. Forcing people out of their property, some of whom have owned them for years while others have inherited them from previous generations, should not be put in jeopardy because a group of people don't have a clue about what they are trying to impose.

Lastly, I just read an article where the Planning and Development Director gave an update to the SB after the PB's January 23, 2024 meeting. According to the Director, "there are as many as 420 STR's in town (I am assuming that is both hosted/unhosted STR), bringing in \$9 million dollars in revenue in the last year, or an average of \$72,000 thousand dollars per property." That is a considerable amount of revenue brought into the community! I can't imagine why that wouldn't be considered extremely beneficial to the town or local business owners. He went on to say that the PB is, "looking at different kinds of rentals with some being considered more traditional in town such as owner-occupied (hosted STR's) rentals and seasonal rentals such as camps on lakes." Since when is an "un-hosted STR" considered "non-traditional" in Camden? Now the PB is considering "capping" the number of "Commercial vacation rentals with owner's offsite" under new guidelines. Why are un-hosted STR's being considered "commercial structures" when they are single family homes? Apparently, the PB is also considering removing the 7 day rental restriction. Of course they are, especially if they outright ban, cap or restrict the number of unhosted (non owner occupied) STR owners allowed in town! Why would any logical person want to restrict, cap or ban an unhosted-STR owner from continuing to offer their property for rent when clearly all STR's pulled in over 9 million in revenue last year? They have specifically stated that most STR's are un-hosted properties in town! That revenue would certainly be greatly reduced if they are capped, restricted or banned! Common sense should prevail!

Camden Maine is, always has been, and hopefully forever will be a vibrant, charming coastal New England community and vacation retreat where year-round folks, summer folks and people from away come to visit, take in the natural beauty of the area, and just stay awhile. Let's not forget, this is still America, A Republic, and One Nation Under God!

Thank you for your time. I hope each and every member of this board takes a serious look at the future of Camden. What the PB is trying to impose is not good for the town, the economy, or the surrounding communities. Please put a stop to their outrageous nonsense! I can be contacted via email at elaininct@hotmail.com. I would certainly take time to chat with anyone.

Sincerely,

Elaine Milardo

From: [Shenley Neely](#)
To: [Janice Esancy](#)
Cc: [Jeremy Martin](#)
Subject: FW: Seniors surviving by renting
Date: Wednesday, February 28, 2024 7:04:16 AM

Can you please post online? Thank you very much.

-----Original Message-----

From: Brian <bstronger@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 5:00 PM
To: Shenley Neely <sneely@camdenmaine.gov>
Subject: Seniors surviving by renting

[You don't often get email from bstronger@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Hopefully most Camden voters will consider that some senior/retired residents can only survive the steadily rising cost of living by renting a portion of their property during the tourist season.

Brian Strong
203-451-6457 mobile

Please post online in public comments STRs

From: Stephanie French <sfrench@camdenmaine.gov>

Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 12:28 PM

To: Jeremy Martin <jmartin@camdenmaine.gov>

Cc: Shenley Neely <sneely@camdenmaine.gov>

Subject: FW: Letter from Camden Resident - STR

From: partners@onthewaterinmaine.com <partners@onthewaterinmaine.com>

Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 12:23 PM

To: Christopher Nolan <cnolan@camdenmaine.gov>; Alison McKellar

<AMcKellar@camdenmaine.gov>; Tom Hedstrom <thedstrom@camdenmaine.gov>; Stephanie French <sfrench@camdenmaine.gov>; Sophie Romana <sromana@camdenmaine.gov>

Subject: Letter from Camden Resident - STR

You don't often get email from partners@onthewaterinmaine.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello All,

I am forwarding this for one of my owners that has a home on Sea Street. They have poor Wifi and are out at sea currently, but wanted to voice their concerns over the STR issue coming to the table soon.

We are UK nationals and have been connected to the town through Wayfarer and now Lyman Morse since 1989.

We have owned a weekly rental property at 15 Sea Street which has been ably run by On The Water In Maine since 2008. We make lengthy visits spring and fall. If we are able, in retirement, we would hope to ramp this up.

Our property sees a steady flow of guests and we know they don't cook much which is good for restaurants and shops. The feedback we get suggests the type of people we get prefer the independent style and would not stay in hotels or guest houses. If they don't rent in Camden they would simply go someplace else.

For our part, without rentals we could not afford it, and I guess the property or site would become another second home providing little for local businesses.

Yours Sincerely

Michael and Janet Fisher

Date:

Attachments:

[image896420.png](#)
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From: Nick Napoleon <NNapoleon@ghgins.com>

Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 12:24 PM

To: Shenley Neely <sneely@camdenmaine.gov>

Subject: Short term rental opinion

You don't often get email from nnapoleon@ghgins.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Select Board, Town Staff & others it may concern,

My name is Nick Napoleon. I live in Jacksonville, FL and I have a vacation home in Camden. I use the home both personally and rent on a short term basis when I am not there. I wanted to share my story and my thoughts on the STR changes being considered.

Overall, I would be opposed to a reduction in the current number of STRs for several reasons:

1. I feel that a reduction in STRs in Camden would have a significant financial impact on the town, schools and virtually all residents:
 - Camden's economy has been built on a long history of vacationers and seasonal visitors.
 - My research shows the approximate 400 STRs in Camden generate around 10% of Camden GDP.
 - STRs and seasonal homes make up a significant amount of tax revenue. Reductions in STRs would cause many to sell their property creating an oversupply of homes in the market. An oversupply would erode the value of property for everyone and result in increased tax burden to those that remain.
2. STR's do not carry the same investment return they once did due to increased home values and increased interest rates. I feel the market has started to correct itself and few additional STRs will come online in the near future.
3. Selfishly, not being able to rent my home on a short term basis would impact my financial ability to retain my home & I would likely be forced to sell.

I am not opposed to reasonable regulation of STR's, licensing and fees similar to those of other types of lodging.

There is more below but I wanted to get to my points quickly as I am sure you have receive many of these emails.

Thanks for your consideration of my opinions,

Nick

Our Story

In 2006 we visited Maine for the first time. My wife & I drove the coast through Camden and up to Bar Harbor for a weekend stay. We are huge outdoors people and National Park fans. On that trip we noted Camden and Camden Hills State Park for a return visit. In 2010 we returned to tent camp in Camden Hills for several days with our 5 year old son and one of his friends. We fell in love with Camden and the surrounding area on that trip and have returned many times since with family & friends. We are annual Camden Hills Park pass holders, Ski at the Snow Bowl every year, we have probably shopped at every store and eaten at every restaurant in the area. Our son has even participated in the cardboard box derby. We have camped, stayed in hotels and have rented a number of STR's over the years. As far back as I can remember there seemed to be a 100+ STR choices in Camden with a wide variety to meet the needs of many. We found it great to have all these options based on the varying needs of our groups over the years.

In 2015, we decided since Camden was becoming such a regular destination it may make sense to have a place of our own. The plan was to make a long-term investment in a home that we could use personally and could also be used by our extended family & friends. To offset the costs we would rent the home for others to enjoy Camden when we could not. We have grown our visits to around 4-5 weeks a year now. Our extended family & friends use the home several weeks a year as well. Someday we hope to use our house for 4-5 months a year as we move into retirement. Our home was built with this specific plan in mind. It is seasonal in that we fully winterize it and close it down in October or November each year and open it back up in April or May. It was not built to be a year around residence.

Our home as an STR

Originally the home rented for 8-10 weeks a year. Since Covid, rental demand has increased and we hit 15 rental weeks one year. Demand dropped a little in 2023 & so far a little more for 2024. It looks to be returning to pre-covid levels and we expect to have it rented for about 10 weeks in 2024. We have many friends that own vacation homes around the country and they are seeing the same trends. Our house typically books 6 -15 months ahead of a scheduled stay. We have rented for as long as a month but most of our guests stay for a week. We really like the weekly minimum rental requirement in Camden as it tends to be the right fit for the families that like to stay in our home and that seem to frequent Camden. It also seems to reduce competition between the inns and hotels which cater to shorter stays.

Our concern with significantly lowering the # of STRs in Camden

I have attended a few of the Zoom meeting this year am very concerned with the potential changes and limitations on STR's in Camden. It would have a significant impact on our ability to maintain our home and with uncertainly around a limited number of licenses renewing regularly we would likely be forced to sell.

There is no question the growth in demand for vacation homes, many used for STR, has increased home prices across the country as well as in Camden. However, there are many other factors at play (EX: historically low interest rates, high costs of construction, high cost of land, covid demand, zoning, etc). Since Covid in January of 2020 the Federal reserve reports the median home price increased from \$330K in Q1 2020 to \$480K by Q4 2022, a 50% increase in home prices nationally. So these dramatic increases are not just in communities with higher %'s of STR.

At the same time people were making decisions to move out of the urban core seeking larger homes in the suburbs and 2nd homes to escape Covid. Federal Reserve stimulus measures resulted in historically low interest rates of under 3%. Compare that to the 30 year average of 6.6% and a long term average of 7.75%.

A \$300,000 loan at the 30 year average of 6.6% would generate a monthly loan payment of \$1,916. The same \$1,916 monthly payment at a 3% rate gets you a \$455,000 loan (50% more money to spend). So all

these people looking for a new place had way more money to spend on that place. This was the perfect storm that had driven up housing prices and got us to where we are today.

Starting in 2023 mortgage rates have returned to historical norms. It takes time but the Federal Reserve is reporting median home price reductions from \$480K down to \$430K. The expectation is rates will remain in the 6% - 7% range for some time and it is doubtful we will see anything near 3% mortgages anytime soon. With higher home prices and higher interest rates the purchase of a home as a STR investment just doesn't make much financial sense. Below I run the numbers on buying a property like mine today as a case study. The financial model along with people returning to the office, returning to the urban core and travel patterns returning to normal are all reasons I believe the demand for converting housing stock to STR is in our past.

What a significant reduction in STR could mean to Camden

Camden has built its economic foundation on seasonal visitors and an aggressive change in STR policy would have dramatic implications on the town, the school system and virtually all Camden residents. I have done some research on the economics and have some data at the end of this email that support my key thoughts:

- 10% of Camden's GDP is directly attributable to the visitors that stay at the estimated 400 STR properties in Camden each year. Eliminating these properties would have a catastrophic impact of eliminating an estimated \$31M from the local economy.
- Real estate taxes are the dominant revenue source to fund public services. A significant cut in STR would cause a large number of properties to hit the market. This could take years to come into balance and would have a significant impact on the value of all property in Town. Reducing values would cause severe stress on public finances and town residents.

Proposed Regulations

Beyond reducing the current number of STR through a cap, I don't think regulating the STR market is a bad thing. I guess it is at some level now but there seems to be a significant broadening in the proposed regulations. I have a few comments on some of these items being discussed and considered:

- An insurance requirement is not needed. I would expect the majority of the STR to have mortgages on their property. Banks regularly check for proof of insurance annually. People that own assets of significance will want to protect themselves and their assets by having adequate insurance. Does the town currently check for insurance on other businesses or lodging establishments? Does it check insurance for those homes that rent on a long term basis?
- Safety inspections - I don't think this is needed but I am not opposed to it as part of a licensing process. STR's tend to be self-regulating in that people look at the reviews to find the best place to stay. There is plenty of competition in the Camden area so it is in the interest of the owner to have a well maintained property that will get great reviews. Any unsafe conditions will certainly make it into reviews. STR rentals tend to be single family houses or small secondary buildings. Life safety dynamics are much different than a larger hotel or multiunit property. I am sure there is some data from local EMS on calls for injuries. I've heard the Camden population triples in July & August. Are there 3 times the calls to local EMS & Fire? Are the calls for accidents that are taking place from unsafe conditions in STRs? Statewide EMS data from 2019 shows a 10% increase in calls in peak season. 23,000 monthly calls on average went to 25,000 monthly calls in July & August. Maine has over 15M visitors annually. Most come in the Summer. You also have a significant influx of seasonal workers coming into the state. The increase in state wide EMS numbers during peak summer seems very small and indicates safety is not an issue.
- Registration Fees – I fine with a small fee like the current \$200 registration fee. In my opinion the fee should align with additional expenses the town may have in reviewing and approving an STR. I

am in favor of registering so the town can monitor and understand the STR impact to the community.

