Report of the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development, Heritage and Downtown Development - June 15, 2022
Item No. 7 Regulating Short-Term Rentals

I wanted to thank the committee for acknowledging the need for regulations of short-term rentals in our city. I agree with the proposed by-laws and strongly encourage council to add primary residency requirements to the by-laws. I'd like to point out that although STR owners/operators who have presented to council on this matter all agree that regulations should be put in place to ensure STR are operated in a responsible manner; none have come forward with a solution. Whereas Winnipeg residents who have been adversely affected by these STR have stated loud and clear that a primary residency requirement would eliminate the issues they are faced with. **The STR owners/operators are doing a disservice to city council by acknowledging that a problem exists but oppose the very solutions proposed; without offering up any solution themselves.** They dismiss and minimize our concerns without having ever been in the situation themselves.

80% of the units on my floor are occupied by owners or long-term residents and for the past 5 years there has NEVER been a 911/ security call made for any of those units. The remaining 20% of units which are operated as STR have on the other hand required security/ police interventions on a near weekly basis. This is the reality of STR and the effects they have on the community. The security in our building informed me that over 80% of calls that come in are for STR units. That is a staggering statistic! If we can mitigate 80% of 911 calls made to our building alone by simply implementing a primary residency requirement that would save the city a lot in resources.

I'd like to reiterate some of the reasons (all of which have been echoed by other Winnipeg residents) as to why the addition of a primary residency requirement is so important:

1. Enhanced security
   Security cameras and noise detectors in short-term rental units do nothing to enhance the safety in those units unless they are monitored. There has been an incident in my building where a

woman got assaulted in a short-term rental unit and yelled for help (this unit was equipped with security cameras and a noise detector). A resident of a neighbouring unit heard her plea for help and called security. When the resident contacted the manager of the short- term rental unit to inform her of what had just occurred in her unit she claimed that the noise detectors didn't even go off and she was completely unaware of the assault. Currently, there is no incentive for owners to monitor their short-term rental units as they are simply an investment for them. If the owners were to be limited to renting out their primary residence they would be incentivized to take greater care of monitoring their units.

2. Disturbances curbed before neighbours are involved

3. Proper screening of guests
   The short-term rental operators who presented to City Council on this matter spoke about their vetting process and how they are selective about who they rent their units out to. While that may be the case for those operators it has most definitely not been case for some short-term rental unit operators in my building. This again underlines the fact that operators need to be held accountable and without the proper regulations in place to weed out the bad actors in the STR industry we'd be completely missing the point here.

4. Easier to regulate
   By limiting STR to primary residence only the city can much easier manage any complaints with the **local** owners. Currently investors from all around the world buy up investment properties in Winnipeg and turn them into STR.

5. Ensures STR isn't used as party unit/house

6. Mitigates a Winnipeg housing shortage

It is vital that these additional requirements are added to the by-law to ensure the effective regulations of short-term rentals. Currently condo boards can only amend their condo by-laws with a majority vote and if the condo building has a high percentage of investors it is impossible

to implement by-laws that don’t appeal to those investors such as a ban on short- term rentals or minimum stay requirements. On the other hand even with appropriate condo by-laws in place management can only fine $100/violation up to a maximum of 12 times a year which isn’t much of a deterrent and allows for irresponsible short-term rental condo owners to continue their bad practices without major repercussions. This lack of enforcement has come at a detriment to the neighbours of those short-term rental units.

I trust that you will put appropriate regulations in place to protect the well being and enhance the safety of our communities.

Jasmin D