

March 10, 2022

To: The Municipality of East Ferris

Attention:

Pauline Rochefort, Mayor, pauline.rochefort@eastferris.ca

Steven Trahan, Deputy Mayor, steven.trahan@eastferris.ca

Terry Kelly, Councillor, terry.kelly@eastferris.ca

Erika Lougheed, Councillor, Erika.lougheed@eastferris.ca

Rick Champagne, Councillor, rick.champagne@eastferris.ca

Greg Kirton, Community Services, greg.kirton@eastferris.ca

From: Beverly Christie-Froud

760 Nosbonsing Park Road

Corbeil, ON P0H 1K0

This letter is in reply to an undated letter posted on the East Ferris website by *Greg Kirton* seeking public input/comments regarding Short Term By-Law.

My husband and I have lived as full-time residents at 760 Nosbonsing Park Road since 1998. We raised our family and are now retired and were hoping to “age out” in this home.

A. BAN SHORT TERM RENTALS

I request that the East Ferris Municipality (EF) consider banning all short-term rentals (STR) and either give the existing STRs a stated time period to phase-out their operations or, institute regulations/bylaws to make them owner-occupied units (such as a B&B) or they are required to operate within a Commercial Zoning area.

We need a zero-tolerance mandate for irresponsible STR operators who are engaging in bad conduct with no punitive consequences in order to ensure safety and enjoyment of our properties and neighbourhoods. STR occupants are transients and have no investment in the socio-economic well-being of EF.

Private homes are not subject to the same scrutiny as a traditional hotel/commercial camp/cottage operation, thereby flying under the radar where operators circumvent all rules and regulations for safe residential neighbourhoods.

4 REASONS TO BAN STRs

1. *EXISTING ONTARIO PRECEDENT BANNING STRs*

There are a growing number of municipalities in Ontario (and around the world) who have banned STRs.

Bylaws to allow STRs to exist and try to control STRs and their effects on our community is not the only option here.

I encourage you to read the very informative article titled: *“Growing Pains: Short-term rentals are prompting concerns around the world”* published December 2, 2021 in the Toronto Star and attached as a separate document.

Ontario communities that have banned STRs are:

Township of Oro-Medonte

I include a newspaper article quoting their Mayor and a copy of their bylaw.

Quoted from a Toronto Star article dated December 2, 2021:

“Closer to home, in Oro-Medonte, just north of Barrie, councillors voted to ban short-term rentals on residential properties last year. “There are certain areas where you cannot have commercial operations and we are deeming short-term rentals as being a commercial activity,” Oro-Medonte Mayor Harry Hughes said in an interview. The rule applies across Oro-Medonte’s short-term rental industry, as even bed and breakfasts need to get rezoned from a residential property in order to operate. Hughes said the main source of consternation for the town has been unhosted rentals, where no one lives most of the year and which get rented out to people who have no sense of affection for the community they will be staying in. “The term that is being used is ‘ghost hotels,’” Hughes said. Unlike a traditional hotel, which has management and staff oversight, ghost hotels are truly transient properties where people with no attachment to the municipality come to party for a weekend and then take off, he said. Another problem with such rentals is people are using all the amenities of a home, meaning they can bring their own groceries and cook, reducing potential spending on local amenities, Hughes said. “They don’t engage, they don’t go anywhere else in the municipality to buy things, they don’t pay any rent — they don’t do anything. They’re just there.” Hughes said backlash regarding the municipality’s decision has been mostly limited to online complaining. “We’ve had more of a situation where people on social media are trying to use this as an alternative to discredit (what we are doing),” he said. Hughes said a unique combination of factors has helped the municipality reduce the problem of late. One of those was skyrocketing property values due to COVID. Since the rental bylaw is now in effect, anybody who buys a residential property in the municipality cannot operate a short-term rental. Thanks to rising property values, people who had bought properties for the sole purpose of running them as commercial businesses saw they could make even more by reselling the properties to actual long-term residents, Hughes said. But that reselling would not have happened if not for the ban on short-term rentals on residential properties.”

(Quoted from the Oro-Medonte bylaw website- their By-Law)

"Short Term Rental Accommodations"

"As a result of concerns that have been raised by the community since 2017 in relation to STRA's including conflict with existing residential uses, noise, safety, parking, environmental, zoning, taxation, and enforcement etc. The Township underwent a review on short term rental accommodations in the Township and conducted extensive research into the matter on other jurisdictions, in addition to obtaining legal input and case law.

*The Township held a Public Meeting (**Notice**) for the purpose of obtaining comments on a proposed amendment to the Township's Comprehensive Zoning By-law 97-95, to provide clarity with respect to the existing prohibition on commercial accommodations in dwelling units in the Township of Oro-Medonte on June 25, 2020.*

*On July 15, 2020 Council adopted **By-law 2020-073** which provides clarity with respect to the existing prohibition on commercial accommodations in dwelling units in the Township of Oro-Medonte and adds a definition for Commercial Accommodation. The Township issued a **Notice of Passing** with an appeal deadline date of August 12, 2020.*

If By-law 2020-073 is appealed to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) then the Township's Interim Control By-law (ICBL) 2018-071 would continue to remain in effect until such time as the LPAT issues a decision on the appeal. Interim Control By-law (ICBL) 2018-071 prohibits the use of all lands within the Township of Oro-Medonte for any Short Term Rental Accommodations."