New STR Investor Case Study:

Let's say you purchased a nice 4Bed home to use as a vacation rental in Camden for \$750,000. \$250,000 in cash as a downpayment and a \$500,000 mortgage. The mortgage will run you \$3,000 a month just for the interest @ 6%. Other expenses (based on my experience):

- \$10,000 property tax
- Power & gas – \$2,250
- Cable & Internet - \$1,500
- Cleaning - \$3,500
- Garbage - \$500
- Yard Maintenance - \$1,000
- Pest Control - \$600
- Insurance - \$2,500
- VRBO listing fee - \$600
- Winterizing - \$750
- Various Supplies (soap, toilet paper, etc.) - \$1,000
- Credit Card Processing Fees - \$1,500
- This is over \$60,000 in annual costs

You would need to rent the home for 15 weeks a year at over \$4,000 a week just to break even. If you wanted to make 8% return on the \$250,000 down payment you would need to rent the home 17 weeks a year for \$5,000 a week. I don't believe anyone is getting those rates and occupancy, so I just don't see investor demand continuing for STR.

Economic Impact

What is the economic impact of STR in Camden?

2022 tourist data for the State of Maine shows:

- 15.4M visitors came to Maine and stayed about 4 days on average giving Maine around 68M visitor days.
- Visitors spent \$8.4B in the state and had an economic impact of \$15.4B.
- That is \$230 per day per visitor in economic impact.

In the meetings I have attended there was an estimate of about 400 non owner occupied short term rentals (STR's) in Camden. If the average STR is used 12 weeks over the year, with an average of 4 guests each stay, that would be 134,400 visitor days to Camden. Based on the above stats the economic impact of these 400 STRs is nearly \$31M.

What % of Camden's GDP is from STR?

Camden Census / Economic Data:

- 2022 population of 5,287 with 2.1 people per household.
- 2,368 households (primary residence). There are an estimated 3,700 houses in Camden. Leaving some 1,300 houses used for other than a primary residence.
- Median Camden income is about \$100,000 per household with a per capita median of \$49,000.
- Knox county has a gross domestic product of \$2.01B with 41,000 residents per the US Bureau of Economic Analysis.
- Camden has 12.8% of Knox County Population.
- Knox per capita income is \$39,000 so Camden is 25% above Knox County as a whole.
- An estimate of Camden GDP would be 12.8% of Knox Co GDP with a 25% inflation for the higher

per capita income. My estimate for Camden GDP is \$320M.
Based on the above stats, the estimated 400 Camden STRs and the guests they bring contribute nearly 10% of Camden GDP.
How else does Camden benefit from STR & seasonal properties?
Camden property Tax Revenue Data:

- An estimated 1,300 homes (35%) are used as secondary homes.
- Tax revenue was up 7.5% from 2022 – 2023 & is budgeted to be up another 7.5% from 2023 – 2024 with a total budget of about \$27M in 2024.
- The vast majority of this is used for Schools and the Town budgets which benefits the 5,300 Camden residents the most.
- An estimated \$9.5M of the town budget will come from real estate taxes from homes that are not primary homes (EX: Seasonal out of town owners and STR properties).
- At the same time the milage rates have decreased by 10% from 21-22 tax year to the 23-24 tax year.

400 Homes or 11% of the towns inventory is estimated to be used as STR. If STR's are banned or significantly reduced a large number of properties will hit the market. This surge will undoubtedly reduce values across the board as it could take years to absorb that amount of property. With costs / budgets increasing and tax revenue decreasing as a result of home values dropping the town and schools would struggle to maintain the same level of services.



Nick Napoleon

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From: [Shenley Neely](#)
To: [Janice Esancy](#)
Subject: FW: Input for town meeting concerning STR
Date: Thursday, February 29, 2024 12:42:19 PM
Attachments: [Untitled document.pdf](#)

Please add to Public Comment on line. I will be sending 2 more after this. Thanks a million....

From: Margaret Rauenhorst <startmargaret@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 12:13 PM
To: Shenley Neely <sneely@camdenmaine.gov>
Cc: Margaret Rauenhorst <startmargaret@gmail.com>
Subject: Input for town meeting concerning STR

You don't often get email from startmargaret@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To the planning board, select board, town manager and all concerned,

As a long time Camden resident and tax payer, I would like the board to address this question at the meeting on the 29th.

- What are the benefits regulating stays to a week?

People should be able to decide how much they are willing/can pay, (Airbnb etc. generally being less expensive than bed and breakfast or hotels) what type of accommodations they wish to stay in (many wish to have their own private space) and how long they can or want to stay. Many people only have a week and do not wish to spend it all in one place.

-Who does the week long regulation benefit and why?

-How would this help a housing shortage and put more residences into the housing market.

There are few STR that would be turned into long term rentals. Many are small spaces, inconvenient for long term cohabitation, used part of the year for family/friends/business, or attached to homes.

*This issue could be addressed by survey of how many STR would be willing to extend to LTR.

-How would proposed regulation help the general economy of the area?

Please take a good look at the result of the 125 surveys. Visitors will spend their money else where if some of these regulations are put into place. Who benefits from these regulations?

Thank you for addressing these questions!

Average Vacation Time in Camden, ME

Vacation Time	# of People	Percent
1-3 days	50	40%
3-5 days	31	25%
5 +	23	18%
No answer	21	17%
Total	125	

Where Vacationers Would Stay w/ Week Stay Requirement in Camden

Preferred Lodging	# of People	Percent
B&B in Camden	20	16%
Hotel in Camden	10	8%
Vacation Rental diff town	55	44%
Hotel/B&B diff town	32	26%
No Answer	8	6%
Total	125	

Preferred Town	# of People	Percent
Camden	30	24%
Different Town	87	70%
No Answer	8	6%
Total	125	

Number of People who still Shop in Camden if Staying in Different Town and How They Would Spend Their Money

Location of \$\$ Spent	# of People	Percent				
Grocery Store	11	11%				
Restaurant	49	51%				
Gift Shop	17	18%				
Tourist Events	15	16%				
Other	3	4%				
				Total Number of Shoppers		95

From: [Shenley Neely](#)
To: [Janice Esancy](#)
Subject: FW: Proposed Zoning Restrictions
Date: Thursday, February 29, 2024 12:00:13 PM
Importance: High

Hi Janice- I could not find this one posted online, can you please post it for us? Thank you!

From: Joseph Killoran <joseph.killoran@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 4:33 PM
To: Christopher Nolan <cnolan@camdenmaine.gov>; Alison McKellar <AMcKellar@camdenmaine.gov>; Tom Hedstrom <thedstrom@camdenmaine.gov>; Stephanie French <sfrench@camdenmaine.gov>; Sophie Romana <sromana@camdenmaine.gov>; Audra Caler <acaler@camdenmaine.gov>; Shenley Neely <sneely@camdenmaine.gov>; Jeremy Martin <jmartin@camdenmaine.gov>
Subject: Proposed Zoning Restrictions

Some people who received this message don't often get email from joseph.killoran@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To: The Camden Select Board and others to whom it may concern:

I am writing to express our concern and dismay regarding the proposed zoning restrictions on short term rentals (STRs) in Camden. If enacted, these restrictions will have serious consequences on our family. Additionally we feel strongly that, as applied to us, these restrictions would not further the goals cited as their justification.

Along with my 5 siblings, we have the great fortune to own a small lakeside property on Megunticook Lake in Camden. Originally purchased by our parents, longtime residents of Rockport, the property is now owned and shared collectively by us, their children. We all grew up in the area and attended the local public schools. Two of us live locally with their families (1 in Camden 1 in Rockport) and the rest of us all return to the area several times throughout the year.

For a few weeks out of the year we rent the property, on a weekly basis, during the summer season. Family members also occupy it for several weeks in the summer as well. This is a cherished family tradition we have had for many years. The rental income is important as it helps us defray the property taxes, which are not insignificant. This arrangement allows us to keep the property in the family and use it for family gatherings. The property has an important role in keeping us connected as a family and to the part of Maine to which we all feel a deep connection.

We would like to make the following observations that we feel show why, in our situation, the restrictions would not further their intended goals.

The property is rather small, rustic, and generally suited to be a vacation home. However, we should mention that we do currently rent it at a lower rate over the winter to a working couple from the local community. This is a good arrangement for

both us and them. The couple have a place for the summer that they prefer, it just isn't habitable in the winter. This provides them affordable housing during this period. The proposed restrictions could impact or end this arrangement.

On Safety: Since we occupy the property ourselves several weeks of the year we have a personal interest in keeping it maintained. Over the decades we have rented it there have been no problems related to safety to anyone. We are on good terms with the neighbors who also have not reported any particular problems to us.

We do not believe we are competing with commercial lodging. Renters come specifically for the lakeside location. We know because they often arrive with small boats, fishing rods, etc. There is no comparable 'commercial' alternative to that experience. If we can't provide it they will most likely seek that experience in a different town.

Lastly, we are not rental professionals! Even if we are lucky enough to get a permit the fees being proposed will be a large percentage of the rental income we typically collect. Please note: We have never made any profit on rental income. At best we break even and cover the very basic costs only. Some years we don't. We are not trying to make money, just limit costs.

In summary:

We urge the select board to consider the negative impact the proposed restrictions will have on families such as ourselves. We have a longstanding connection to the area and some of us are permanent residents. Those of us who do not live permanently in the area spend several weeks each year there and may hope to return permanently one day. We only rent as an STA for a few weeks out of the year and we only do this to control costs so we can continue to use the property ourselves. We do not believe we are competing with commercially available accommodations in Camden as renting a house on a lake is a very different experience not otherwise available. As such, we do not believe this arrangement has any negative impact on the town, individuals or local businesses. The restrictions, however, will certainly have a negative impact on us personally!

Thank you for considering our situation.

The Killoran Family
Joseph, Katherine, Peter, Patrick, Timothy & Christina

From: [Michael Johnson](#)
To: [Janice Esancy](#)
Subject: Limiting Short Term Rental
Date: Thursday, February 29, 2024 11:53:37 AM

You don't often get email from johnsonretina@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Planning Board,

I object in the strongest terms possible to the proposed restriction of short term rentals. This will devastate the local economy which is already fragile enough.

And if it passes this will not lead to more affordable housing. Don't kid yourselves, the homeowners will not be renting their homes monthly. They will close them up and you will have dark streets in Camden which will be quite detrimental to the local economy. If the shopkeepers and restaurants owners are made aware of what is going on they would be up in arms as this will adversely impact their businesses.

Moreover, by limiting short term rentals you, the planning board, will reduce the value of my home and I will request a reduction in my property taxes and I know that other homeowners plan on taking similar action.

I am also told that one of the board members owns a bed and breakfast. If true, that conflict of interest is unconscionable and will come back to bite the board.

The proposal, while I suppose is well intended, is poorly conceived and will have manifold negative effects on the health and vibrancy of gorgeous Camden, ME. I encourage you to abandon the project.

Sincerely,
Michael Johnson

Dear Camden Select Board:

7-11-23

At the most recent joint Planning Board / Select Board workshop on June 28 regarding Short Term Rentals (STRs), the Planning Board outlined a number of goals for addressing STRs and strategies for achieving these stated goals. The general premise of the PB is that STRs are a primary cause of the lack of affordable housing (rental or otherwise) in town and that they should be regulated and ultimately significantly limited town wide through restrictions and even an outright ban. This is absolute crazy talk.... I caution the Select Board to be very skeptical of the PB's assertion, logic, and overall methodology.

The PB's meeting notes outline the following goals and strategies relative to STRs: "increase the available housing stock of long-term rentals and/or properties offered for sale in the Town of Camden, ensure the safety of STR occupants and the public, protect the town's sense of community and its desirability as both as a renowned vacation destination and an attractive place to live and work, and address the current unequal playing field between existing commercial lodging industry and unregulated short term rentals."

