Positive Aspects of Short-term Private Room Rentals: Neighbour's Perspective

I am writing to draw attention to the positive aspects of short-term private room rentals and to support amendments to the wording of the regulatory framework so that renting at least two rooms in a primary residence, will be possible.

I live two doors down from an Air B+B where the owner lives in the home and rents out two rooms. This is in the Spence Neighbourhood, and he has operated his shared space for about 2 years now. He has proven to be an asset to the street and his business has helped to bring new life to the neighbourhood.

There are several reasons why, as a neighbour, I support this model of shared accommodation.

1) Allowing a homeowner to rent out rooms in their own home, enables homeownership for young people. Homeownership is something that is often nearly financially prohibitive, especially for young people - and this model is something that makes it possible.

2) Homeowners - who actually live in their home (as this person does), while it is used as an Air B+B, are physically present and living in the neighbourhood. This is so much better than having landlords who are disconnected from their properties. We have another Air B+B home on the block that is owned by someone in B.C. There is no connection between that landlord and the community. The live-in model is far superior.

3) Homes such as this one help to revitalize neighbourhoods such as Spence. When this young person first moved to the street and described what he wanted to do, even I, someone who loves this community, was a bit skeptical. But he has shown that this model of housing can bring new interest and new life into the neighbourhood. He is unabashedly proud of Spence - a pride that is often lacking in relation to downtown Winnipeg. It is completely to his credit that he has been able to nurture this small business.

4) People who live in a home that is also a business have additional incentives (and funds) to maintain their properties in a way that shows pride of ownership and helps to make the whole street look better. This home is one of the nicest looking and best cared for properties on the block. This is so encouraging for other neighbours.

5) Furby Street between Ellice and Sargent has six rooming houses, five apartment blocks, several duplexes, and some single-family homes. These are big old homes - that can easily become part of someone's investment portfolio - with landlords who have no connection to the community. When someone wants to buy a home and actually live on this street - the city should do everything in its power to make this a simple thing to do. Don't charge extra fees, don't charge extra tax, don't put on unnecessary regulations. Make it possible and attractive for young people to move into our neighbourhoods. Often, they provide alternate ways for students, new Canadians, people who are here for educational or employment short stays, and so on, to have a homey place to live.

My neighbours and I hope that you will make it easier for responsible and community minded people to continue with this very successful model of shared living.

Thank you.