Seguin

Quoted from an April 1, 2021 article quoting Seguin's Mayor in the Parry Sound Northstar

"Over the last two years Seguin council has heard concerns and sought feedback from its ratepayers and it remains a divisive issue. However, council stands by its current zoning bylaw that prohibits short-term cottage rentals in residential areas. "Our permanent and seasonal residents have been coming to Seguin to enjoy all that our township has to offer for many years and the concerns surrounding (short-term cottage rentals) have challenged many of our residents," said Seguin Township Mayor Ann MacDiarmid. "Our zoning bylaw has been in place since 2006 and is very clear that commercial operations are not permitted on shoreline, residential properties. Council stands by our bylaws and support the efforts to stop short-term cottage rentals in ing Seguin."

Collingwood

Short Term Accommodations

The town of Collingwood does not allow for short term accommodations unless the home is approved as a Bed and Breakfast. Short term accommodations include any rental, including vacation rental (eg AirBNB, VRBO, etc), for any period less than 30 consecutive calendar days. The investigation into such units in the Town of Collingwood are complaints driven, and homeowners found to be conducting a short term accommodation business may be issued a hefty fine.

Wasaga

Homeowners who own a residential property in a commercial zone that allows tourist accommodations are permitted to rent for fewer than 31 days, provided they have a business licence from the municipality and have undergone inspections for property standards and fire safety.

A homeowner living in a residential zone can also offer up a portion of their home for rental as a bed and breakfast, with the proviso that they live full-time on the property.

If these municipalities can ban them and avoid all the headaches, why can't East Ferris?

2. *THEY ARE POPULAR*

Just because you rent a STR in other areas of Ontario, Canada and the world and you like them, doesn't mean that they are appropriate in EF. Many municipalities wish that they could have banned them before they became fixtures in their areas. EF should learn from these communities.

3. *ECONOMIC BENEFIT TO EF*

As you are aware, EF is predominantly a bedroom community to the City of North Bay. There are very few retail businesses in EF that will benefit from STRs occupants/owners so why does it seem that EF wants STRs and may feel that there is some unknown economic benefit to EF.

There is one small grocery/LCBO store in Astorville, a couple of variety stores (one with a LCBO), a lumber store and a couple of gas stations. Most EF residents work in North Bay, buy their groceries and personal needs and attend entertainment/sports in North Bay.

STR occupants will buy their groceries, gas and alcohol/cannabis, etc. before they come to EF. If they need anything or want entertainment/restaurants, museums they will drive to Callander and/or North Bay.

I fail to see how EF will gain economically to offset the difficulties hiring more employees to enforce STR's and the complaints from full time residents who have to deal with this mess in the future. Unless EF charges exorbitant licensing fees, I just don't see the math working out to the benefit of EF. Please provide your figures.

4. *ADVERSE EFFECTS ON EF AS A COMMUNITY*

The following quotes are listed on the EF website:

“Our Home/Notre Chez-Nous”;

East Ferris is a rural, **residential community...**;

EF is a wonderful **place to live**”;

“it offers residents privacy and the convenience of a nearby city centre.”; “The Municipality has experienced steady growth and currently has a population of over 4,800. **This continued growth is a true reflection of the residents, the community spirit,** and the many benefits **associated with living in East Ferris.**”

This is why we and others choose to live here. However, allowing STRs to exist contradicts the EF vision. A partially hollowed community will follow and EF’s reputation as a great place to live will decline.

Every house/unit in EF that becomes a STR removes one more **family home** from the housing market and community. There are few residential homes for sale in this area as it is.

In a full-time residence:

- our children’s bottoms fill the seats in the local schools that provide jobs for teachers and educational support jobs;
- our bottoms fill the seats at the library, churches, seniors’ club and other local community agencies;
- we are the ones supporting the arena, local exercise clinic, the soccer field, curling club;
- we are the reason you are building a new medical clinic;
- we are the ones who volunteer at EF agencies and events;
- we are the ones who volunteer at the EF fire station and even for East Ferris Municipality;
- we are the ones supporting East-Ferris Auto, Perron Lumber, Evergreen Landscaping; etc. on an on-going basis.

The non-resident owners and their renters will not become involved in the EF community because if they do any of the above, it is somewhere else and the EF as a “community” will be hollowed out.

Every house/unit that becomes a STR directly affects the use and value of the adjacent properties.

If the house next to me is sold as a STR the value of my property declines for anyone wanting to purchase it as a fulltime residence because no one wants to live next to a STR and the problems they bring. Therefore, my only choice is to rent it as a STR or sell it for some nice big fat over-inflated price to a non-resident for a STR. It is a domino effect with house after house on a road/street and it has already begun.