Certainly, the lack of affordable housing of all types in Camden, regionally, and state wide is a problem. But this is not due to STRs--we've been dealing with this issue as a town long before airbnb and VRBO existed. 20+ years ago Camden Affordable Housing identified a need for "work force" housing and successfully completed The Madison Way/Mt. Battie Street and Lupine Lane developments. Since these developments, there have been few, if any, similar efforts. We need more diverse housing types like duplexes and triplexes or larger that may have 1, 2, or 3 bedrooms with sensible floor plans, efficient heat/cooling systems, and low overall maintenance/operation costs. The PB's logic that converting many of the existing STRs into long term rental housing or into new market offerings for purchase (to then become open for long term rental or year round owner occupied) will somehow miraculously solve long term rental and full time ownership/occupancy of homes in Camden is simply flawed. Does the PB really think that a home purchased for \$500K (currently there is only 1 home on the market under this amount in town) can then be offered for long term lease at a rate that is anywhere affordable? After debt service on a \$500K loan, taxes, insurance, maintenance, etc... the property owner/landlord would need to rent the home for over \$3K just to break even.

Similarly, if you follow the logic of the PB and compel current STR owners to sell their properties on the open market the end result will be just to reset the purchase bar (and future rental bar) even higher and more out of reach than it is already. This just makes no sense.

With regard to the PB's goal of making STRs safer for occupants and the public, is there some data the PB can cite that there are safety issues? Is the PB also concerned with occupant safety at long term rentals? Arguably, short term rentals see increased property maintenance (as properties are furnished and outfitted), upkeep (through weekly cleanings and the like) and when properties are professionally managed with a firm like On the Water, there is certainly much more oversight. And common sense tells you that owners who offer STRs are simply more engaged with their property as it is their home that they also live in and use. The "STRs are not safe argument..." just doesn't hold water. Yes, let's make all dwellings in Camden safer for all occupants whether they are long term renters, vacation/2nd home owners, full time owners, or short term renters. If the town wants to go down that path of regulation let's include everyone in the process.

Furthermore, if it is the intent of the PB to push an agenda initiated by the innkeeper/hotel owner lobby some years ago and wants to push measures detrimental to STRs using safety and parity as the buzzword they are misguided. STRs are properties that are simply rented short term. The use is residential. Just like a long term rental--the use is residential. The owner of a long term rental is entitled to make a profit on her/his investment just as an owner who chooses to rent short term. The safety/parity/commercial use argument is just a veiled effort to add more red tape, bureaucracy, and to be discouraging and not for the earnest purposes of making a property safer. The phrase a "rising tide lifts all boats" comes to mind as I reflect on the relationship between our local innkeepers and hotels and STRs. With more housing options for all visitor demographics and family types to visit and stay in Camden, all will benefit--shop owners, schooner owners, and all small business owners across the spectrum throughout town and the region.

In terms of preserving the town's sense of community goal as stated by the PB, is there some metric they are using to quantify this or qualify this? In the modern era, Camden has always been a town that has attracted summer and seasonal visitors. We've always had folks who come to their summer homes for the season and we've always had summer rentals--also known as short term rentals. Before airbnb and the like the Chamber of Commerce published their rental booklet of available homes and cottages. Historically, The Harp School, Maine Media Workshops, and Bay Chamber, to name a few, all attracted many visitors who needed rentals for the season. And increasingly, Camden depends on tourism for its lifeblood in all seasons--not just summer. Fundamentally, whether we like or not we are a community that depends almost exclusively on tourism for our existence. If anything, we need more options for tourists and visitors to consider Camden, not less. We should be encouraging tourism. If we limit STRs in town does the home that sits vacant and dark after the summer resident goes back home improve the sense of community? Wouldn't the neighborhood dynamic and tourism potential for the town be improved when more people are here? If we discourage the opportunity to visit Camden by restricting STRs it's just like eliminating parking spaces downtown; tourists and would-be visitors will just take their dollars elsewhere and keep on driving. And we don't want that!

In closing, I want to highlight what the PB is really proposing although not outlining in its list of goals with regard to STRs. About halfway through the June 26 workshop meeting, the PB chair said clearly that is their intent to ban all un hosted short term rentals. By the PB's definition, an "un-hosted rental" is any rental which is not owned by a full-time, voting resident of Camden. So, essentially, the PB is suggesting that any vacation home owner/2nd home owner, property owner who might want to retire here but does not live here full time yet, or any other person that owns a home here who may wish to rent it short term (for whatever reason) and who does not claim Camden as her/his full time residence may not do so or will be severely restricted to do so. Did the PB chair say the quiet part out loud? Does the PB have no concept that this is essentially all the STRs in town? Sure there are some STR rentals where a full-time resident moves out to her/his camp for the summer and rents their house or there are those who might go to Florida or snowbird somewhere for the winter and maybe choose to rent their home but these are few and far between. There are also those with a garage apartment or in-law unit but again these are the exception and do not reflect a significant number of the STRs that exist that provide the bedrooms that tourists and visitors use. The vast majority of STRs that vacationers and tourists depend on (because they are affordable, offer options for families/intergenerational, etc..) are owned by non-full time residents of Camden. Without these STRs and the diverse housing options they provide, our fragile tourist economy would be crippled and people will simply go elsewhere to spend their money. Every small business operator will suffer--every restaurant, retail shop, tour operator--without the tourists and visitors we depend on to fuel our economy and way of life. It is unfortunate the PB overlooked considering the potential economic impacts of such a radical recommendation. As a real estate professional for 20+ years in town, banning/severely restricting one's ability to rent one's

home depending on a Camden full time residency status would destroy the real estate market too, not to mention cause undue turmoil for those current property owners who purchased a home with an understanding of their property ownership rights not to mention severely affecting property resale values in the future too. And what about existing property owners who have lived in their homes for years and who may not have any intention of renting their home at the moment but don't want to give away that right should their residency status or life course change?

In sum, although admirable, the PB's effort to address the lack of affordable housing in town is misinformed and misguided. Without any real data correlating STRs and affordable housing issues, without understanding the basic nature of STRs and of the real estate market forces in town, and without understanding the the fragile nature of our tourism based economy (as well as all the potential stakeholders who would likely be affected by such measures), the PB has lost its way. If the Planning Board wants to act on increasing affordable housing, let's build more deliberate housing like Lupine Lane or Madison Way like we did 20 years ago or a newly envisioned rental specific affordable housing development rather than wishfully reallocating STRs through bureaucratic measures or taking property rights of current owners all to the detriment of our tourism based economy and small business owners.

Sincerely,

Alex Cohen
6 Wood Street
Camden, ME

From: [Shenley Neely](#)
To: [Jeremy Martin](#)
Subject: FW: Subject: Preserving Camden's Vitality: A Plea to Support Short-Term Rentals
Date: Thursday, January 18, 2024 12:32:00 PM

FYI

From: kate cohen <katecohen1968@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 12:13 PM
To: Shenley Neely <sneely@camdenmaine.gov>
Cc: Christopher Nolan <cnolan@camdenmaine.gov>; Alison McKellar <AMcKellar@camdenmaine.gov>; Tom Hedstrom <thedstrom@camdenmaine.gov>; Stephanie French <sfrench@camdenmaine.gov>; Sophie Romana <sromana@camdenmaine.gov>
Subject: Subject: Preserving Camden's Vitality: A Plea to Support Short-Term Rentals

Some people who received this message don't often get email from katecohen1968@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Planning Board members and Select Board of Camden,

I trust this message finds you well. My name is Kate Cohen, a long-time resident of Camden with a deep connection to the community. I am reaching out to express my perspective on the Planning Board's ongoing work concerning a Short-Term Rental (STR) ordinance in Camden.

As someone who has witnessed the evolution of Camden over the years, I find myself with a dual interest in this matter. Having grown up here, graduated from CRHS in 1986, and returned in 2001 to raise my family, I have experienced firsthand the ebb and flow of Camden's economy, heavily reliant on tourism.

Undoubtedly, tourism has been the lifeblood of Camden, creating a vibrant atmosphere with the arrival of "summer people" and tourists. I cherished the excitement of summer, the influx of new faces, and the joyful times it brought. However, like many locals, I also welcomed the quieter pace that followed after Labor Day, a time for reconnecting with local friends and returning to routine.

My journey led me away from Camden after graduation, fueled by the perception of a quieter off-season lacking in opportunities. Yet, over time, I witnessed a transformative shift. People started embracing Camden not just as a summer destination but as a year-round home. Many offspring of the "summer people" chose to settle here, and my friends and I followed suit, drawn by the appeal of this community.

Recognizing the challenges of our local economy, housing, and employment, many of us invested in properties that we could rent out short-term, proving to be a valuable source of supplemental income. Personally, offering STRs has allowed me to stay home and raise my four children – an endeavor my career as a Social Worker would not have facilitated.

On a professional note, our company, Porch + Pebble, has organically grown with a handful of listings in town. Our clients, diverse in background, utilize their properties for personal enjoyment while also renting them out. Their primary goal is to cover costs and generate additional income, contributing positively to our local economy.

The landscape of travel has evolved, with STRs becoming an integral part of the hospitality industry alongside hotels and B&Bs. Many of my guests are multi-generational families seeking the space and flexibility that traditional accommodations may lack. The money injected into Camden by STR guests throughout the year is not only substantial but vital for the local economy.

I respectfully urge the Planning Board to reconsider any inclination to limit STRs. Such restrictions, I believe, would have detrimental effects on our local economy, potentially jeopardizing small business owners like myself. Rather than viewing STRs as an issue around affordable housing, I propose a shift in focus towards exploring alternative solutions, such as utilizing available land to construct affordable multi-unit dwellings.

Preserving the vibrancy of Camden requires a balanced approach that values the contributions of STRs while also addressing the need for affordable housing. I trust that the Planning Board will carefully consider the long-term impact of its decisions on the community and work towards a solution that benefits all stakeholders.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kate Cohen

February 27, 2024

Dear Planning Board Member,

We purchased our home on Belfast Road in Camden in 2020. At the time of purchase, the house had been on the market for over 1 year. We worked with local contractors and craftspeople to update and renovate the home.

While we are not year-round residents, we love spending as much time as possible in Camden and the Midcoast. In addition to time in the Summer, over the past few years we have spent Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter and other holidays in the place that we love. Our kids have learned to ski at the Snow Bowl and have watched Santa arrive via Coast Guard vessel into Rockland Harbor.

We are lucky to work with a great local company to offer the house for week-long rentals when we are not able to be there. Offering the house for rent through a local company contributes significantly to the local economy. We know that visitors come to Vacationland to enjoy all the natural beauty, but also to eat in the restaurants, shop in local stores, take boat trips on Penobscot Bay, and enjoy all the other leisure activities that make Maine one of the great vacation destinations in the world. If we did not offer the house for week-long rentals when we cannot be there, the house would sit empty, and those guests would not be contributing to the local economy.

We understand that the Board is considering significant restrictions of the rights of homeowners to be able to rent out their homes. We understand that some of this may come from a place of genuine concern about a lack of affordable housing in the area. We share that concern, but we do not believe that taking tens of thousands of dollars in tourist spending out of the economy every year would help the people for whom affordable housing is a pressing concern. In addition, in our case, because we enjoy the house for several weeks throughout the year, restricting rentals when we are not there would not make the house part of the pool of available housing, affordable or otherwise. Moreover, while we are not yet able to be year-round residents, we do pay year-round property taxes. And since we do not have kids in Camden public schools, this is a net financial benefit to the Town.

The existing 7-day minimum rental restriction in Camden is already a reasonable measure to maintain the character of the town. While this restriction may diminish our personal financial benefit, we believe it is appropriate and we support it. But eliminating short-term rentals completely or adding additional restrictions that would make existing 7-day minimum short-term rentals untenable, would be counterproductive to the goal of growing the overall economy.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Robert Lafferty and Gregory Payton

From: [Shenley Neely](#)
To: [Janice Esancy](#)
Cc: [Jeremy Martin](#)
Subject: FW: Workforce Housing and Short Term Rentals
Date: Thursday, February 29, 2024 9:17:20 AM
Attachments: [PastedGraphic-4.png](#)
[PastedGraphic-5.png](#)

Hi Janice- could you please post this email online under public comments on STRs? Thank you very much.

From: Barbara Lawrence <bkl@barbaralawrence.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 8:53 AM
To: Shenley Neely <sneely@camdenmaine.gov>
Cc: Barbara Lawrence <bkl@barbaralawrence.com>
Subject: Workforce Housing and Short Term Rentals

You don't often get email from bkl@barbaralawrence.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Members of the Planning Board,

When I ran a real estate and construction company on Mount Desert Island from 1982 to 1995, I witnessed the pressure on local homeowners from the purchase of houses by people who would only use them for a month or two a year. In the past 9 years I have lived in Camden, I've seen the same pressures at work. This is a serious problem, and we need to create a solution.

