

Adam Zack

From: Ingrid Gabriel
Sent: Wednesday, July 14, 2021 9:17 AM
To: Vacation Rental Comments
Subject: FW: VR application moratorium

From: thomaswalterharrell@gmail.com <thomaswalterharrell@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 13, 2021 12:11 PM
To: San Juan County Council <councilvm@sanjuanco.com>
Subject: VR application moratorium

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Hello all, Yesterday I attended your meeting intermittently due to commitments and obligations. I was on the phone a couple of times, but was never called upon to speak. In some ways that was good for you, mostly because other speakers clearly covered most everything I might have said, so it cut out some of the redundancy you had to endure. I do want to weigh in on a few points and offer (however tentatively) a few recommendations and kudos. Let's begin with the later.

THANK YOU for your endurance and patience. I was quite impressed! You all demonstrated the patience of Job and seemed to be attentive to all the competing interests and expressed concerns. Well done! In your future deliberations I hope that you maintain an open mind and heart and not pass judgement too quickly. Make your decisions on FACTS not FEELINGS.

My concern about this issue is part of a broader concern I have regarding the role of government in doing what is necessary and sufficient to solve problems when there are no other entities or modalities to address them. Inappropriate application of governmental authority expressed by arbitrary rules and regulations are divisive and rarely solve the problem they seek to address. It seemed to me that the arguments for the moratorium were based upon heartfelt concerns about general trends in our society at large (that I tend to share) and VRs become the scapegoat or the strawman to be sacrificed (which is what I believed I was hearing). Examples of this include the following:

- General concerns about tourism and its impact on the islands (I have no appetite for this given the positive impact tourism has on the economy and the fact that it is an issue only tangentially related to restricting VRs)
- Affordable housing (A concern universally shared that is only minimally connected to VRs)
- Behavior of tourists in residential areas (HOAs, subdivision covenants, property managers and city rules for compliance and enforcement of same could and should address this, not blanket moratoriums against VRs)

Regarding affordable housing, in the studies I have read, VRs negative impact is the result of taking potential rental units off the market. This seems to be occurring almost exclusively in urban areas where corporate interests are buying multiple units specifically for rental. I just don't see that happening here. It seems to me that here on the islands most folks are just trying to offset the costs associated with their property. Does anyone know? Who is applying for VRs for their homes?

Sometimes the best action is no action. My recommendation is to take a light hand with any proposed regulation that takes aim at perceived social ills. The moratorium has struck me as a solution in search of a problem. For the life of me, I can't understand what it accomplishes other than divide the community and hold VRs up as scapegoats. Lets don't burn this strawman.

Disclosure: My wife Cheryl and I owned a home on Yacht Haven that had a VR permit. All rentals were managed by San Juan Property Management. To the best of my knowledge NO problems arose during the time we owned the home. We are currently considering applying for a VR permit specifically because of the moratorium, an unintended consequence no doubt.

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