

To: The Clerk, the Mayor and all Councilors

From: Pat Pollock, Chair of Mayvern Area Residents Association

Re: Item 12.14: Staff Report on Air BnBs/STRAs

April 8, 2020 Council Meeting

I am the chairperson of the Mayvern Area Residents Association and want to address comments about the report for Air bnb's/STRAs, item 12.14 on the agenda for the April 8, 2020 Council Meeting. I have read the report and understand the issue. We have had at least one Air bnb/STRA in our immediate area. I am basing my comments on research that we as an association has done in preparation for this issue being included in the CZBL, and also, on our experience with this Air bnb/STRA in our area.

I want to point out that our community is a very closely knit group; we look out for each other, value the safety and relationships we have with our neighbours. Many of us have lived in this area for a long time, some 40+ years. Our commitment to this area and to Richmond Hill is strong. Our children have grown up here and enjoyed the safety of our neighbourhood; we have noticed that safety has been jeopardized in the last year and we have recently committed ourselves to a Neighbourhood Watch program with the York Region Police. We have over 75% involvement in that program. That is how committed we are to the safety of our neighbourhood and community.

Air bnbs/STRAs in a residential neighbourhood are a concern for us because:

- a) they provide a transient clientele
- b) they do not support the community and the relationships in the community
- c) they provide extra traffic and compromise the safety of children
- d) they take away affordable housing
- e) they do not abide by parking by-laws, disposal of waste by-laws, weed control by-laws etc. because they either don't care or do not familiarize themselves with the rules
- f) the owners do not take care of their property, they show no pride in ownership in contrast to a resident owner who lives there with a family. Hence, the property is left to deteriorate.

Because of these concerns we do not feel that Air bnbs/STRAs belong in a residential neighbourhood. An Air Bnb/STRA is a BUSINESS operating in a RESIDENTIAL community. As such they operate much like a MOTEL/HOTEL. Those who use the facility have no commitment to the neighbourhood and community. These characteristics are counter to what we have built as a residential community and the safety and appearance we expect of our community. We have worked hard to include newly moved-in residents to our community. An Air bnb/STRA is a contradiction to our community goals.

Consequently, we would like to see the following:

- a) ideally, no Air bnbs/STRAs in a residential neighbourhood
- b) If there is an Air bnb/STRA allowed in a residential neighbourhood, then it must be registered, inspected, licensed and taxed accordingly.
- c). no 'ghost' hotels, owner of the property must be living on the property

Licensing allows for standards to be set of what is expected e.g. owners must be present, there must be fire regulations and building codes that are adhered to. This is for the safety of guests as well as owners AND protects the community. Registration allows the City to know where the Air bnb/STRA is located and allows taxes to be levied according to that use i.e. business taxes/occupancy taxes rather than residential taxes.

With no regulations (registration or licensing) this welcomes other speculators into our City, using our facilities, and changing our neighbourhoods. We want our neighbourhoods to be safe, with caring and committed residents who care for and about others and their property. We want an environment whereby the residents feel they are part of a community, participating with each other and enjoying the neighbourhood they live in. That cannot happen with Air bnbs/STRAs that take up affordable housing, have transient clientele, that have no commitment to our neighbourhoods and communities. We value the amenities our communities have and want them protected.

I would like this point of view entered into the public record and be considered in future discussions of this topic.

Pat Pollock

67 Drumern Crescent

Richmond Hill