I am concerned, however, that we are addressing the issue in a narrow way that is not likely to be successful. Some buyers of single-family homes who do not occupy their houses year-round will not flinch if they can't rent their property. Others will. Renters spend money in Camden. Empty houses do not.

Some investors have purchased multiple houses for rental as a business. If they are not allowed to rent these houses, they may sell them to owners who will use them for short periods of the year and otherwise let them remain empty. Most of these houses are now unaffordable to workforce buyers, and though their value may depreciate if rules about Short Term Rental change, they are still not likely to become affordable to large segments of our population. I do not think limiting an owner's option to rent a property will alleviate our workforce housing crisis.

What can we do? I believe we can and must create subsidized workforce housing in our community.

Two strategies for developing workforce housing have been underutilized, and I hope you will consider them.

1) Using the 1031 and 1033 sections of the Federal tax code to create workforce housing as an investment opportunity. There are many articles online about this strategy including this one: <https://fnrpusa.com/blog/1031-vs-1033-exchange/>

In the early 1990's my company developed land donated by a summer person, and a

consortium of summer investors paid us to divide it into lots and restrict future sale of the land to keep the houses affordable. We might consider a similar project here - perhaps using the 1031/33 option.

2) Building over existing schools, shopping malls, and other structures with flat roofs or unused attics. A report I wrote for the Annenberg Rural Trust, *Lowering the Cost by Raising the Roof*, about using this strategy and others, to lower the cost of constructing schools is available at: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED465483.pdf>

Thank you,

Barbara Kent Lawrence, E.D.

Relevant Experience:

NYC Housing Development Administration - 1968, policy analyst

Owner/broker Train Properties, Northeast Harbor, Maine, 1982-1995

Broker - LandVest - Boston Office 1995 - 1998

Annenberg Trust/Rural School and Community Trust - Facilities Policy Analyst, 1998 - 2008

Barbara Kent Lawrence, Ed.D.

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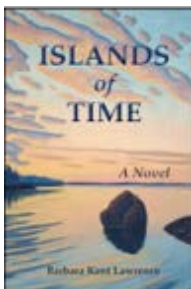
Facebook.com/hpfacadia

2-minute book trailer: <http://vimeo.com/user22900183/review/89934426/1b4759f803>

30-minute interview: Islands of Time <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q09oR2cF8ms&feature=youtu.be>

30-minute interview: The Other Island: Ben's Story

<http://haverhillcommunitytv.org/video/barbara-kent-lawrence>



Open Letter to Camden Planning Board Planning Board Public Hearing # 4 -- 2-29-24

If the purpose of tonight's (2-29-24) Planning Board public hearing agenda item # 4 is specifically to review the definitions as drafted by the Planning Board (PB) over the last year or so, I think it's important to recognize that it is very difficult to address these definitions in a vacuum. They are tied to a larger picture of new zoning ordinance revisions the PB is proposing that will radically redefine how we understand short term rentals (STRs) in our town.

Accordingly, separating the definitions from the actual specific language and intent of the full ordinance language within the proposed zoning amendments is a challenge. If you will, it's hard to separate the "meat" from the "bone." Tonight, I think we're talking about the bone if you follow this analogy. I think these definitions, these bones, are fairly innocuous, if considered on their own and outside of the Planning Board process over the last 9+ months or so.

As citizens of Camden, we often vote on zoning language changes or clarifications or the like during town meetings and town votes. It is part of the process of refining and clarifying our laws. Generally speaking, who really wants to go out of their way to get deep into definitions of oftentimes mundane, technical zoning language? However, in this instance, with regard to short term rentals in Camden, these new definition recommendations might have significant ramifications in terms of how they might be applied to future language that is yet to be determined relative to regulating short term rentals.

I think it is hard discuss these definition changes or perhaps more precisely these "new definitions," without understanding a little bit of the backstory as to why we are actually defining them on paper tonight to discuss as the PB wishes us to do. The Planning Board carefully crafted these definitions over the last 9+ months with presumably, thoughtful consideration.

Let me begin expressing a general feeling that as I have been watching the PB process unfold over the last many months, there is a general assumption of certain things that I don't necessarily agree with, and I don't necessarily believe are rooted in fact or data or logic for that matter. Accordingly, it is hard to adequately debate or discuss or offer public commentary on these definitions without some appreciation of some of the backstory.

As I understand it, the process of the Planning Board's desire to look at short term rental regulation, stems from a desire to create more affordable, and now, "available housing" as it has been clarified over these months. Obviously, this is an admirable effort, and one that I think we all can get behind. Affordable housing, workforce housing, elder housing, mid range housing—if that's even a term—we need all different kinds of housing, including apartment housing and J-1 visa / temporary worker housing. We need it all.

My perception of this Planning Board process has been that there has been a desire to differentiate between property owners in Camden. I'm not talking about property types like one typically does when talking about zoning use changes. I'm talking about property owners--the people themselves. I believe the Planning Board would like to create "two baskets" if you will -- one is the "full-time voting Camden resident" basket of property owner type and the other is the "non-Camden, non-voting" resident property owner type. These two baskets are different as far as I understand it from a Planning Board perspective and they have different "rights" if you will as property owners and taxpayers vis a vis zoning and regulations and the like relative to STRs in the eyes of the Planning Board.

Fundamentally, I disagree with this premise that a non full-time, non-voting resident in Camden, who owns property and who is similarly engaged in all that we enjoy about being in Camden, is somehow different fundamentally from a year-rounder. They are folks who volunteer at the library, the hospital, their church or synagogue, or donate to a local nonprofit. These folks enjoy the Snowbowl, boating on the bay, hiking on trails in the state park, walking down Bay View street or even sitting on the deck of the Waterfront Restaurant on a glorious summer or fall day! However, from a Planning Board perspective, as I understand it, these non-voting residents are different as it relates to what their particular rights might be in terms of a desire to operate a short term rental in their home. A short term rental has been defined by the Planning Board during this process as a rental of less than 28 days.

I'm not sure this is a good precedent or a good way to differentiate between people that pay the same taxes and essentially function in the same way as a voting member of town with the only difference being that that person happens to have a primary residence somewhere else whether it's in Rockport, Searsmont, Freeport, California, Florida, Switzerland or wherever they happen to live.

One person I've talked with commented that the Planning Board seems to be picking "winners and losers." Another person I've spoken with said having different property rights based on residency status is "discriminatory." I sometimes wonder if we

differentiate resident from non-resident within the short term rental landscape are we going to likewise take things to another level like whether a non-resident taxpayer has the ability to have a Camden Library card or a season's pass at the Camden Snowbowl or a mooring in Camden Harbor? Will we charge a non-resident taxpayer double for their library card or double for their season's pass or double for their mooring fee? Or maybe we should just prevent them from having these rights altogether? Of course, I'm being sarcastic, but you get my point. This is not a good precedent to set.

Refocusing on what I believe the Planning Board wants us to discuss tonight with regard to short term rentals are these five (5) definitions, set out nicely in big blue, highlighted, and underlined blocks on one simple page — not threatening at all.

Fundamentally, my perspective is that these new definitions set up two different buckets of people—one bucket is the resident short term rental bucket person and the other is the commercial rental bucket person. I don't think most short term rental property owners would characterize themselves as “commercial operators” as the planning board has so comfortably defined in the past and sort of just passes off as fact and has labeled as such in its new definition tonight. Instead, I would imagine most short term rental owners think that they are regular people with a second home, a home they inherited, a vacation home, a place that they come to whenever they can to enjoy the area or a place to retire to. I think these people probably feel more like Camden community members than anything else. I don't think they feel like outsiders. I don't think they consider themselves “commercial” in nature, nor do I feel like they probably consider themselves exploitative in any way given their choice to rent their homes on a short term basis should they choose to do so now or perhaps in the future.

I'd like to offer the board an email from Cale Pickford from Allen Agency in Camden. Cale is one of the preeminent insurance professionals in our area and someone who I have depended on in my 23 year career as a Camden area real estate and rental professional. Interestingly, the email which I'll provide to the PB outlines a fundamental insurance fact within his practice and that is that all of the short term rental homeowner policies his company unwrites are simply “personal homeowner” insurance / “personal liability” insurance policies. These are not commercial policies or business policies. Again, let me repeat--the short term rental homeowner insurance policies are personal and non-commercial in nature. I would argue that if the national insurance network system classifies short term rental insurance policies as personal policies that surely the Planning Board could also adopt that perspective relative to their proposed definitions. An insurer's concern for risk and demand for policy accuracy is paramount in their industry and the fact that if this is how they define short term rental homeowners then

this should also be something we can all agree on too. They certainly know more than us.

Not to get too deep in the weeds, but there is actually a third property ownership category that the Planning Board is asking us to discuss tonight. This third ownership category is called “seasonal short term rental.” This subset, if you will, further creates an “us and them“ category for property ownership. However, in this case, it’s not based on residency status. This seasonal short term rental category defines property owners (whether they are year-round, voting members of Camden or not) who have seasonal properties. A seasonal property is defined as a non-winterized property per the PB. This could apply to someone with a \$1M “seasonal” Megunticook Lake camp/cottage or someone with a \$100K “seasonal” shack on Hosmer Pond, or even a rustic home downtown somewhere without insulation or a central heating system. Well, there is a special exception for those people such that they do not necessarily have to conform to more robust short term rental ordinance measures and regulations that the other bucket of folks might be subject to if the PB's proposed zoning amendments, as discussed, over the last months, moves forward. The genesis of this subset of property ownership classification does not seem to align with the general goals of the Planning Board as I understand it if they are earnestly looking to regulate short term rentals fundamentally, across-the-board, in a fair fashion and create more “available” housing. Would an owner of a winterized Megunticook Lake property feel that it was fair for his neighbor with a non-winterized camp/cottage to have a short term rental regulation loop hole? Probably not. Additionally, I would think in the summer season, with increased lodging demand (especially for seasonal workers), that there might be more desire for the PB to limit seasonal camps and seasonal homes from offering STRs rather than the opposite if the PB's goal is to seek measures to expand longer term housing availability even if it is just for the summer/warmer 6+ months of the year? If these seasonal properties can be rented for more than 28 days, then they should be integrated into these other buckets of classification that the Planning Board wants to try and pressure into the “long term” 28+ day rental market.

Because this issue is so complex and so layered — it’s not a simple "one size fits all" and yet again, an effective zoning ordinance is not one where there can be endless exceptions for endless situations, but there is yet another “carve out” as defined in the documents before us tonight. That additional carve out is for a short term rental property owner who does not use that property as their “primary residence,” however, they are full-time Camden residents and that property happens to be physically “abutting” their full-time residence. I know that’s a lot to sort of digest but basically if you, as a full time Camden resident, happen to also own a property "next door" to you literally, and you wish to rent it as a short term rental—well then there is an exception for you to do

that with less red tape! Interestingly, if you are also a Camden resident and live full-time and own a property a block away, two blocks away or two houses away, there is no special consideration for you. You would fall under the commercial short term rental basket if you will, as defined by these terms and the PB's logic.

In closing, as I see it, and I've been trying to follow this issue diligently and I'm doing my best to understand it at each twist and turn over these last 9+ months and I am still flummoxed. I often don't know what is really being discussed and what the real intentions are of the Planning Board and these proposed STR regulations. I want what's best for my town and I want more housing of all shapes and sizes and I want all different kinds of people to be able to live here and to experience what I experience. But I simply have too many reservations about going down a road that looks like this where we pick certain folks over others for no real reason except that they don't live here year-round. There have been summer families here for generations, there are newcomers arriving all the time, and there are all those in between and I just don't think we can say one person is better than the other.

Given what I've listened to over these last months on the Planning Board level, I simply don't trust that somehow approving these definitions or glossing over them, independent of the context within which they will be applied as a function of a revised zoning ordinance, is a good practice. It just doesn't make sense to me. If we can't understand what the real motivations or purpose is behind defining these property owner categories then we have no idea what the unintended consequences could be once implemented.

There are many other points to discuss relative to the Planning Board's efforts to regulate short term rentals so hopefully, there will be more opportunity to dig down deeper and really get into the nuts and bolts of what I believe the Planning Board is proposing and how they wish to implement it as I believe there would be detrimental consequences to not only property owners, the real estate and rental industries but also to our fragile, tourism-based economy.

I would just urge everybody listening and in the room tonight, who may not have been aware of some of this to voice their concerns and perspectives and try to get more information about the topic at hand. There will be another public hearing to go into some of these more "nitty-gritty" topics specific to the regulation details of short term rentals in Camden that I hope we all can participate in.

Alex Cohen
6 Wood Street
Camden, ME

Penobscot Regional Chamber of Commerce
25 Park Street, Suite 2
Rockland ME, 04841
Phone 207-596-0376
www.CamdenRockland.com



MARCH 4, 2024

Camden Select Board Members
Camden Planning Board Members
C/O Jeremy Martin
Planning and Development Director

Dear Camden Select Board Members,

The Penobscot Bay Chamber of Commerce would like to write in support of the Select Board and Planning Board efforts to advocate for local and regional businesses as our area continues to struggle with a housing crisis.

We recognize that by updating and implementing policies to regulate the registration of, number of, and safety of short-term rentals in the town those efforts will ultimately lead toward more available housing for the area workforce and those wishing to make Camden and the Midcoast their permanent homes.

The Penobscot Bay Chamber of Commerce and this Committee recognize that there are many opinions on this topic and that anyone living and working in the area are challenged by a lack of affordable housing. We will continue to support Camden and other local municipalities where our business members live and work toward the goal of creating and maintaining housing in our communities.

Submitted respectfully on behalf of the Penobscot Bay Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors,

Greg Soutiea – Chair, Advocacy Committee
Chris Austin – Member, Advocacy Committee
Ashley Benson – Member, Advocacy Committee
David Gogel – Member, Advocacy Committee
Diane Lebson – Member, Advocacy Committee
Tyson Thornton – Member, Advocacy Committee

To the Camden Planning Board and Camden Select Board:

March 5, 2024

I am new to the discussion of short term rentals in Camden and am working to catch up on nine months of information. I listened to the planning board meeting last week and was shocked by the contentious tone. Certainly we can all agree that Camden is in need of more affordable housing. It is less apparent to me how that problem can be solved by eliminating short term rentals.

Obviously there are many different STR situations. I don't believe mine is extraordinary. We have lived in Camden on and off for almost 50 years , both as renters and homeowners. Before our retirement, I was a nurse practitioner and my husband a commercial fisherman. Since 2000, we have owned a winterized camp in Searsmont and have made that our primary residence. But we have also been planning for our old age (my husband is 91). To this end we purchased a house in Camden in 2003. To be able to afford to do this, we rent the house as a short term rental for the summer months. In the winters we live here in Camden, or occasionally lease the house as a winter rental, November through May. Our long term renters have mostly been people moving to Camden who want to be here searching for a house, including our adult children.

Our summer renters are now mostly repeat people who we have come to know well. I clean and maintain the house myself so I am very aware of what goes on from week to week. In 20 years there has never been a party here, nor a complaint from neighbors. My summer renters eat out almost every day and do a lot of shopping here in town. They hike and bike and go out on schooners. They go home and tell all their friends what a wonderful place Camden is.

So that's the story on one of those heinous commercial renters, which I apparently qualify as since my legal residence is in Searsmont. However, I do not meet another part of the definition as I have never intended for our house to be solely a short term rental. I sincerely hope that it will still be possible for it to be where we spend our old age.

Joanne Ricca, 34 Sea St, Camden

Good afternoon Alison and Chris,

I wanted to send a short email regarding my concern of the proposed STR amendment. While I work hard for affordable housing and understand the desperate need I find this proposal deeply troubling and concerning. I am unfortunately not going to be able to be on the zoom this evening as I am with a friend at Maine Medical center.

As a property owner who pays exorbitant taxes to be told what I can do and cannot do with my property is unfair and just wrong. The thought of a "lottery system or paying for your ability to rent is simply wrong. Talk about dividing our town further.....While I understand that this is a large problem where some buy homes simply for rental purposes only it is clearly in violation of our rights. Who knows why someone purchases a property? Perhaps to retire in 3 years or to plan for their future. Those of us lucky enough to have the means to live how and where we want should not be punished for that. Instead, we should be grateful we can bring new people into our town to spend the money with the local merchants and restaurants. I was extremely proud of Rockport when they chose not to allow this restriction on rentals, and I would hope Camden Select-board will weigh this proposal very carefully.

I appreciate both of you taking the time to read my letter and hope this is stopped dead in its tracks.

Thank you both for your service on our town government.

With kind regards,

Caroline Morong

Bradley Boyd
318 Ludwig Road
Hope Maine

3/11/24

Dear Camden Select Board:

Dear Planning Board:

I have become aware of a push to regulate Short Term Rentals (STR). In my opinion, the minute you implement new regulations, there will be fewer. Owners will take them off the market so they don't have to conform to the new rules or be regulated. While the intent to ban un-hosted STR's, the net is cast over all private property and all property owners will be harmed by these new regulations. A reduced future sales price would be expected due to the additional rental restrictions.

I own a single family home in Camden and it is a year round full time rental, in a HOA (home owners association). When I purchased it in 2013, I knew the market, the location, municipal regulations and read the HOA documents. I understood the constraints of the property and the risks of owning and renting it. Like all homeowners, I am concerned about additional restrictions on private property. While I am renting year round now, I want to preserve the right to do a short term rental to fill in an off year in the future. The HOA documents require owners to conform to all municipal rules and regulations old and new.

If the goal is to create more affordable housing for workers, elderly, and low income individuals, then you should focus on building affordable units. Building is neither easy or inexpensive, but at least you aren't trying to over regulate private structures. And, it's the only way to increase the number of units. Why not incentivize the new construction of affordable housing? Fewer restrictions, regulations, faster approvals, with increased density for certain areas of town? The Tannery RFP comes to mind. It would be nice to hear the current status of that project.

I would prefer to get it right, rather than rush and get it wrong, only to meet a unrealistic date. It's not a good time to be further regulate the real estate market. Please drop this bad idea.

Thanks,

Bradley Boyd
bradboyd@tidewater.net

From: [Susan McBride](#)
To: [Select Board Distribution Group](#)
Subject: Short Term Rentals
Date: Friday, March 15, 2024 2:04:42 PM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from mcbridesusan12@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Members of the Select Board,

I've been following along with the planning board meeting about short term rentals and I've read many of the very well-written letters stating opposition to the proposed restrictions. Being able to rent by the week enables home owners to supplement their income in a small community with limited job opportunities.

STRs bring so many more people into our area who support local businesses and keep this town alive financially! These are not people who would rent a hotel room or a one-room B&B--they need the extra room and the kitchen to make it affordable to visit our town. Like many people, I would love to see more long-term housing in this area, but going after existing homeowners is definitely not the fair way or the best way to go about it. Thanks for your consideration.

Susan McBride

From: [Shenley Neely](#)
To: [Janice Esancy](#)
Subject: FW: SHORT TERM RENTAL PROPOSAL
Date: Friday, March 15, 2024 11:34:32 AM

Hi Janice- would you be able to post this letter online with the others? Thank you.

From: Doug <theshopincamden@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, March 15, 2024 11:31 AM
To: Shenley Neely <sneely@camdenmaine.gov>; Jeremy Martin <jmartin@camdenmaine.gov>; Christopher Nolan <cnolan@camdenmaine.gov>; Alison McKellar <AMcKellar@camdenmaine.gov>; Tom Hedstrom <thedstrom@camdenmaine.gov>; Stephanie French <sfrench@camdenmaine.gov>; Sophie Romana <sromana@camdenmaine.gov>
Cc: Audra Caler <acaler@camdenmaine.gov>
Subject: SHORT TERM RENTAL PROPOSAL

You don't often get email from theshopincamden@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Our family has had property on Bay Road in Camden since the 1940's. Our grandfather was a lobsterman who lived there and used the building on the ledges of Camden Harbor as a shop to repair and store his lobstering equipment. The property was passed to our parents, who were both born and raised in Camden. After working and raising our family in New Hampshire, our parents moved and retired back to Bay Road in 1999, where our mother still lives.

The only way that we have been able to keep the property in our family was by turning the lobster shop into a seasonal weekly rental, which we did beginning the early 1990's.

Not to offend anyone, but the thought that it is a good idea to limit short term rentals in a well-known tourist town like Camden, is ridiculous. Doing this will only hurt the local economy. The amount of money put into the local economy in the past 30+ years, from just our guests, is huge. Over the years, three of our renters have fallen in love with Camden so much that they ultimately stopped renting from us, buying their own homes in Camden.

We are sorry that there is not enough affordable housing in Camden, but this is not the solution.

On a personal note, if we were not able to rent this little home on the water, our mother who is ninety-one would be forced to move from the home that has been in our family for eighty years.

We respectfully ask you to look at the whole picture in deciding this issue. We feel that passing this would be a huge mistake for present and future Camden.

Thank you very much.

Eric, Douglas, and Steven Young
5 and 6 Bay Road

From: [Shenley Neely](#)
To: [Janice Esancy](#)
Cc: [Jeremy Martin](#)
Subject: FW: Letter Relating to Restrictions on Short Term Rentals
Date: Monday, March 18, 2024 7:42:38 AM

Hi Janice- would you please post this email letter online with the other STR public comment? Thank you.

From: Mellor, Thomas C. <thomas.mellor@morganlewis.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 16, 2024 8:50 PM
To: Jeremy Martin <jmartin@camdenmaine.gov>; Shenley Neely <sneely@camdenmaine.gov>; Christopher Nolan <cnolan@camdenmaine.gov>; Alison McKellar <AMcKellar@camdenmaine.gov>; Tom Hedstrom <thedstrom@camdenmaine.gov>; Stephanie French <sfrench@camdenmaine.gov>; Sophie Romana <sromana@camdenmaine.gov>; Audra Caler <acaler@camdenmaine.gov>
Subject: Letter Relating to Restrictions on Short Term Rentals

Some people who received this message don't often get email from thomas.mellor@morganlewis.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Camden Planning Board and Camden Select Board,

I write with some reference points relating to the discussion around a possible STR ordinance.

I grew up in Thomaston, and now live in New York. For many years my wife and I had a second home in Union, and about a year and a half ago, we bought a place on Chestnut Street in Camden. We spend as much time as we can there with our 4 and 5 year old. We use the place year-round. In the summer we put the kids in camp in Rockport. But we are also in Camden for vacations, and throughout the winter. We took the kids for their first ski lesson at Camden Snow Bowl 2 weeks ago. They loved it!

I graduated from Georges Valley. My mom, step-dad, dad and step-mom live in Thomaston. My Dad and stepmom were teachers in local schools. My mom worked at CMP and my stepdad grew up on a dairy farm in Lincolnville and is a local roofer. My brother lives in Union, and my sister (working on her nursing degree) lives in Belfast with my 7 year-old niece. I consider myself a local, notwithstanding that my "primary" residence is in New York, and I consider our family to be part of the fabric of the local community.

We care very much for the small-town feel of Camden, and I also am concerned about the lack of affordable housing (which has impacted my family). That being said, the proposed STR restrictions, at least with respect to our house on Chestnut Street, *will not assist with creating affordable housing*. This is because *we use our place year-round: the only opportunity we have to rent it to others is in connection with a short term lease*. I expect there are many other "year-round" families that are in similar situations. The proposal limiting STRs with a "lottery system" will effectively mean there will be no opportunity to generate income from rentals for repairs, carrying costs, and improvements for those who use their second homes year-round. I also note that, for any house in Camden purchased recently, the short-term lease rentals are more closely aligned with the actual

carrying costs of the property – any long-term lease of a recently purchased property would likely not come close to covering monthly expenses.

I hope you find these reference points useful for your consideration of this issue. The affordable housing situation is an important issue. In my view, limiting short term rentals likely will not create any meaningful improvement for affordable housing in Camden for a number of reasons, including the reasons noted above. And the economic cost of limiting short-term rentals (in-flow of tourism dollars, money for local business and trades, etc.) would be a significant loss to the local community.

