

## Tinti, Elisa

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**From:** Cindy Shnaider <shnaider@mac.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 21, 2023 4:05 PM  
**To:** Tinti, Elisa  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL EMAIL] Comment on Kingston zoning

Hello,

Appreciate that Kingston is looking at outdated zoning regulations. I live in RRR zoning that allows a professional office (our house previously hosted a dental office) or up to three apartments.

We would like to have the attached office space in our home become a sort-term rental with the advantage of us living next to the space (that was previously an office). I realize that short-term rentals were not around when the zoning was last updated. Surely if we could have an office, which would create a lot of traffic, we could safely host short-term rentals.

I understand that it would be up to a board to decide each application for a short-term rental, but the zoning laws should be updated to not require a variance, but be part of the zoning, subject to approval.

Thank you for your consideration,

Maurice and Cindy Shnaider

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## Tinti, Elisa

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**From:** Mark Haldeman <markwhaldeman@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 08, 2023 7:38 PM  
**To:** Tinti, Elisa  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL EMAIL] Kingston Zoning Proposals/Common Council Meeting comments...

Ms. Tinti,

I am writing to you today on the back of the KFC Rezoning meeting I and some of my friends and small business owners attended in September 2022, followed by the Common Council Meeting at City Hall last evening, February 7th, regarding the proposals put forward to ban any new Air BnB rentals, retroactive from June 2021 if the property owners were not already grandfathered in.

I did speak to this at both meetings, but I wanted to put in writing some of the points I covered in the meetings, in addition to some others I did not have the opportunity to discuss either time.

First, let me start by saying that I, as well as a number of other local residents who have small Air BnB rentals in the city of Kingston, believe the banning of all short term rentals related to Air BnB's (or other like short term rental partners) has not been: a) thoroughly vetted and the public given an opportunity to comment in a meaningful way about it's impact on the city's finances, quality of life, tax base and visibility of our town from increased revenues brought in by those who are renting short term, and b) the impact this will have not only on out of town travelers to come to Kingston and enjoy all it has to offer, but also on the small business owners who, as far as I am aware, are the main source of the rentals in the town of Kingston.

I believe there is a mistaken notion that most of the Air BnB properties in the town of Kingston are either owned by and/or run by large corporate entities who have no long term connection to the town or it's livelihood, which, from mine and my fellow hosts perspective, is totally the opposite. We are not rich, we are not absentee landlords, we have lived and worked in the town for many many years, we DO care a great deal about our town, and we have made significant investments in the town over these many years to help improve it and make it more attractive for ALL people from all backgrounds and income levels to live and work in, not to mention, visit and possibly move to. While I run an AirBnB, I also have a four unit apartment building that is considered subsidized housing, with the tenants being classified under Section 8 guidelines. I have never attempted to evict or displace these tenants for financial gain. Part of the reason is I am able to do this is because of the supplemental income that my Air BnB house provides to me.

Most of the Air BnB's I am familiar with, though certainly not all of them, are based in residential neighborhoods in the city of Kingston, are single family dwellings, are not apartments or multiple property dwellings, are NOT so-called "party houses" rented by large groups of people who are disruptive and destructive, and ALL are locally owned and have used and continue to utilize local contractors and goods and services providers to help renovate, maintain, and improve their properties. I can only speak for myself and my experience with my guests, but almost every single one of them has come to Kingston because of it's reputation as one of the most dynamic towns in Upstate NY - for the Arts, Dining, Sightseeing, Shopping, Tourism, Outdoor activities, and so forth. Many of these people are also interested in moving to the area and are here to begin to explore the town and to understand if it would be a good place for them to live, work, raise a family, start a business, and so forth. NONE of them are rich, entitled people ho are coming to destroy the community and displace those who are struggling to find affordable housing and raise their families, work in the town, and pursue their own dreams.

I think that it is wrong to try and link affordable housing issues in the town along with the legitimacy and relevance of continuing to allow people from out of town to come, enjoy our town, and be able to affordably rent a HOME, not a hotel or a Best Western room for a weekend, a week, or a Summer. Affordable housing is

a serious issue here, I agree, but banning all Air BnB rentals is not only shortsighted and a rush to judgement on some well-intentioned people's part, but it is also bad business, bad PR, and not a good next step for a town that has struggled for so long to increase it's tax base to be able to support more worthy and important initiatives such as affordable housing on the backs of those of us who are trying to do just that, AND make a living, save for retirement, run a small business (yes, Air Bnb's are small businesses to many of us) while continuing to live in and enjoy this town we also call home. At best this is a stop-gap measure to appease some, but will have VERY little to do with the actual housing crisis. At worst, it is a classic bait and switch technique and will have more serious ramifications for the city down the line.

I do have a few questions for the Common Council as well...

