

Adam Zack

From: Lisa Byers <lisabyers50@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 7, 2017 4:08 PM
To: Susan Bauer
Cc: joe symons; Comp Plan Update; DL - Council; Lynda Guernsey; Natalie Menacho; fred klein
Subject: Re: Did Airbnb Kill the Mountain Town? | Outside Online

Susan -

I am the director of OPAL Community Land Trust. We provide affordable housing on Orcas. I hope it may be useful for me to chime in a bit. (I have had a lot of family demands, so I have not been participating much in the Comp. Plan discussions and my on-going participation will be spotty, but...)

OPAL provides both ownership housing (resale restricted to keep houses affordable) and rental housing. At this point about 5% of the island's year round housing lives in an OPAL home. Our current applicant pool includes 19 households seeking to purchase a home through OPAL (we generally have about 4 or 5 resales per year). In addition, this year we have received 10 new applications for ownership housing, and more than 30 inquiries for rental housing.

I believe that one of the biggest unmet needs on the island is housing that island workers can afford, and I think the Comprehensive Plan plays a very important role in determining the degree to which we, as a community, will be able (or not able) to provide more housing in the future. I also believe that our ability, as a non-profit developer providing and stewarding housing, is constrained by the amount of grants and donations we procure. Therefore it is important that we as a community figure out a way for private developers and property owners to be part of the solution. Again, I think the Comprehensive Planning process is an appropriate place for that discussion.

If you want to discuss this further, please let me know. Again, because of family demands my time is fairly limited, but I'd be pleased to have a phone call.

Lisa Byers
360-376-3191

On Sun, Jul 16, 2017 at 3:03 PM, Susan Bauer <earthtosue@gmail.com> wrote:

I have to think about this some more. Is our comp plan group's focus mainly 'density' (limiting short-platting of parcels & limiting tourist 'beds') or is it just as strongly a focus on affordable housing for islanders? It seems to me there is quite a lot of work already done (on this island) re: the affordable housing problem. If we mean to discuss this issue too we should plug into/learn from what affordable housing groups have already begun and be careful not to harm their message.

On Sat, Jul 15, 2017 at 2:08 PM, joe symons <joesymons@me.com> wrote:

He has talked with the **Regional Housing Authority** about Section Eight housing, the national program providing assistance to low-income renters. "Which I qualify for," he says pointedly. "It's pretty humiliating, at age 41, to ask the federal government for help with housing." He does not want to leave the area, for fear of putting his child custody in jeopardy. "I'm scared," he confesses. "I'm kind of trapped in paradise."

from:

<https://www.outsideonline.com/2198726/did-airbnb-kill-mountain-town>

Please submit this to the PC as part of the conversation regarding the vacation rental ordinance update.

Please read this article. it is spot on re the national housing challenge faced by other small “beautiful” communities such as San Juan County due to short term transient rentals.

Joe Symons