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We know that the growth of short-term rentals (Airbnb and other platforms) in Portland is problematic. If my assumptions are true, from regulatory and political perspectives, I do not see the current conditions supporting short term rental (STR) platforms sustainably.

I suggest various problems created by STRs are not generated from the hosts that the STR platforms were designed to support. I suggest that the few hosts who have created conditions expressed repeatedly in the media regarding long term rental shortages and adverse guest experiences are a minority. However, because of this, STRs can and should be regulated.

I suggest that there is a segment of STR hosts creating these difficulties disproportionately. This segment will rent/lease many units and transition them into satellite business sites via STR platforms. These rogue entrepreneurs avoid building maintenance, safety regulations, supervision of their guests and a list of other activities and oversight that nourishes a neighborhood, the surrounding community and the city.

I think we must oversimplify to identify a solution. Renting rooms is a tradition of human existence. That said, I believe STRs should be limited to owners of a building who reside on site or tenants who reside in a unit (with landlord approval). If STR services are within these limitations, most downsides, including building maintenance, safety regulations, care and supervision of guests, etc are addressed.

I imagine there are a number of units within the peninsula that are off the long term market due to rogue entrepreneurs who don't consider nor ultimately care about our neighborhoods and quality of life. I speculate they don't invest much thought and consideration into the safety of their guests.

Our guests are often families and many return annually. We host family reunions for those who can't afford large hotel accommodations and for those who prefer a space that is more of a home environment rather than institutional. Many of these families return. Other guests prefer the peace, quiet and privacy of a short term rental over the atmosphere of hotels and bed and breakfast inns. There is bountiful joy in our building with toddlers, children, parents and grandparents.

Re: Affordable Housing

The argument that the "affordable housing shortage" was caused by Short Term Rentals has many flaws.

Ten years ago, Portland's rental housing stock was in ruins due to decades of deferred maintenance, profiteering and bad ideas. It was a vast collection of moldy fire traps.

The multi-unit we purchased was such a property. To renovate a building this size, age and condition and to current codes requires in the vicinity of \$400,000. This included removing oil furnaces, pipe and radiators, oil tanks and associated contamination and replacing it with efficient systems on all floors, all rooms.

I spent nearly a year in the cellar accomplishing this, plus re-pointing all brick and stone, weather-proofing the foundation, installing exterior french drains, installing sound and heat insulation and a fire-rated cellar ceiling. I added heating and dehumidification systems. I removed one hundred plus years of roof to reach the original plank, installed a white roof to reflect heat and light into space for another contribution to mitigating global warming. Our roof/crawl space has an R-60 insulation rating. We insulated the building, weather-proofed every window, door, and all plumbing/heating/wiring conduit to the exterior. We designed and installed landscaping to move Munjoy Hill surface water away from our building and our neighbor's building as well. This required sacrifice and investment.

We hired a professional environmental quality company to provide blower door and infrared readings. When we completed the renovation, he stated that he hadn't tested a building our size and age that achieved as high a score. A fire inspector, following the annual unannounced inspection, asked if I would be willing to make a video that he could show to other Portland landlords.

I spent three years on the project. I did it correctly.

Bringing Portland's abused housing stock into the realm of healthy and safe requires huge investments and ongoing maintenance, repair and replacement costs. Those investments cannot occur without an increase in rents and income to pay for those expenses.

I am retired. I am a disabled veteran. My wife works full time. When I pass, if she lacks our rental income, she will be without retirement support other than social security.

People are not homeless due to short term rentals. *Blaming short term rentals for expensive housing is inaccurate, uninformed and shortsighted. It is creating conflict between neighbors rather than challenging the bigger issues behind expensive housing:*

1. The same banks and hedge funds that caused the financial collapse formed companies that bought vast amounts of properties with failed mortgages for pennies on the dollar, fixed and flipped them at huge gains. This inventory is still be rented and sold with massive profits.

2. Climate change is moving well-heeled people from Florida, the Carolinas, New York and other regions to Maine. What we perceive as expensive, they perceive as excellent value.

3. *Affordable housing isn't possible until the minimum wage far exceeds \$15/hr.* Given health care costs, food costs, across the board inflation and housing costs, a minimum wage of \$24/hr. would equal the same purchasing power as the minimum wage of 1986.

4. Companies developing new buildings "buy" their way out of affordable housing requirements. Cities and states compete for development with tax relief incentives that rob our communities of the funds necessary to support appropriate infrastructure and social programs designed to support our citizens.

5. There is a natural progression toward gentrification of communities such as Portland. Years ago, natural beauty and inexpensive housing attracted cultural creatives. These creatives are the "urban pioneers". They flocked to Portland as they did to San Francisco and Mendocino in Northern California, Silver Lake, Venice Beach and Mission Beach in Southern California, the French Quarter in New Orleans to name a few. The urban pioneers create a sub-culture that attracts artisans, then cafes and then restaurants. These are followed by shops and boutiques which, in total, create interesting neighborhoods. From here, real estate prices and rents escalate as the middle class and eventually upper class follow the appeal.

Re: STR problems according to neighbors and the press

The press and a few politicians present short term rental hosts as predators. The charges of damaging affordable housing are valid when the "hosts" are not stakeholders and avoid the responsibilities of a good landlord.

Our building and guests have not eroded the neighborhood. In fact, our influence is exactly the opposite.

When we purchased our property nine years ago, this was a neighborhood of syringes on the sidewalk along with empty beer and whiskey bottles on the tree lawn. These are activities reserved for darkness and shadow. We installed porch lights that automatically light the sidewalk from dusk to dawn. Our entire property is lit from motion detector flood lights. These difficulties subsided.

Wild parties were common. For example, one neighbor's building attracted a line of teenage boys on the sidewalk as strippers performed in a second floor parlor. Public drinking was a persistent nuisance. Loud parties were plentiful. I evicted tenants for that behavior.

Yes, gentrification has occurred as noted above. Airbnb guests didn't inspire the creation of the plush array of upscale restaurants, upscale retail shops, upscale breweries, upscale distilleries and upscale gyms. Although the tourism dollar enhances their bottom line, this influx and success of new businesses requires customers who are residents year-round.

Even with this, there are a few with hidden agendas.

For example, one neighbor was interviewed after calling the mayor's office about parking. I explained that our Airbnb guests use far less "on-street parking" than our full time tenants used. Many of our guests use our off street parking as well. Our neighbor's response was "well, they park inappropriately, sometimes taking up more space than they should." Sufficient parking is a problem endemic to all cities. For example, we know that appropriate and considerate parking at one moment can appear "inappropriate" hours later as surrounding vehicles depart and arrive. Yet, somehow it is Airbnb guests who "park inappropriately".

Host Solutions

We have approximately 28 neighbors living on three sides of the property.

Out of respect to them and to us, we have house rules for our guests which include:

1. The building is quiet as of 10 pm.
2. Windows remain closed with ample air conditioning during dinners or gatherings.

We provide all of our neighbors with our cell numbers and encourage them to call regarding any inconvenience. On rare occasions, we have had problem guests. When I learn of a problem, I deal with it decisively and unconditionally.

We are rarely out of town. When we are, we advise our neighbors and we have a house sitter. Meaningful solutions occur via conversation and communication. Otherwise, the corporate hotels love the debate. They prefer that the citizens argue and drive the hotels' perceived competition from the vicinity. At times, the anti-STR voices sound similar to a hotel association's lobbying effort.

City Solutions:

I thought the first set of rules was too lenient.

I believe the licensing fees should be increased.

I believe there should be annual / mandatory safety inspections.

Those of us who register and support the rules shouldn't suffer from those who don't and the apparent lack of ability to enforce current rules.

We must afford short term rental permit enforcement and safety inspections. Increasing fees is wise if it supports safety and license oversight. This would allow added safety inspection opportunities into buildings that would otherwise be ignored. I rented STR apartments in New York City and Boston that were fire traps.

If current rules are not being enforced, how will new or different rules be enforced? Will the city punish good citizens with additional burdens or limitations inspired by problems caused by a different population that doesn't care?

Additional considerations:

1. The economies that STRs bring to the market allows cash otherwise sent to Marriott's [et al] corporate accounts in another state or country to be spent locally. *The money saved from STR economies is redistributed to local businesses and local support personnel [housekeeping, gardening, etc]. The income derived from STR rentals by the host is spent locally as well. Hotels export these benefit differentials out of state.*

2. Many travelers are part of the Airbnb traveling community that Airbnb delivers to Portland. *I have selected destinations that offered a healthy Airbnb selection over destinations that would have forced me into hotels.* My experience and decisions are not uncommon in the STR guest demographic.