First, has the City of Kingston done any studies over the last few years to understand the effects, positive and negative, that the increase in short term rentals in the town have had? Has it taken into account not just the number of properties that are or potentially will be on the books as short term rentals, but also the added value that these rentals have had on the community in terms of additional jobs created by businesses to service visitors to our town? Has it calculated the additional tax revenues that are coming into the town not only from fees assigned to the owners of these short term rentals, but also to the additional revenues from Shopping, Dining, Sightseeing, Tours, and other goods and services that are being utilized and paid for by the guests of these short term rentals?

During the process of determining how best to "manage" short term rentals in the town, were there other proposals put forward or considered, other than the one that is currently being proposed? This seems unusually restrictive based on not only it's cut-off date, but also on the potential inclusion of the "owner occupied" provision, as well as the outright ban on any STR's going forward. Is it really fair to take this all or nothing approach if in fact this is still what is being considered? Shouldn't there be an effort made to appeal to and accommodate both sides in this debate?

If the town and *some* of it's residents are concerned about "out-of-towners" coming in and taking away valuable housing that could be better utilized for others, shouldn't it be looking directly at the STR's that currently exist here and seeing who the actual owners are and where they live (and work?) I guarantee you, it won't be a lot of people from Manhattan, California, Florida, or outside of the Ulster/Orange/Dutchess county areas that are the primary owners and landlords, and I can also guarantee that very few of these local STR owners have multiple properties all over Kingston or other towns.

I've done my own research on other parts of the country that have had similar concerns with absentee landlords, big corporations, etc. harming the fabric of their towns, and one of the options that makes sense to me is that in addition to having all STR's listed with the city and applicable fees paid to them, a codicil is added to the city's guidelines that says either a) a STR landlord must live and/or work within an x mile radius of their STR property (usually around 30 miles) or b) the STR owner has to be available within a half hour to an hour to physically be on the property to answer any questions, deal with any issues, or make any repairs necessary to insure the smooth running of the rental during the guests stay.

Finally, let me state once again how much I, and my fellow Air BnB hosts are invested in this town. My husband and I bought our first home in Kingston 16 years ago. At the time, we could only come up on weekends and holidays, but we always had the intention of moving here full time at some point down the road, and I'm happy to say that we were able to do just this the last 2 years. In addition to our Air BnB and rental unit, I have also recently opened a retail business in Uptown Kingston, which I hope will contribute to the continued revitalization of the Stockade District and the town in general. We are not going anywhere, and we want to continue contributing to the fabric of this great town, but please, don't penalize us for wanting to do just this, as well as provide ourselves with an income to do so.

I urge you to take some additional time, canvas the wider community, and get more feedback from a variety of people, not just the loudest and most vocal, before you connect the issues of affordable housing in the town with short term rentals, which I believe is problematic at it's core.

I would be happy to get feedback on my above questions regarding research done on STR's and their applicability and effects on affordable housing here in Kingston, and am happy to speak with you directly should you have any further questions for me. I would ask that you reach out to me if there are other relevant meetings or forums that I and my fellow Air BnB hosts could/should attend in the future to make certain our voices are heard and opinions taken into account before any final decisions are made on the guidelines around STR's in the City of Kingston.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing back from you as things progress...

Mark Haldeman  
160 Arnold Drive  
Kingston, NY. 12401  
(917) 294-3766

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## Tinti, Elisa

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**From:** Kimberly Lum <kim.meibe@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 10, 2023 10:39 AM  
**To:** Tinti, Elisa  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL EMAIL] Kingston Forward Zoning code

Dear City of Kingston,

I do not support the current proposed structure in the new Kingston Forward Zoning code that restricts Short Term Rentals (STRs) for private homeowners in the city of Kingston. While some restrictions may be necessary to retain the core values of our community, the current proposal is too restrictive for private homeowners and MUST be reconsidered. It will have negative impacts on property values and the local economy. I want to make my voice heard. Thank you for your consideration.

Kimberly Lum

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**Tinti, Elisa**

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**From:** Noble, Steve  
**Sent:** Friday, February 10, 2023 1:10 PM  
**To:** Tinti, Elisa  
**Subject:** Fwd: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] Mayor Noble's Special Zoning Newsletter

FYI.

Steven T. Noble  
Mayor, City of Kingston  
420 Broadway  
Kingston, NY 12401  
845-334-3902  
www.Kingston-ny.gov  
www.engagekingston.com

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Aol <chaslandi@aol.com>  
**Date:** February 10, 2023 at 11:53:53 AM EST  
**To:** "Noble, Steve" <SNoble@kingston-ny.gov>, andishaut@yahoo.com, "Hill, Barbara" <ward1@kingston-ny.gov>, "Frankel, Carl" <ward2@kingston-ny.gov>, ward3@ci.kingston.ny.us, "Worthington, Rita" <ward4@kingston-ny.gov>, "Muhammad, Naimah" <Ward5@kingston-ny.gov>, "Davis, Tony" <tdavis@kingston-ny.gov>, "Olivieri, Michael" <ward7@kingston-ny.gov>, "Schabot, Steven" <sschabot@kingston-ny.gov>, "Hirsch, Michele" <mhirsch@kingston-ny.gov>, "Baker, Daniel" <dbaker@kingston-ny.gov>, "Cahill, Suzanne" <scahill@kingston-ny.gov>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL EMAIL] Mayor Noble's Special Zoning Newsletter  
**Reply-To:** Aol <chaslandi@aol.com>

Common Council et..al;

What has not been mentioned in Mayor Noble's Special Zoning initiative is the connection between high property taxes & the quality of life protective zoning currently in place. Property taxes in the City of Kingston are among the highest in NYS with minimal complaints due to current R, RR, triple RRR zoning districts. If & when the Mayor's special zoning districts replace the quality of life protection" districts, there could be the possibility of certiorari class action suits filed in the courts.

