SUBMISSION – DEREK KLASSEN, RESIDENTIAL MAINTENANCE SERVICES WPG

Item 5 of the Report of the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development, Heritage and Downtown Development dated April 5, 2022 regarding Regulating Short-Term Rentals

Dear City Council & Executive Policy Committee,

I want to draw attention to a letter submitted at the last meeting by a resident of Waverley Heights regarding opposing short term rentals and traffic on her street. It seems she took particular issue with a construction crew staying in the STR on her street.

She also cited a lack of housing in Winnipeg as a reason STR's should not be allowed etc. I find it ironic to balk at the site of a construction crew staying there when what do you think they were building here??? HOUSING!!!

This is a quote from the letter I am referring to: "Many of the occupants have been commercial workers such as construction workers etc in groups consisting of 6-8, primarily men, working in Winnipeg with occupancy from 1 week to 6 weeks. Vehicle license plates & signage on vehicles confirm they are from Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario & Quebec, plus areas of Manitoba outside of Winnipeg. All of the commercial occupants drove large crew cab style trucks with most pulling large commercial trailers & some even had large commercial trucks & trailers."

I am a third generation construction worker. Reading her note, I am not sure what the issue is here. Is the neighbour upset that we exist and does not like the sight of a crew? What difference does it make where we are from or the style of vehicles we drive? If there were 6 male lawyers in suits staying in the house each driving our own BMW would that suit her better? Does it offend her that our clothes and hands are dirty?

If these trailers are blocking her street leaving nowhere to park that is a valid concern (but the letter does not state this). If that is the case one of the councillors she contacted should have told her that it is the law that a truck attached to a trailer can not sit on the street for more than an hour unless it's a job site. So if this resident really wants to she could call it in to have the trucks (if attached to trailers) ticketed. Seems like she has spent some time on this already (with all the intense record keeping) so a few extra phone calls should not be a problem for her to do.

However, if the trailers and vans are parked on the host's property then they are absolutely of no business to anyone else. It is not illegal to drive on a residential street and does not warrant shutting down an entire industry. Seems pretty elitist to take offence over the sight of of a work truck and allude to the idea that construction workers should not be staying near a school? They stayed 6 weeks so it's not really even a short term rental technically because it was over 28 days.

The letter also goes on to say what she speculated this host earned. I am not sure how the earnings are relevant. This figure is speculative and highly inappropriate to discuss publicly and does not factor in to the regulation of short term rentals? What this neighbour is thinking is the host doubled her profit from $20,400 per year to $43,700 per year. Shame on her for earning more income!

The real picture looks more like this: the unfurnished rental was $1,700 per month the furnished rental is on average $3,641 per month. What happens to the cost of the furniture she invested in? What about the utilities she now has to pay on the house (an unfurnished rental the tenant typically pays the utilities)? What about the wages for cleaning staff, snow cutting or grass cutting? Maybe the homeowner does that labour herself, would she not deserve to be paid for her time? This is her job! All of the numbers this neighbour gave are fictitious anyway because the price of a day's rental fluctuates daily and hourly. It would be impossible to calculate. Unless she is checking on it hourly which by the sounds of the letter is entirely possible.

I do not happen to know this host but I looked up the listing in the link provided in the letter. She has great reviews and it looks like she is a Superhost on Airbnb. Shame on her for giving visiting construction workers here to build more housing in Winnipeg a place to sleep, shower and cook a meal!

I hosted a construction crew out of Alberta for nearly a year here to build condo blocks in South West Winnipeg and North Main near the Perimeter. They parked six crew cab long box pickup trucks on my property with plates from all over Canada on them. (The trucks stay here but are registered in different provinces because it is a national company). Big deal!

My neighbourhood had no issue with it. Once a neighbour even come over to ask those guys to hang a few pictures for her. They did it in exchange for a case of beer which they were happy to get. We were hosting a pretty big name film producer on the same property (duplex) at the same time and he befriended the construction guys while staying right next door. Since when is it so offensive to be a construction worker?

This letter only illustrates the elitist "not in my neighbourhood" attitudes that prevail with many residents regarding short term rentals. I know a guy who hosts primarily visitors from Northern Manitoba here for work, medical appointments and shopping. They are often teachers, social workers etc. He gets rude comments from his neighbours (because his guests don't look like the rest of the people on this street?) He has whole home listings in St Vital and Fort Rouge. He told us about the racist attitudes he deals with on his neighbours there are shocking. Luckily my listings don't have to deal with that style of neighbour. One of my neighbours has done missionary work all over the world in developing countries. Fortunately I know I will not have any issues with racism from them.

The only problem I see here in the letter is that this resident is taking photos, keeping logs of the movement at this house, calculating the host's income and discussing it publicly as well as describing in detail all of the host's personal business. She shared how much the rent was before and who her tenants were before. To me this sounds like it probably falls under a breach to the privacy act and would also be covered by anti-stocking laws.

So what happens if the City of Winnipeg is foolish enough to shut down short term rentals in Winnipeg and this host is forced to sell her house. You never know who the next neighbours will be. Maybe a construction worker will buy it who drives a big one ton dually diesel truck and all of his friends drive trucks too. Maybe he hangs out in a motorcycle gang on the weekends. You can't pick your neighbours,

but you sure can’t be stalking them either.

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