

Appendix A

Outcome Notes from the January 16, 2025 Short Term Rentals (STR) Stakeholder Roundtable Meeting

Roundtable started at 1:37pm

Earl Rook offered a welcome and reviewed the purpose of the meeting.

Purpose - to explore considerations for managing STR's on SSI and the greater SGI Region

Roundtable Participants

- Ben Corno – SSI Local Community Commission (LCC)
- Brian Webster – SSI Local Community Commission (LCC)
- Chris Hutton – SS Island Trust Regional Planning Manager
- Dal Brickenden – B&B Operator
- Dan Ovington – CRD - SSI EA Senior Manager
- Earl Rook – SSI Local Community Commission (LCC)
- Francine Carlin – Rural Island Economic Partnership
- Gary Holman – SSI EA Director
- Gayle Baker – SSI Local Community Commission (LCC)
- Jamie Sterling – Southern Gulf Island Tourism Partnership
- Jason Roy-Allen – SS Chamber of Commerce
- Justine Stark – SGI EA Manager
- Kelly Armstrong – Harbour House Hotel
- Laura Patrick – Islands Trustee
- MacKenzie Williamson – SSI EA Staff (Recorder)
- Maxine Leichter – Positively Forward
- Peter Lloyd-Jones – SS Accommodations Group
- Robert Steinbach – Country Grocer
- Stephen Henderson – CRD Real Estate, SGI and SSI-LCC Senior Manager
- Terri Potratz – SS Accommodations Group

Presentations:

Chamber of Commerce

-Management of STR is preferred over outright ban. Recommendations were to:

- Amend Land Use Bylaw 355 to define STR
- Initiate business licensing
- Expressed the contribution of STR's guests to the economy and how they support local businesses.

Harbour House

- In support of business licensing. They anticipate licensing will improve the management of STR's

- Housing for employees is a necessity

Tourism Partnership

- Management of STR's is preferred over outright ban.
- Could do a Salt Spring review case study in 4-6 weeks
- Occupancy rates should align with the community's capacity for the industry to be

SSI Accommodation Group

- STR available listings double in peak month of August, relative to the winter months
- STR helps to provide needed financial support to some Salt Spring residents
- Data Collection needed to inform policymaking
- Principal residence rule is supported
- Business licensing is supported for improving STR management

Rural Economic Partnership

- Supports initiating business licensing. They suggested they this will
 - Provide standards
 - Unregulated units are not paying into the MDRT
- Feasibility study on business licensing was recommended

Island Trust- Trustee Patrick

- Zoning Bylaw may need to be update
 - Official Community Plan (OCP) update is about to be initiated. Possibility to expedite (off-ramp) related parts of the plan prior to completion of the entire process.

Roundtable Considerations:

a. Local & Island-wide Impact of STR's

- Owner occupied operators are important, as the available hotels/motels and resorts are not sufficient to accommodate the demand
- Clarity in definition of the number of units is required.
- On SSI there are estimated to be about 600 STR's advertised in mid summer and 300 in the winter. This likely includes the hotels/motels and resort units that are available on SSI. Some of these units advertised may only be available for a few weeks or months. An expressed need for more data and analysis.

b. Regulatory Options

i. Zoning – updates to the OCP and Zoning are needed

ii. Business Licensing

- It was noted that business licensing would allow for more responsible tracking of water usage and other impacts associated with short-term rentals
- Experiences from other communities, such as those that have enforced licensing for short-term rentals, were highlighted as valuable lessons.
- Support for business licensing was identified by the Short-term rental stakeholders
- A business license would likely only be issued if a business activity is compliant with zoning

iii. Bill 35 – Short Term Rental Accommodations Act

- The option to opt-in to principal resident requirement is available annually

- Provincial registration number is currently required
- Discussion about Bill 35, which does not require licensing but mandates registration numbers for short-term rentals.
- The need to meet with provincial officials to understand the enforcement and implications of Bill 35 was mentioned.
- Business Licensing is not mandatory under the Act

[[Post Meeting

- following the meeting a Provincial Announcement was made to update the Act.*
- Any Short Term Rental Offers (STR's) and Platform Service Providers now must have a Registration number under the Act.]]*

c. A Regional Voice

- Emphasis was placed on learning from other communities to enhance enforcement and program development for the islands.
- The importance of planning a program tailored to the islands and focusing on effective enforcement was highlighted.

d. CRD & Island Trust Role

- OCP and Zoning is currently in Islands Trust workplan with acknowledgement of updating
- Business Licensing could be implemented by the CRD, and was discussed as an action that would more likely follow the OCP and Zoning being updated
- Opting into

e. Other Agencies/ Organizations

- Messaging was consistent with the presentations provided

Recommendation/ Next Steps:

- The Chamber of Commerce offered to complete a Feasibility Study on Business Licensing
- The Southern Gulf Island Tourism Partnership offered to facilitate an Analysis of STR Data
- There is a need to review with the Province the enforcement and implications of Bill 35 – i.e. Short Term Rental Accommodation Act
- There is a need to explore the possibility of implementing a business licensing program
- There is a need to continue to consider advocating for inclusion of Salt Spring Island in the expanded taxable area for the Speculation and Vacancy Tax

Roundtable ended at 3:38pm