B. PROBLEMS DUE TO STRs

If EF does not ban STRs, the following is a list of problems that have occurred by existing STRs on our road and other locations These problems will need to be addressed by EF, the police, garbage/recycling, school buses, the SPCA, the Fire Department. The onus is on the residents to report the problems to officials. A lot of us

(full time EF residents) are afraid to confront occupants of STRs and/or contact officials due to a fear of retaliation by the owner and/or occupants. This creates a very disagreeable and stressful quality of life. The following are also valid reasons to ban STRs.

- **Noise** the short-term rental period is typically for one to seven days in length, individuals renting are not aware of the surroundings and therefore tend to create a disturbance and stress for neighboring property owners as they are outside all hours of the night. Short-term rentals are often groups/family's celebrating events such as weddings or attending a major event in the area, resulting in larger than normal number of individuals occupying the dwelling.
- **Septic System** The approved system is typically not designed to accommodate large groups and potentially creates immediate and/or long-term issues with the system and subsequently our Lakes. I had heard that there was an algae bloom at one of the STRs on Nosbonsing Park Road and the waste was visible bubbling on the ground. This site also housed 3 good sized trailers in addition to the residence.
- **Overcrowding** My neighbours and I have witnessed that STRs on Nosbonsing Park Road are overcrowded and beyond the number of occupants allowed on their websites. Please see the attached AirBnB reviews for a 3 bedroom house telling others to bring air mattresses and there's lots of room for 2 families. The ad states that there is room for 8 vehicles and rv parking too. This goes back to the Septic System, Noise and Parking issues.
- **Parking** Parking is often an issue as the driveway for some of the short-term rental properties does not accommodate for all the vehicles, resulting in vehicles being parked on the road out front of neighboring properties limiting their parking and/or creating an obstruction for the flow of traffic. The STR located at another STR on Nosbonsing Park Rd had 3 vehicles plus snowmobile trailers of which one was parked on the 2 lane dirt road interfering with the snowplow, school bus, garbage truck and obstructing residents' vehicular view of the road. No parking signs should be installed on the EF roads where STR exist with fines.
- **Trespassing/Fencing** Many of the residents on the Lake in EF do not have fences. Unfortunately, many urban/non-resident visitors have no knowledge or respect for property boundaries causing adjacent residents many problems with dogs and occupants trespassing on, and, damaging properties. There will be also unauthorized use of neighbouring docks. If no ban, and despite the Fencing Act, it should be mandatory in bylaws for STR owners to supply and install dog proof fences at their cost to keep their occupants and pets on their site.
- **Habitable Rooms/Areas Boat houses**, bunkie's and RV trailers have been used to accommodate larger groups. These uses should not be allowed given the septic and overcrowding problems
- **Fire** The occupants of STRs are typically unaware and uneducated regarding the use of fire pits and fireworks. Their lack of understanding puts the rest of us at risk and stress with their bonfires etc. We are fortunate to be surrounded by trees and it would be tragic to have a forest fire for any reason.

- **Recreational Vehicles** STR occupants bring their 8 snowmobiles and their tow vehicles, and trailers to a STR adjacent to residential homes. The noise on the STR unloading, loading, up and down to the lake, on the road when lake access isn't good enough and it is every day that they occupy the STR. This is every weekend in the snowmobiling season and the least number so far has been 6 at a time. STR occupants bring recreational trailers on site which causes overcrowding, septic system and parking problems. Non residents driving ATVs on our roads are accidents waiting to happen. No helmets, kids, high speeds, increased traffic on a winding hilly road that has already had one fatality (non-resident) on Nosbonsing Park Road.
- **Traffic**
Each STR has 2, 3, 4 or 5 or more times vehicles parked in their driveways. That means that they are also using our roads. Specifically, Nosbonsing Park Road is a dirt road that was never meant to accommodate the additional use not only from the STRs but also the additional lots added in the last couple of years. The condition of this road is sub-par and is a dirt road with any vestiges of gravel long absorbed by the sand base. Can our lowly little dead-end road take any more abuse by additional traffic? Is it now unsafe? It is not uncommon to come across a non-resident head on because they have no clue how to drive on rural roads. Non-resident pedestrians have no idea about walking single file facing traffic on the side of the road. It creates dangerous situations for all parties on winding, hilly roads.
- **Existing and Potential Commercial**
STR's are referred to as "ghost hotels". They are commercial money-making animals and STR owners brag in their ads about being "entrepreneurs". STRs affect the lively hoods of the commercial accommodation businesses in EF. Cozy Camp, Big Moose Camp, Birch Hill Camp, and others are commercial entities abiding by the law, paying their commercial licenses, taxes and other fees while STRs, which are COMMERCIAL HOTELS fly under the radar. Our commercial camps/cottages provide short term rentals and they are disrespected and treated unfairly to compete with STRs. STRs are commercial and should be located in commercial not residentially zoned areas.
- **STR Insurance** I question whether the STR owners are carrying liability and fire insurance should the activities on their property affect me, my family/visitors, and our structures, vehicles etc.
- **Fear** I am afraid of verbal and physical harm/retaliation by STR occupants if they are causing problems and I need to call the police/bylaw official/fire dept.

Thank-you for your consideration and I look forward to following the progress of this project.

Beverly Christie-Froud
northernshores760@gmail.com