

Thank you, Council members,

I'm putting a personal face to my email of June 11.

- Multinational hotels, STR owners and couch-surfer hosts all use websites to reach different demographics to the benefit of Greater Victoria.
- Hotel customers do not want short term rentals.
- Short term renters do not want hotels...
- Seniors, single women, lgbtq2s, children—there are many whose experiences point them away from the risk and lack of security/ privacy of a bedroom in some stranger's house.
- Don't be blinded by industry and media portrayal of AIRBnB: I am not an AirBnB franchisee.
- VRBO, HomeAway, AirBnB,—services are paid for through transactions, just as hotels pay for Trivago, booking.com etc. With payment, owners purchase \$1 million in insurance per stay. We pay for transaction services, exactly as charged by the banks.
- I do not hear Council going after the websites favoured by the hotel industry, or Craigslist, or the TC online classifieds the services that facilitate reach but *own no short term rentals*.
- Don't choose the easy target: individual property owners, your constituents, in favour of multinational hotels that send monies to headquarters in out of Victoria, out of Canada.
  - Delta Ocean Pointe, a subsidiary of US-based Marriott Intl.
  - Coast Hotels, an Okanabe property, a subsidiary of by APA North America, in turn a subsidiary of APA International, the largest hotelier in Japan.
- Unlike the hotel industry and its lobbyists claiming to be local, I am local.
- Every dime I spend in setup and operation is spent on local trades and in local stores—from Charmaine's to Fabricland.
- Mortgage and operational costs eat up earnings, yet those earnings are taxable as if they equate to cash in hand. They do not.

- Unlike hotels, I do not get to pay myself a salary and deduct that as an expense to reduce my taxes. The revenue puts me into a higher bracket—but the cash goes to the mortgage and costs. My partner past retirement age is working to pay that tax so that, together, we can hold onto property for our old age.
- Unlike the hotel industry, I do not have hundreds of rooms to spread costs over. I do not have a spa, a restaurant, a bar, room service. I do not have the benefit of a City council creating a transient zone to support me, or paid lobbyists to scapegoat local innovation with logical fallacies and extreme anecdotes.
- Instead, I face a City council prepared to take away *what is my pension*.
- Rob and I are the very embodiment of what Council has said it wants Victoria citizens to be. We are community oriented, I volunteer as community board treasurer and he as block watch captain. We look after boulevards that the City neglects, and are connected through our personal efforts to some 42 households.
- We care about affordable housing—our own—and that of our long term tenants. STR enables both. Between tenancies of our furnished accommodation, we backfill with STR.
- We do not raise rents annually—a senior on a fixed income has seen no increase in 5 years. Another, 3 years. 3 young families- 2 and 3 years no increase. A City staffer: 2 years.
- How can we do this? Two short term rentals—working past retirement age.
- Why do we do it? Because we care about our tenants, love Victoria, and know that our direct efforts support local small business in our neighbourhood.
- For short term renters, among a variety of needs, we support hospital visits, work projects that are part of bringing resources for success of local businesses, compassionate respite, experience of community outside the tourist commodification zone. We house and engage with real people with real needs wanting a real experience they cannot get in a traditional hotel.
- We treasure that we can have friends and family visit, when our personal living space does not allow that.
- We provide short term rentals to the Belfry Theatre as our support to community arts.

- The PST and MRDT tax regime already applies. Under provincial law, my and your entitlements are set. That is covered.
- *A licensing regime is welcome—one that recognizes we are NO WHERE NEAR as advantaged as hotels.*
- Forbidding short term rentals that provide the private suite that visitors demand for legitimate reasons will not solve the housing issue: it will send visitors to more hospitable cities, it will harm individual tax paying citizens of Victoria.
- Instead: leverage the equity in co-op housing that is now at the end of mortgage terms to acquire one-level units suitable for aging in place, and thereby free up 3 level family units now occupied by empty nester couples and singles. It is a sustainable solution for a shared goal: affordable housing.
- If you think housing is expensive for young people, try surviving in old age. Property assets are my pension, means to age in place, means to live with dignity rather than be forced back into the closet in some facility.
- You are poised to ask local citizens to sacrifice livelihood and futures while you protect corporations.
- Instead—I urge you to encourage local entrepreneurial efforts so necessary for citizens to survive in Victoria.

#### Addendum: Comment to Council

I have gained a greater understanding of the pressures that are being brought to bear on the issue of short term rentals over the last month. For the most part, I have learned how easily issues become conflated with hot buttons (such as housing) to mask underlying motivations and how time consuming public reaction to perceived positions must be.

Should Council determine to engage in a participatory effort to engage with STR owners, I would welcome invitation to take part.

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard.