

**CITY OF MARINE ON ST. CROIX**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**REGULAR MEETING**

**Tuesday April 30 2019- 7:30pm**  
**121 Judd Street – Village Hall**

1. Call to Order
2. Discussion— Short-Term Rentals – Topics: Performance Standards, Amount/Concentration of STRs, Lodging Tax
3. Old/New Business
4. Approval of March Minutes
5. Adjournment

The City of Marine on St. Croix Planning Commission regular meeting of April 30, 2019 was called to order by Chairman Mrosla at 7:30 pm. Hagstrom, Henry, Sanderson, and Spisak present. Brenner and Smitten absent.

Citizens Present: Lon Pardun, John Waugh, Larry Whitaker, Larry Roden, Gwen Roden, Andy Kramer, Karen Kramer, Tracy Johnson, Michael Tibbetts

Discussion— Short-Term Rentals – Topics: Performance Standards, Amount/Concentration of STRs, Lodging Tax

Mrosla stated that tonight’s format would be similar to last month’s meeting: The Planning Commission would discuss each topic first, and then the discussion would be opened up to the audience. The committee that has been working on STRs outside of the regular meetings, Council Member Gwen Roden, along with Commissioners Hagstrom, Smitten, and Henry, again provided an outline with recommendations based on other communities and resident comments received thus far. Comments from the first three topics discussed in March can still be submitted to the City, but the focus tonight will be on performance standards, the amount/concentration of STRs, and lodging tax.

Henry summarized the committee’s recommendations on performance standards. First, each property would be required to pay a 50-dollar license fee and renew it annually. Next, the number of guests per bedroom would follow what is currently being done in St. Paul (tool is included on draft Guest Rental Instruction and Rule sheet provided to the Commission and audience). Guest records would be required for any potential complaints and confirmed by the owner in the application. Parking could be addressed through current City requirements, or by specifying one spot for each bedroom. Events would not be prohibited, but the host must sign off on them ahead of time, and ordinances must be made known to the guests in Instructions/Renters’ Rules. Signage would not be allowed, and the owner must provide written directions to guests. For owner/designee availability, the committee recommends 24/7 availability via phone and being within 15 minutes of the dwelling. For complaints, there would be a paper form and a form available on the website (draft also provided), but permit revocation is still being discussed. Finally, contact information must be available on site: 911, the owner’s information, and a back-up number, and the owner or designee must respond within 15 minutes of a call.

The Commission first discussed events. Hagstrom noted that on street parking would still be available for events in addition to the parking requirements per bedroom. Spisak asked how to address an STR

potentially having a wedding every weekend and changing the character of the neighborhood. It was determined more research would be needed on this issue. Mrosla then asked if STRs would be handled as Conditional Use Permits (CUPs), which Hagstrom said they are still discussing. Sanderson questioned if the license fee should consider staff time processing the application. Mrosla expressed that there should be a fixed number of guests per bedroom. Mrosla also believes the owner availability should be extended to 30 minutes, similar to other cities. Hagstrom explained that the committee also discussed the issue of homesteading due to comments from the March meeting, but have determined that it would not be a favorable idea because it would exclude those whose home in Marine is not their homestead. There was then discussion on complaints, including what would constitute a complaint (a call to the Sheriff, violating City ordinances, etc.) as well as who is enforcing the repercussions (Washington County, city staff, etc.). The Commission determined this issue also needs more study.

Mrosla opened the topic to comments from the audience. Resident John Waugh of Judd Street said there should be a hierarchy of complaints, some immediate and some not, with different triggers of who to call and when. Spisak suggested that the immediate neighbors have the owners contact information, and sign off as having been notified to the STR. Mrosla agreed that this would allow neighbors to call the owner before contacting the Sheriff.

Resident Larry Whitaker of Pine Cone Trail read some comments from fellow Pine Cone Trail residents John Goodfellow and Kitz Vadheim who could not attend tonight's meeting. Notably, they believe that the type of ownership/nature of the intended STR should be considered when determining the type of STR allowed in a zoning district. They support the St. Paul standard for number of guests and keeping records, but also believe that all commercial and some social events would be disruptive to the neighborhood. Regarding enforcement, they believe that the severity of the problem as well as a pattern of problems should be considered in possible revocation.

Whitaker then provided his own comments, notably that there should be a requirement of direct access to City streets only. He used Pine Cone Trail as an example of a private road being used by the public. Resident Andy Kramer of Walnut Street suggested requiring the permission of everyone on that private drive for the STR. Mrosla said that this would have to be explored further, along with also private Butternut Falls and Tanglewood. Sanderson noted that with the bedroom requirement for guests, the number of cars would likely mimic the current amount of traffic now. Whitaker also expressed that the 50-dollar fee way significantly too low, and Mrosla agreed, adding that it should be at least a hundred dollars in his opinion.

Kramer responded to the comments on homesteading, stating that it is consistent with the Commission's desire to have the owner stay there at least 188 days per year, which otherwise could not be verified. Hagstrom clarified that it is not 188 days that the Commission would require, but the owner staying at the property as many nights as they rent. Resident Karen Kramer noted that 'snow birds' can still do long-term rentals. Gwen Roden commented that many of the cabins in Marine are probably not homesteaded, and Karen Kramer noted that there are communities up north facing a problem with cabins and STRs.

Mrosla then moved to the concentration/amount of STRs. Hagstrom explained that per the committee's recommendation, there would be fewer STRs allowed in urban districts than in rural districts, because lot sizes in rural districts are larger and there is a less of an impact expected on neighbors. There would also be no proximity limits as the committee believed there would be no inherent problem with two STRs being next to each other. Spisak noted that the Jackson Meadow Association already prohibits STRs. Henry said it is important to consider both homeowners rights and what is good for the economy. Mrosla suggested starting out low, with potentially 12-15 STRs total, and revisiting the demand in a couple of years.

The final topic was the lodging tax. The STR committee believes there should be a lodging tax, and there is a Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) lodging license requirement.

#### Old/New Business

Mrosla stated that he will not be at the May Planning Commission meeting, and that Commissioner Brenner will chair.

#### Approval of March Minutes

Spisak said that the sentence "...of Third Street commented that limiting such multi-unit dwellings would support opportunities for affordable housing" would be clarified by adding 'STRs in' before 'multi-unit dwellings.'

*Spisak moved and Sanderson seconded to approve the March 26th Planning Commission minutes as amended. **Motion passed unanimously.***

#### Adjournment

*Spisak moved and Hagstrom seconded to adjourn at 9:00 pm. **Motion passed unanimously.***

Minutes by Kiersten Northcraft, Assistant City Clerk