I strongly urge the Common Council to avoid the pending expensive legal battles that could occur, by vetoing this special zoning act.

Respectfully  
chaslandi@aol.com  
1-845-594-8257

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## Tinti, Elisa

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**From:** Tom Polk <tapolk59@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 10, 2023 4:23 PM  
**To:** Tinti, Elisa  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL EMAIL] Comments on Proposed Zoning Code

Dear City Clerk,

I wish to state my support for the current draft of the new zoning code. I find many elements of it commendable, but especially the part to end parking mandates. Other communities that have ended parking requirements have found many benefits, including increased walkability. I would love for the City of Kingston to do the same.

I urge the approval of the new zoning code.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Tom Polk  
104 Arnold Drive, Kingston

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## New York State Association for Affordable Housing (NYSFAH) Testimony re Kingston Citywide Zoning Amendment

13 Feb 2023

### **Background**

Housing affordability is a huge problem in Kingston, throughout the Hudson Valley, and across the state. More than 50% of renters across the state are rent-burdened (i.e. pay more than 30% of their income on rent) – the second-highest rate in the nation. Outside of NYC, rents have risen 40% to 60% since 2015, while home prices have risen 50% to 80%. Empirical research has shown that building more housing lowers rents across a region and immediately adjacent to the new housing as well.

Much of this problem across the state is due to a housing/jobs mismatch. Over the last 10 years, New York created 1.2 million jobs, but *only* 400,000 new homes. New York State needs 817,600 housing units over the next decade – half to meet current need, and half for future demand.

Additionally, building more housing helps address source of income discrimination (i.e. discriminating against voucher holders). At present, such discrimination is a huge issue because there are simply not enough housing units, so market-rate renters can outcompete voucher holders for units.

In other words, the solution to affordability is more housing.

### **Approve this proposal**

NYSFAH strongly urges the Common Council to approve this proposed citywide zoning amendment. These commonsense reforms represent the best practices of planning and zoning from across the United States. The choice to implement a form-based code will preserve the historic urban design of this great city, while allowing for appropriate infill development.

Removing the artificial limits on multifamily housing will allow NYSFAH members to build more housing that directly meets the need for affordable housing in Kingston. Additionally, removing restrictions on accessory dwelling units will allow seniors to age in place and provide for intergenerational households – ADUs are heavily supported by the AARP.

And missing middle housing will help provide reasonably priced housing options for working people who are being priced out of Kingston. A single-family home is the most expensive type of housing to purchase and own, and missing middle housing will allow a much greater variety of housing options.



Finally, we applaud the move to abolish parking requirements. Parking requirements drive up the cost of housing, spread out buildings, and make neighborhoods less walkable. And building a parking garage costs between \$40,000 and \$125,000 per space, a cost that is directly passed onto residents in the form of higher housing costs.

### **State Context**

The proposed zoning amendment will also pro-actively bring Kingston into compliance with the Governor's proposed Housing Compact. The Housing Compact would create a 1% housing growth target for upstate municipalities over a three-year planning cycle. The Housing Compact would allow more housing in the places that make sense – near commuter rail and within already developed areas. And the Compact would achieve this while still allowing communities to determine how and where they change their zoning.

The Compact would also directly address New York's fair housing challenge. New York has the most segregated school system in the U.S., due to its intense residential segregation. The single greatest obstacle to building affordable housing is local zoning, which typically forbids multifamily housing almost everywhere. Not only would the Compact spur communities to allow multifamily housing, it would also directly incentivize affordable housing locally by double weighting in housing growth calculations.

Communities could also comply with the Compact by adopting specified zoning actions – by eliminating parking requirements, allowing mixed-middle housing, and allowing ADUs, all steps included in this zoning amendment. By pro-actively passing such "preferred actions," Kingston will be seizing control of its destiny, ensuring that growth is guided and shaped by a comprehensive approach.

Please reach out to James Lloyd at [james@nysafah.org](mailto:james@nysafah.org) if you have any questions regarding this testimony.

*NYSFAH is the trade association for New York's affordable housing industry statewide. Its 400 members include for-profit and nonprofit developers, lenders, investors, attorneys, architects and others active in the financing, construction, and operation of affordable housing. Together, NYSFAH's members are responsible for the vast majority of the affordable housing built in across the City and State that uses federal, state and local subsidies and incentives. Founded in 1998, NYSFAH is the nation's largest affordable housing trade group.*