

To: Sutter Creek City Council

Sutter Creek Planning Commission

Re: Short Term/Vacation Rentals

As you know there are many ordinances throughout the State concerning the administration of short-term rental ordinances. Some are simple and some are very complex. Many of the ordinances focus on the impacts of irresponsible renters creating a nuisance, which apparently has not been a problem in Sutter Creek. However, nuisance issues are insignificant compared to the impact of turning our local, very limited housing stock into short term rentals. Short-term rentals undermine the entire concept of a neighborhood. Each unit converted into a vacation rental deletes one more opportunity for a new family to become part of a neighborhood.

The issue of converting a residence into what amounts to a motel, is not a matter of personal or property rights, but rather a zoning/land use issue. Given that, it seems that any ordinance created to address this issue should be focused on zoning/land use.

Please consider:

1. Limiting the short-term rental of existing houses to properties currently zoned commercial, in effect making short-term rentals a permitted use for commercial properties.
2. Guest rentals of portions of an existing residence while the property-owner is present could be permitted in any zone, pending Planning Commission review and conditions.
3. Retain all the various other conditions such as payment of TOT, etc.
4. Provide all currently active vacation rental properties a two-year notice that their conditional use permit is being terminated. Two years should be adequate time for the owner to make alternative plans for their property.

This simple plan would be very easy to administer and would provide much needed protection to the community spirit generated by thriving neighborhoods.

Thank you taking time to consider this important issue,

Tim Murphy

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CC: Tom DuBois

Derek Cole