Sincerely,
Tom Mellor

From: [Shenley Neely](#)
To: [Janice Esancy](#)
Cc: [Jeremy Martin](#)
Subject: FW: Letter to planning board - short term rentals
Date: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 10:11:28 AM

Hi Janice- could you please place a copy of this letter online with the others? Thank you very much!

From: Erin Merrifield <emerrifield@jaretcohn.com>
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2024 4:35 PM
To: Jeremy Martin <jmartin@camdenmaine.gov>; Shenley Neely <sneely@camdenmaine.gov>; Christopher Nolan <cnolan@camdenmaine.gov>; Alison McKellar <AMcKellar@camdenmaine.gov>; Tom Hedstrom <thedstrom@camdenmaine.gov>; Stephanie French <sfrench@camdenmaine.gov>; Sophie Romana <sromana@camdenmaine.gov>; Audra Caler <acaler@camdenmaine.gov>
Cc: Keirsten Wyman <kwyman@jaretcohn.com>; Jestine Sawyer <jestine@jaretcohn.com>
Subject: Letter to planning board - short term rentals

You don't often get email from emerrifield@jaretcohn.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Members of the Camden Planning Board,

As the proud new owners of RE/MAX Jaret & Cohn, a brokerage with a rich history of serving Buyers and Sellers in MidCoast Maine for over 40 years, we are writing to express our concerns regarding the proposed changes to the current short-term rental capabilities in Camden. We understand the importance of balancing the interests of property owners with those of the community at large. However, we believe that the ordinances, as they are being proposed, restrict the rights of property owners and may have unintended consequences for both property owners and the local economy.

Property owners in Camden, like elsewhere, invest significant resources in their properties. They pay property taxes and shoulder the responsibility of maintaining their homes to a high standard and exude the architectural charm that so many people love about our historic communities. These investments not only contribute to the aesthetic appeal of our community but also serve as vital sources of revenue for local businesses, services, and tradesmen. For some, the ability to no longer allow short term rentals, could lead to a departure from our beloved Camden community.

By imposing limitations on short-term rentals, the proposed ordinances could undermine the property rights of homeowners. Property owners should have the autonomy to decide how to best utilize their properties, whether it be as long-term rentals, short-term rentals, or primary residences. These decisions should not be arbitrarily dictated by municipal ordinances that fail to consider the unique circumstances of each property owner.

Furthermore, we are concerned that these restrictive ordinances could have adverse effects on the local economy. Many property owners rely on rental income to offset the costs associated with homeownership. By limiting their ability to rent out their properties seasonally or year round, the proposed ordinances could exacerbate financial burdens for property owners, particularly younger and older generations.

We urge the Planning Board to carefully consider the implications of these proposed changes on property owners and the community as a whole.

We encourage you to continue to engage in meaningful dialogue with stakeholders, including property owners from multiple generations, local businesses, real estate professionals, and residents, to develop a balanced approach that preserves the rights of property owners while addressing legitimate concerns about short-term rentals in our communities.

Thank you for considering our perspective on this important matter. We remain committed to working collaboratively as a community to find solutions that benefit all members and property owners.

Kind regards,

Jestine Sawyer, Erin Merrifield, and Keirsten Wyman
Owners, RE/MAX Jaret & Cohn

Offices in Belfast, Camden, Rockland, and Waldoboro.



*Licensed to Practice Real Estate In Maine.

[Why RE/MAX Jaret & Cohn ?](#)

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To: The Camden Planning Board and Camden Select Board
March 25th, 2024

I was born and raised in Camden and moved back here with my wife about 10 years ago to raise a family, and currently work for my family's company Camden Real Estate Company. Long term rentals have always been a problem and difficult to find, but restricting or eliminating short term rentals is not the solution to fixing this problem.

I have many clients who plan to eventually retire and move to Camden who have purchased properties and are currently living in them for part of the year and they also rent them short term for part of the year to help with paying their mortgage, taxes and insurance. Most of these owners will not rent their properties long term as they want to be able to visit Camden and stay in their property when they're in town. I have never heard of any of my clients or my friends/family who have short term rentals have issues or complaints with tenants being noisy or throwing parties.

I currently have buyer clients who are now holding off on purchasing property in Camden because they want or need to be able to do short term rentals in order to help pay their mortgage, taxes and insurance. These buyers are putting off traveling to Camden until they know whether they will be able to rent their properties short term. Even the perceived potential of short-term rental restrictions is hurting my real estate business. I can't imagine what a short-term rental ordinance restriction would do to my livelihood and others in the real estate sector.

Restricting or eliminating short term rentals will definitely have a negative impact on the real estate market here in Camden, but it will also effect and limit the amount of people traveling to Camden if they can't find places to rent short term while they are here. Many people who take vacations travel for a week or two and if we restrict short term rentals, people will decide to vacation/visit somewhere else. In the summer, when Camden sees its most tourists/visitors, most hotels, motels, inns, and B&S's are full, so we needs short term rentals like we've always had for people to be able to stay in when they visit Camden. It's simple supply and demand and economics.

If we restrict or eliminate short term rentals, it will have a negative impact on our community by reducing the number of people visiting Camden each year who come here and spend money going to all of our local shops and restaurants and taking trips on the schooners and boats. Let's not make such a drastic change with short term rentals that will have an effect on our local businesses and people.

Thanks,



Kessler Horty

From: Jennifer Johanson <jenerikjo@yahoo.com>

Sent: Thursday, December 21, 2023 3:23 PM

To: Jeremy Martin <jmartin@camdenmaine.gov>; Audra Caler <acaler@camdenmaine.gov>; Christopher Nolan <cnolan@camdenmaine.gov>; Alison McKellar <AMcKellar@camdenmaine.gov>; Tom Hedstrom <thedstrom@camdenmaine.gov>; Stephanie French <sfrench@camdenmaine.gov>; Sophie Romana <sromana@camdenmaine.gov>

Subject: STR Meeting Tonight

You don't often get email from jenerikjo@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Good Afternoon,

We write to you as Camden residents, taxpayers and Short Term Rental owners, to have our voices heard by those who need to hear it regarding the proposed STR ban in Camden. We hope you will have the opportunity to read this before this evening's meeting.

If the reasoning behind the Planning Board's STR ban is to increase the availability of affordable housing stock, then we suggest the Planning Board go back and do a little more research on this issue. As residents of Camden, we have seen how affordable housing is a fundamental, long-standing concern that needs addressing, but banning STRs is not the solution and will only serve to have detrimental economic impacts that we will outline here.

We purchased our home on the understanding that income from STRs would help offset the exorbitant property taxes and costs of living in an area such as Camden. Our property allows us to offer rentals to many tourists looking to visit Camden each year, some of whom have family connections to the area and offer us their repeat business and support of the town. B&B/hotel accommodation does not always lend itself to family needs in terms of utilities, parking, bedrooms and larger living spaces, nor can they house larger parties-- and that's where we can offer a "home from home" experience. The changes that the Planning Board is proposing would make this arrangement null and void, causing a loss of business and income for homeowners with STRs as well as other businesses that rely on the tourism industry.

We view this proposal as an infringement upon our property rights as tax paying residents of the Town of Camden, who are being told what we can/cannot do in terms of how we conduct our rental business. It is also upsetting to see that this proposal has not been made out of the interest of the current inhabitants of Camden, nor does it appear that the Planning Board sought to reach out to members of community. These include homeowners with rentals, such as ourselves, the local REALTOR association or REALTORS themselves who are the real estate professionals with extensive and historical knowledge of housing related issues.

Without a doubt, affordable housing is lacking in this area, as with many other vacation destinations. Camden is sought after, therefore expensive and as mentioned before, STRs offers a way for residents to be able to afford to live here. If these restrictions force STR owners to sell up, how will that help the affordable housing problem? While more houses on the market increases the housing stock inventory, the existing homes in this area are historical and expensive, and will continue to be priced highly once resold on the market-- so how does this benefit people in the lower level income bracket? Prices would not change enough to make these properties affordable. The logic is simply absent - there is no evidence to suggest that banning STRs will increase the availability of houses that are considered "affordable". And what deems affordable housing? In Camden? Where we pay that little bit extra for everything?

From the US Department of Housing and Urban Development:

Housing is considered "affordable" if the household spends no more than 30% of its income on housing related costs (mortgage or rent, utilities, taxes, insurance, and maintenance). Keeping these costs under 30% of income allows the household enough money to cover other expenses, such as healthcare, food, education, and transportation. A household spending more than 30% of its income on housing is considered to be cost burdened.

The median household income in Camden is just under \$91,000.

The median listing home price is \$1.2M

The median listing home price/sq ft is \$457

The median sold home price is \$614,100

In terms of safety, we think you will find that STR owners make safety a priority because of the liability aspect. The STR market place is competitive, and STR owners will take better care of their properties, therefore keeping Camden a well kept town. For STR owners who rely on this income uphold their properties to a much higher standard to ensure that income streams are consistent as income is based on the integrity and safety of the properties themselves. Business is of utmost importance to STR owners who therefore invest money in maintaining the look, comfort, safety and accessibility of their properties to ensure guest satisfaction, repeat business and good reviews. Our property is an investment and we employ local folks to help run our business, such as cleaning services, yard services and trash pick-up, as well as local tradespeople whom we employ to ensure our property fulfills the standards to be a good representation of Camden.

It is evident that the Planning Board is misconstrued in their understanding of affordable housing and are therefore making drastic efforts to try to remedy an issue that has plagued this town for decades, on false notions and unsubstantiated claims.

We hope that this gives you a better, more insightful look into what it means to be an STR owner and the impact your decisions will have on us and many others.

Sincerely,

Erik & Jen Johanson

From: **Jessica Chester** <jlchester1970@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Jan 17, 2024 at 4:01 PM
Subject: Short term rentals.
To: <sneely@camdenmaine.gov>

Hey there I just read the summation about what you guys are planning to do for a short term rentals in Camden. I think it is absolutely insane. Our business depends on tourists in the summer. We have a clothing store Leonards and we 100% depend on the summer tourism to keep our business afloat. By stopping short term rentals or making them very hard. It impacts our business gigantically so if you guys want community of shops and year-round businesses, this is not the way to it because if we don't get the summer business, we are going to close down bottom line the people that rent a house and work at Hannaford or work at Rite Aid are not shipping yin our store and therefore we don't make any money and we live in Camden as well. So this idea is absolutely acidize and will officially ruin all the downtown businesses so I would think you'd listen to input of the local business people and figure it out a different way because the way you're proposing is really really harmful

Thank you.
Jessica Chester.
Nancy Leonard.

Leonard's

From: Greg White <gregwhite543@gmail.com>

Subject: STR - Equitable Access

Date: March 7, 2024 at 2:33:06 PM EST

To: sneely@camdenmaine.gov, jmartin@camdenmaine.gov

Cc: acaler@camdenmaine.gov, thedstrom@camdenmaine.gov, sfrench@camdenmaine.gov, sromana@camdenmaine.gov, cnolan@camdenmaine.gov, amckellar@camdenmaine.gov

The wealth of a typical black family and a typical Hispanic family are 15% and 20% respectively of that of a typical white family. This is according to a report released on October 18, 2023 by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

My name is Greg White and my wife and I are CT residents. We purchased our property at 8 Limerock Street in July of 2020 as I was working for Camden National Bank at that time. I retired at the end of 2022 and we just recently started to rent our Camden home. My wife and I spent 4-5 weeks in Camden each of the past 2 summers and recently my wife thought it would be good to begin to rent our Camden home for multiple reasons. Personally I was indifferent about renting it and I share this only to point out that the outcome of this STR issue is not overly important to us other than how the policy will negatively affect the town. We do feel for others as we read their personal situations that are different from ours.

Camden is beautiful but as we know it definitely lacks diversity. Are we concerned that reducing the supply of STR units in any manner will likely have the unintended consequence of making Camden even less racially diverse? Clearly black and brown families will be disproportionately impacted by a policy that forces more visitors who want to stay in a home environment to then have to pay for 30 days - instead of 7. I hope this potential inequity has been discussed and considered. If not, it needs to be part of the discussion and analysis. Have Cape Elizabeth and Kennebunkport seen declines in visitations by underrepresented groups? It also appears the towns boards and committees lack diversity. I understand this can be a challenging issue but if it is true are we doing any type of proactive outreach to correct this?

