

Erika Shook

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To: Council Public Comment
Subject: Vacation rental moratorium

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To my fellow Lodging Hosts & Council members.....2/16/2021

....peter a delorenzi, owner, The Cabin of Two Bears

I own and operate, for now, a small 350 sf hand built cabin in the woods on the north end, since 1994. The cabin had been originally built by me in 1990 as my writing studio. The furnishings were: a small desk, my typewriter, a chair and a composting toilet.

Then came the advent of the portable computer. With fondness I said good bye to my Quiet writer 7, which had cost me more in 1986 than any computer I have purchased since.

My wife at the time convinced me to rent out the cabin and furnish it with some of her furniture from her house on Egg Lake. We advertised in the Seattle Weekly, met our clients at the ferry and either took them or led them out to the cabin. Some came on motorcycles. Some on bicycles. I would meet them at the ferry landing on my own Harley to show them around the island a bit.

It didn't take long before Michele Novak contacted me from the County and informed me that I would need to start charging for and paying tax. No problem. That was 1996 and we finally received our permit in 1999 after a lengthy and costly process with the BOCC, Appeals Board and so on. Since then I have have enjoyed some perks such as the SJIVB and the Chamber, as well as the camaraderie of other hosts..

I worked and/or have volunteered for expensively for those organizations through out the years. Currently I am a Past Commander, Museum Curator, and current Finance Officer of the American Legion in Friday Harbor, and still, after the past 12 years, the Veteran Service Officer representing County veterans.

Through the past 30+ years sharing a small space on the island has been one of the most rewarding experiences in my life. I am a 70% disabled veteran and appreciate the island visitors and the opportunities of friendship they have afforded me, besides the additional money I need to support life on the island. As a bonus, several of my former 'guests' are solidly friends now, and I have stayed at their homes on occasion when going to the VA hospital in Seattle.

The threats of not passing along with the land the benefits of vacation rental property through automatic revocations of permits will cripple the hopes of many hosts. It as an income benefit to help offset the rising costs of island life (as well as everywhere) to make it possible for many residents to stay in their homes. It is also a right, when a property is purchased, to utilize that property as you wish, according to the laws at that time. Most of us have to exercise creative thinking to live on this island.

Most households already work two jobs in order to survive. A vacation rental is a full time JOB! Anyone actively engaged in this business is working their butts off to maintain and improve their property to portray an inviting lodging respite.

Especially right now, in this pandemic, our habits, rituals and health are changing everyone's travel itinerary. The vacation rental entrepreneurs have a viable, healthy and unique alternative to conventional travel plans.

Welcoming guests to our island is THE very best, environmentally friendly industry we can tolerate here. I would ask for support in a responsible manner and NO NEW TAXES OR REGS!

Peter DeLorenzi

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