I really do understand some of the reasons given for considering limits on STRs but I think an independent Economist or panel of Economists would put a fork in this issue quickly: They would tell you that reducing STRs would inevitably reduce "overall" economic activity and would likely reduce diversity too. Those are very important issues.

Lastly, If Lucia deCordre still owns the Timbercliffe Cottage Inn and hasn't recused herself from this process yet, she really needs to.

Thank you,
Greg White

From: Mike Prucker
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2024 9:32 AM
To: 'jmartin@camdenmaine.gov' <jmartin@camdenmaine.gov>; 'Sneely@camdenmaine.gov' <Sneely@camdenmaine.gov>
Cc: 'thedstrom@camdenmaine.gov' <thedstrom@camdenmaine.gov>; 'amckellar@camdenmaine.gov' <amckellar@camdenmaine.gov>; 'cnolan@camdenmaine.gov' <cnolan@camdenmaine.gov>; 'strench@camdenmaine.gov' <strench@camdenmaine.gov>; 'sromana@camdenmaine.gov' <sromana@camdenmaine.gov>; 'acaler@camdenmaine.gov' <acaler@camdenmaine.gov>
Subject: Comments on Short-Term Rental Proposal

Dear Mr. Martin:

My wife, Ross Brown, and I are the owners of the house at 7 Bay Road in Camden. We consider ourselves very lucky to have stumbled into this extraordinary house in this extraordinary town.

I have fond memories of Camden going back to the late 1950's and 60's. My mother grew up in Lisbon Falls, where my grandparents lived until they passed away. Many summers I was taken to visit Camden, usually staying at Beloins. My parents later took my children to stay there, and my grandchildren have visited many times, especially now that we have a house.

I have watched three workshops on short-term rentals with mixed emotions. We support the goal of spreading knowledge about the current requirement that those operating short-term rentals be registered. We also support the recent fee increase. Beyond that, the goal or goals, and the proposals you have discussed to reach them, seem confused and premature.

The goal of expanding housing is a good one. But you seem to have nothing more than a faith stance that limiting short-term rentals will solve that problem or even alleviate it marginally. There is seemingly little information on the number of short-term rentals in Camden, the nature or characteristics of those short-term rentals, and whether the solutions being proposed will have any positive impact. It is clear there will be negative impacts. It sounds as if, by the time you make the necessary exceptions to take care of short-term rentals by residents of Camden, little will be accomplished for all this unfocused effort.

I can tell you that renting our place during the summer is key to our retaining the property itself. Even winning in the lottery system that has been discussed would not help our situation, whether the lottery occurs every year or every three years, because our mortgage and property taxes don't stop when you lose out on a license. For the same reason, if we give the house up, it will not turn into long-term rental as even a middle-income couple would not be able to afford the rent necessary to pay the monthly bills on the house, and no investor would purchase the house to rent long-term knowing it would lose significant money every year. For us, I can see only two likely results of the proposals I have heard discussed – sell the house or not rent. If the house is sold, only someone who has sufficient assets to own it without renting will be able to afford it. In that case, the house will go from being occupied for 8 months a year, including the winter months we spend in town, to being occupied for a few months in the summer. The house will join the ranks of those that have gone dark over the years in this neighborhood. Or, if we decide to try to hang on, we will stop living in the house during winter months and renting during summer. Rather, we will

vacation in the house for a couple of summer months. Either way, all the economic activity that the house generates for the town of Camden and its businesses will go away, except for the weeks we are there. Dozens and dozens of restaurants reservations will not be made, stores of all types will not be shopped in, and heating oil purchases will go down significantly. I could go on and on, but I won't.

One other thing, the proposal can be construed as anti-middle-class family – not by design or intention I am sure, but it flows logically from the consequences of the action, because by limiting short-term rentals the tourists you will be driving out of town are middle class families with more than one child. Take my family or my father's family as examples. Two parents, and a teenage girl and a teenage boy. You need to be able to afford three hotel rooms to stay overnight in Camden. Better to leave Portland, stop for lunch in Camden, and move on to Bar Harbor for the night unless you are lucky enough to find a now scarce short-term rental from one of the lucky forty. You may disagree, but I find it extremely hard to believe that the proposal will **not** put downward pressure on economic activity in the town, lessening income for residents. The bottom line, however, is that I have not heard anyone address this aspect of the proposal. And, at this point, the planning committee has only a vague notion of the number of short-term rentals that exist, it cannot possibly have any inkling of the economic impact of shutting down everyone except the lucky forty.

I really do think the Planning Committee has not thought this through in a clear and precise manner. The town is being asked to buy "a pig in a poke." Gathering information and having a reasonable understanding of the market being affected and the impact of any proposal on the town is a better approach than this one. Listening to one constituent after another asking for a reasonable exception to the "crack-down" is a good indicator of flawed unfocused proposals. I hope you take the most reasonable approach to this issue and insist that adequate information be collected by the planning committee and specific problems be identified before "solutions" are adopted, so that solutions adopted do not miss the mark so wildly.

Sincerely,

Michael Prucker

7 Bay Road,

Camden, ME

From: Mike Prucker
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2024 10:03 AM
To: jmartin@camdenmaine.gov; Sneely@camdenmaine.gov
Cc: thedstrom@camdenmaine.gov; sfrench@camdenmaine.com; cnolan@camdenmaine.gov;
amckellar@camdenmaine.gov; sromana@camdenmaine.gov; acaler@camdenmaine.gov
Subject: short-term rental comments

Dear Mr. Martin:

My husband, Michael Prucker, and I own the home at 7 Bay Road. It is a beautiful house, and we are lucky to occupy it as much of the year as we do. Unfortunately, simple economics will not allow us to afford the home without renting it during the season, and I believe that forcing us to sell would not only be sad for us, but bad for the town.

The house is currently occupied about 8 months a year. Generally, from mid-May till mid-October, the house is occupied by short-term renters, except for a month in late summer when we use it. We reserve it for family use beginning in November. Our daughter and her family spend Thanksgiving there, and we arrive in time for Christmas by the Sea and stay into February. Stop by and see us in the winter. We're easy to find--we're the only house with the lights on for blocks around!

How would forcing us to sell the house improve things for Camden? We could, I suppose, maintain it as a long-term rental, but a middle-income family would not be able to afford the rent we would need to charge to cover costs. So selling becomes the only viable option. Who would buy? An investor would not be able to charge a high enough rent, so the house would most likely go to people wealthy enough to maintain a second home solely for their own use.

How does that help Camden? It does not in any way address the affordable housing issue. Instead, it means lessened economic activity--the restaurant meals, the grocery shopping, the impulse purchases of souvenirs and gifts, and heating oil throughout the winter. Camden is a tourist town, and so many residents and businesses depend on the tourist trade; it seems unwise to weaken that income stream with nothing to replace it.

So many of those who have written opposing the proposal can point to their deep roots in Camden. I can't. But I love the town, and I cherish my place in it. I don't want to lose it.

Ross Brown

3-27-24

As a property owner in Camden for over 40 years and as the owner of a local real estate company for nearly 30 years and as a resident of Camden for 20 of those 40 years I find the new proposed regulations and licensing of short-term rentals to be unnecessarily, excessive and overreaching on personal property rights.

Statements and assumptions made in the proposed ordinance are unfortunately not supported by actual data and information. There hasn't been nearly enough information and research conducted and once something like this is put into place it's hard to reverse it and the impact will already start to underscore this lack of thorough research. The largest issue, which I believe has not been fully researched or acknowledged, is the impact that this regulation will have on local businesses and their viability. That in turn will have an impact on the types of goods and services, restaurants and local merchants that will continue to be able to be sustainable with a substantially lowered volume of visitors and vacationers. Businesses in Camden find it hard enough to make a living on a year-round basis without limiting effects on their clientele.

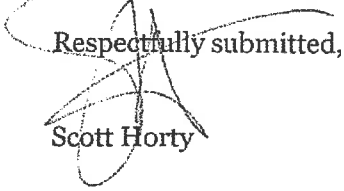
Events like the Fourth of July weekend, Camden Classics Cup, Windjammer Weekend, National Toboggan Weekend, Camden Conference, Camden International Film Festival and many other events that have come to mark a reason to come to Camden will most likely see a reduction in attendance due to short-term housing availability. Also, short term housing support local schooling opportunities such as Maine Media, The Center for Furniture Craftsmanship and The Apprenticeshop. For so many years local businesses and people have built-up these fabulous events, is this a way to acknowledge that?

The last thing the town needs is to hire additional employees to check on short-term rentals to see if they're operating safely enough. This is already covered adequately enough by the property owners themselves, insurance companies and the town code enforcement officer. And remember these are houses used and enjoyed by their owners too. So if they are safe for the owners they are safe for the renters too.

We all know this kind of control of property rights is not the answer to available long-term housing needs in Camden. Instead, Camden needs to put more resources into developing longer-term housing such as the project of the Elm Street school. No significant housing effort has been made from the town in decades.

I sincerely hope that the select board will see that this is a flawed approach to a complex problem of affordable and available housing. Most likely this will lead to a greater number of empty houses as owners can't rent their homes when they aren't residing in them.

Respectfully submitted,



Scott Horty

From: "Lyman, Mackenzie" <Mackenzie@lymanmorse.com>

Date: March 28, 2024 at 4:36:00 PM EDT

To: sneely@camdenmaine.gov

Subject: STR Letter

Dear Members of the Camden Planning Board,

I've read the letters written by our community members regarding the proposed changes to the short-term rental regulations in Camden. I will not restate the many reasons I feel these proposed changes are ill-conceived, as the overwhelming majority of the letters you've received have accurately conveyed the opposition to your proposal. I add my support to their well-informed statements and encourage you to listen to the many voices who recognize the importance of short-term rentals to our community's economy.

According to the Maine Office of Tourism, tourists spent nearly \$8.6 billion in Maine in 2022, supporting 151,000 jobs and contributing nearly \$5.6 billion in earnings to Maine households. Maine bills itself as "Vacationland", and short-term rentals are a critical piece of being able to "vacation" here. I struggle to understand how a town whose economy is reliant on tourism would consider removing such an important aspect of our town for residents, business owners and visitors. Short-term rentals do not only support property owners and tourists; they also support the livelihoods of the many service-industry workers – waitstaff, housecleaners, landscapers, etc. -- who serve them.

Thank you,

Mackenzie Lyman | Lyman-Morse

59 Sea Street | Camden, ME 04843

Mackenzie@lymanmorse.com | Office: 207.236.4378 | Direct: 207.230.8555 | Cell: 207.832.1126



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As a property owner in Camden for over 40 years and as the owner of a local real estate company for nearly 30 years and as a resident of Camden for 20 of those 40 years I find the new proposed regulations and licensing of short-term rentals to be unnecessarily, excessive and overreaching on personal property rights.

Statements and assumptions made in the proposed ordinance are unfortunately not supported by actual data and information. There hasn't been nearly enough information and research conducted and once something like this is put into place it's hard to reverse it and the impact will already start to underscore this lack of thorough research. The largest issue, which I believe has not been fully researched or acknowledged, is the impact that this regulation will have on local businesses and their viability. That in turn will have an impact on the types of goods and services, restaurants and local merchants that will continue to be able to be sustainable with a substantially lowered volume of visitors and vacationers. Businesses in Camden find it hard enough to make a living on a year-round basis without limiting effects on their clientele.

Events like the Fourth of July weekend, Camden Classics Cup, Windjammer Weekend, National Toboggan Weekend, Camden Conference, Camden International Film Festival and many other events that have come to mark a reason to come to Camden will most likely see a reduction in attendance due to short-term housing availability. Also, short term housing support local schooling opportunities such as Maine Media, The Center for Furniture Craftmanship and The Apprenticeshop. For so many years local businesses and people have built-up these fabulous events, is this a way to acknowledge that?

The last thing the town needs is to hire additional employees to check on short-term rentals to see if they're operating safely enough. This is already covered adequately enough by the property owners themselves, insurance companies and the town code enforcement officer. And remember these are houses used and enjoyed by their owners too. So if they are safe for the owners they are safe for the renters too.

We all know this kind of control of property rights is not the answer to available long-term housing needs in Camden. Instead, Camden needs to put more resources into developing longer-term housing such as the project of the Elm Street school. No significant housing effort has been made from the town in decades.

I sincerely hope that the select board will see that this is a flawed approach to a complex problem of affordable and available housing. Most likely this will lead to a greater number of empty houses as owners can't rent their homes when they aren't residing in them.

Respectfully submitted,



Scott Horty

From: Jennifer Johanson <jenerikjo@yahoo.com>

Sent: Thursday, December 21, 2023 3:23 PM

To: Jeremy Martin <jmartin@camdenmaine.gov>; Audra Caler <acaler@camdenmaine.gov>; Christopher Nolan <cnolan@camdenmaine.gov>; Alison McKellar <AMcKellar@camdenmaine.gov>; Tom Hedstrom <thedstrom@camdenmaine.gov>; Stephanie French <sfrench@camdenmaine.gov>; Sophie Romana <sromana@camdenmaine.gov>

Subject: STR Meeting Tonight

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Good Afternoon,

We write to you as Camden residents, taxpayers and Short Term Rental owners, to have our voices heard by those who need to hear it regarding the proposed STR ban in Camden. We hope you will have the opportunity to read this before this evening's meeting.

If the reasoning behind the Planning Board's STR ban is to increase the availability of affordable housing stock, then we suggest the Planning Board go back and do a little more research on this issue. As residents of Camden, we have seen how affordable housing is a fundamental, long-standing concern that needs addressing, but banning STRs is not the solution and will only serve to have detrimental economic impacts that we will outline here.

We purchased our home on the understanding that income from STRs would help offset the exorbitant property taxes and costs of living in an area such as Camden. Our property allows us to offer rentals to many tourists looking to visit Camden each year, some of whom have family connections to the area and offer us their repeat business and support of the town. B&B/hotel accommodation does not always lend itself to family needs in terms of utilities, parking, bedrooms and larger living spaces, nor can they house larger parties-- and that's where we can offer a "home from home" experience. The changes that the Planning Board is proposing would make this arrangement null and void, causing a loss of business and income for homeowners with STRs as well as other businesses that rely on the tourism industry.

We view this proposal as an infringement upon our property rights as tax paying residents of the Town of Camden, who are being told what we can/cannot do in terms of how we conduct our rental business. It is also upsetting to see that this proposal has not been made out of the interest of the current inhabitants of Camden, nor does it appear that the Planning Board sought to reach out to members of community. These include homeowners with rentals, such as ourselves, the local REALTOR association or REALTORS themselves who are the real estate professionals with extensive and historical knowledge of housing related issues.

Without a doubt, affordable housing is lacking in this area, as with many other vacation destinations. Camden is sought after, therefore expensive and as mentioned before, STRs

offers a way for residents to be able to afford to live here. If these restrictions force STR owners to sell up, how will that help the affordable housing problem? While more houses on the market increases the housing stock inventory, the existing homes in this area are historical and expensive, and will continue to be priced highly once resold on the market-- so how does this benefit people in the lower level income bracket? Prices would not change enough to make these properties affordable. The logic is simply absent - there is no evidence to suggest that banning STRs will increase the availability of houses that are considered "affordable". And what deems affordable housing? In Camden? Where we pay that little bit extra for everything?

From the US Department of Housing and Urban Development:

Housing is considered "affordable" if the household spends no more than 30% of its income on housing related costs (mortgage or rent, utilities, taxes, insurance, and maintenance). Keeping these costs under 30% of income allows the household enough money to cover other expenses, such as healthcare, food, education, and transportation. A household spending more than 30% of its income on housing is considered to be cost burdened.

The median household income in Camden is just under \$91,000.

The median listing home price is \$1.2M

The median listing home price/sq ft is \$457

The median sold home price is \$614,100

In terms of safety, we think you will find that STR owners make safety a priority because of the liability aspect. The STR market place is competitive, and STR owners will take better care of their properties, therefore keeping Camden a well kept town. For STR owners who rely on this income uphold their properties to a much higher standard to ensure that income streams are consistent as income is based on the integrity and safety of the properties themselves. Business is of utmost importance to STR owners who therefore invest money in maintaining the look, comfort, safety and accessibility of their properties to ensure guest satisfaction, repeat business and good reviews. Our property is an investment and we employ local folks to help run our business, such as cleaning services, yard services and trash pick-up, as well as local tradespeople whom we employ to ensure our property fulfills the standards to be a good representation of Camden.

It is evident that the Planning Board is misconstrued in their understanding of affordable housing and are therefore making drastic efforts to try to remedy an issue that has plagued this town for decades, on false notions and unsubstantiated claims.

We hope that this gives you a better, more insightful look into what it means to be an STR owner and the impact your decisions will have on us and many others.

Sincerely,

Erik & Jen Johanson

From: [Jeremy Martin](#)
To: [Janice Esancy](#)
Cc: [Tom Hedstrom](#); [Shenley Neely](#); [Audra Caler](#)
Subject: FW: Comments on Short-Term Rental Proposal - please post
Date: Friday, March 29, 2024 1:49:06 PM

From: Mike Prucker <pruckerm@ncpssm.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2024 9:32 AM
To: Jeremy Martin <jmartin@camdenmaine.gov>; Shenley Neely <sneely@camdenmaine.gov>
Cc: Tom Hedstrom <thedstrom@camdenmaine.gov>; Alison McKellar <AMcKellar@camdenmaine.gov>; Christopher Nolan <cnolan@camdenmaine.gov>; stretch@camdenmaine.gov; Sophie Romana <sromana@camdenmaine.gov>; Audra Caler <acaler@camdenmaine.gov>
Subject: Comments on Short-Term Rental Proposal

Some people who received this message don't often get email from pruckerm@ncpssm.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Mr. Martin:

My wife, Ross Brown, and I are the owners of the house at 7 Bay Road in Camden. We consider ourselves very lucky to have stumbled into this extraordinary house in this extraordinary town.

I have fond memories of Camden going back to the late 1950's and 60's. My mother grew up in Lisbon Falls, where my grandparents lived until they passed away. Many summers I was taken to visit Camden, usually staying at Beloins. My parents later took my children to stay there, and my grandchildren have visited many times, especially now that we have a house.

I have watched three workshops on short-term rentals with mixed emotions. We support the goal of spreading knowledge about the current requirement that those operating short-term rentals be registered. We also support the recent fee increase. Beyond that, the goal or goals, and the proposals you have discussed to reach them, seem confused and premature.

The goal of expanding housing is a good one. But you seem to have nothing more than a faith stance that limiting short-term rentals will solve that problem or even alleviate it marginally. There is seemingly little information on the number of short-term rentals in Camden, the nature or characteristics of those short-term rentals, and whether the solutions being proposed will have any positive impact. It is clear there will be negative impacts. It sounds as if, by the time you make the necessary exceptions to take care of short-term rentals by residents of Camden, little will be accomplished for all this unfocused effort.

I can tell you that renting our place during the summer is key to our retaining the property itself. Even winning in the lottery system that has been discussed would not help our situation, whether the lottery occurs every year or every three years, because our mortgage and property taxes don't stop when you lose out on a license. For the same reason, if we give the house up, it will not turn into long-term rental as even a middle-income couple would not be able to afford the rent necessary to pay the monthly bills on the house, and no investor would purchase the house to rent

From: [Brian Wickenden](#)
To: [Select Board Distribution Group](#)
Cc: [Jeremy Martin](#); [Shenley Neely](#)
Subject: Short Term Rentals
Date: Sunday, March 31, 2024 9:16:02 PM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from bwickenden@legacysir.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Members of the Camden Select Board,

I've been following the Planning Board's proposed changes to STR regulations in Camden. I have a number of concerns that I think warrant further consideration before placing this on the ballot in June. Below are the primary ones.

1.) Economic impact. I read the statistics published by the Maine Office of Tourism which highlight that visitors contributed approximately \$8,500,000,000 in direct spending during overnight trips to Maine in 2022. That's nearly \$700 per person per night. In my career as a real estate agent, I've worked closely with many of these visitors contributing significantly to the tourist based economy in Camden and the surrounding area. I know that many of these visitors have struggled to visit, particularly during peak season, because of the general lack of available housing options, both hotel / motel rooms, and STRs. Further limiting the pool of available housing options will absolutely impact local tourist based businesses, and at \$700 per person, per day, that impact could be substantial to Camden's tourist based economy.

2.) Affordable housing: The Planning Board has identified housing affordability as an important issue cited in the town's Comprehensive Plan. There is no doubt that affordable housing is an important issue facing Camden, as well as communities across the state of Maine and throughout the country. I believe affordable housing is a very worthy topic for the town to help try and address, but I think the correlation between STRs and the lack of affordable housing is flimsy at best. I know this topic has been discussed extensively, but I'm not at all convinced that limiting the number of commercial STR permits to 150 will help with affordable housing, rather it's more likely to lead to more empty homes, and a further concentration of property ownership among the wealthiest of individuals who can afford to own homes that sit empty while not being used. Do you have any real data that shows how many of those commercial STR owners would place their properties into the "affordable" housing pool if they're unable to continue as STRs?

3.) Alternatives: Has the Planning Board sufficiently researched alternatives to limiting STRs? What about economic incentives to homeowners who convert from STRs to year round rentals? Not to mention strong incentives for developers to build more affordable housing which everyone agrees we need.

4.) Why does the number of commercial STRs need to be limited to 150? What is the significance of 150? Why not implement a registration process and see how many applications you get in the first year or two and react from there. In listening to the prior PB sessions about the topic it became clear that there were some potential use cases that gave the PB pause, the resident teacher who co-owns a commercial STR next door to their primary residence as a means of generating additional income to afford living in Camden. Or a family home in Camden being used part time and also as a commercial STR before the owner has the opportunity to return to Camden at some point in the future. How many similar property

owners will be negatively impacted by a limit of 150 licenses.

I'm concerned that limiting STRs will have little positive impact on local residents, and has real potential to hurt our local economy, and will only make it harder for people to afford to keep their homes.

Sincerely,

Brian Wickenden
93 Chestnut Street

long-term knowing it would lose significant money every year. For us, I can see only two likely results of the proposals I have heard discussed – sell the house or not rent. If the house is sold, only someone who has sufficient assets to own it without renting will be able to afford it. In that case, the house will go from being occupied for 8 months a year, including the winter months we spend in town, to being occupied for a few months in the summer. The house will join the ranks of those that have gone dark over the years in this neighborhood. Or, if we decide to try to hang on, we will stop living in the house during winter months and renting during summer. Rather, we will vacation in the house for a couple of summer months. Either way, all the economic activity that the house generates for the town of Camden and its businesses will go away, except for the weeks we are there. Dozens and dozens of restaurants reservations will not be made, stores of all types will not be shopped in, and heating oil purchases will go down significantly. I could go on and on, but I won't.

One other thing, the proposal can be construed as anti-middle-class family – not by design or intention I am sure, but it flows logically from the consequences of the action, because by limiting short-term rentals the tourists you will be driving out of town are middle class families with more than one child. Take my family or my father's family as examples. Two parents, and a teenage girl and a teenage boy. You need to be able to afford three hotel rooms to stay overnight in Camden. Better to leave Portland, stop for lunch in Camden, and move on to Bar Harbor for the night unless you are lucky enough to find a now scarce short-term rental from one of the lucky forty. You may disagree, but I find it extremely hard to believe that the proposal will **not** put downward pressure on economic activity in the town, lessening income for residents. The bottom line, however, is that I have not heard anyone address this aspect of the proposal. And, at this point, the planning committee has only a vague notion of the number of short-term rentals that exist, it cannot possibly have any inkling of the economic impact of shutting down everyone except the lucky forty.

I really do think the Planning Committee has not thought this through in a clear and precise manner. The town is being asked to buy "a pig in a poke." Gathering information and having a reasonable understanding of the market being affected and the impact of any proposal on the town is a better approach than this one. Listening to one constituent after another asking for a reasonable exception to the "crack-down" is a good indicator of flawed unfocused proposals. I hope you take the most reasonable approach to this issue and insist that adequate information be collected by the planning committee and specific problems be identified before "solutions" are adopted, so that solutions adopted do not miss the mark so wildly.

Sincerely,

Michael Prucker
7 Bay Road,
Camden, ME