



AGENDA

Carbondale Planning Commission September 1, 2021- 6:00 p.m.

Due to an increase in COVID-19 cases, this meeting will be held in a virtual format via Zoom:

Meeting login information:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86419855850?pwd=TGxhZEFGaEROZlNqNUZXb2txSDhCUT09>.

Meeting ID: 864 1985 5850

Passcode: 519462

Audio Only Dial-in: 1 (312) 626-6799

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**
2. **Approval of Minutes:** June 2, 2021
3. **Citizen Comments and Questions**
4. **Report of Officers, Committees, Communications**
5. **Public Hearings**

PC #22-01 – The City of Carbondale is requesting a text amendment to Title 15 of the Carbondale Revised Code as it relates to the owner occupancy requirement of Vacation Rental Units. The notice of public hearing is attached for your information.

6. **Old Business**

None
7. **New Business**

None
8. **Adjournment**



MINUTES

Carbondale Planning Commission Wednesday, June 2, 2021 3:00 p.m. Webinar Meeting

Ms. Litecky called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

Members Present: Sheffer, Hamilton, Lilly, Litecky, Henson

Members Absent: Miller, Burnside, Love, LeBeau

Staff Present: Lenzini, Brightharp and Maxwell

1. Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Sheffer moved, seconded by Dr. Hamilton, to approve the minutes for September 9, 2020.

The motion to approve the minutes with corrections passed with a unanimous voice vote.

2. Citizen Comments or Questions

There were none.

3. Report of Officers, Committees, Communications

There were none.

4. Public Hearings

There were none.

5. Old Business

There was none.

6. New Business

- A. Mr. Lenzini went over the new staff structuring that occurred since the last meeting, as well as the changing of the name Development Services Department to Community Development Department. Mr. Lenzini stated that the purpose of the

meeting is to touch base with the Commission members and to let the members know of the changes that has happened within the Planning Department. Mr. Lenzini went over the future projects that are coming up within the department. There was a discussion on the outcome of the census and the future of Home Rural.

Ms. Leticky asked when in person meetings will resume.

Mr. Lenzini stated that the next meeting will be in person as the government has started to open back up.

Ms. Leticky ask if the SIH Project, a new urgent care, that was approved in the previous meeting has started or when it will start.

Mr. Lenzini stated the department has not seen any plan submissions on that project at this time.

Ms. Leticky ask what is in the old hotel on New Era and Route 13.

Mr. Lenzini stated that it is a hotel and it's open and has been remodeled.

6. Adjournment

Ms. Litecky adjourned the meeting at 3:30 p.m.

M-E-M-O-R-A-N-D-U-M

TO: City of Carbondale Planning Commission

FROM: Molly Maxwell, Planner

RE: PC 22-01, Text Amendment Relative to the Owner-Occupied Requirement of Vacation Rental Units

DATE: August 24, 2021

(Planning Commission Public Hearing on September 1, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.)

PART A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Applicant:
City of Carbondale
200 South Illinois Ave.
Carbondale, IL 62901
2. Requested Action and Background:

The City of Carbondale has allowed the use of vacation rental units (VRU's) in residential districts (R-1, Low Density Residential; R-2, Medium Density Residential; R-3, High Density Residential; PUD, Planned Unit Development; RMH, Planned Mobile Home; AG, Agriculture; F, Forestry), as well as the downtown district (BPR- Primary Business District) since December 2016. The standards can be reviewed on Exhibit A, an excerpt from *Accessory Uses, Structures, and Buildings*, 15.3.4.2.C of the Carbondale Revised Code.

In response to multiple requests from land owners and residents of Carbondale for the City to reconsider the owner-occupied requirement for VRU's, City staff initiated a text amendment proposal addressing the issue in August 2020. The Planning Commission recommended and City Council approved the removal of the owner-occupied requirement for VRU's in the BPR District (Ordinance 2020-33).

At the July 13, 2021 meeting of the City Council, the removal of the owner-occupied requirement from VRU's in other zoning districts was discussed:

City Staff continues to receive inquiries from current VRU operators, property owners, property managers, and potential investors who express interest in obtaining VRU licenses but can't because of the requirement to reside on-site. Enrollment declines at SIU have resulted in much of the older rental housing properties remaining vacant, underutilized, lowering in value, and needing repair.

City Staff believes there is an opportunity for housing in the City to be improved if VRU licensing could be expanded. Similar to the redevelopment of the property at 110 S. Marion, allowing non-owner occupied VRUs provides an incentive to reinvest in property which could improve the overall housing stock, expand the tax base, and increase tourism and sales taxes from increased stays in Carbondale; host companies now collect the hotel tax automatically from their guests and send it directly to the City. Staff also understands that there are concerns among some residents to restrict the expansion of VRU's to residential neighborhoods, specifically R-1 areas. To date, hosting platforms have operated in Carbondale for at least a decade and complaints to the City regarding VRUs have been minimal. VRU hosting platforms are designed to be self-regulating which helps to penalize subpar operators. However, Staff suggests that if Council is open to supporting an expansion of VRUs, R-1 districts should be excluded and only include other zoning districts that permit household living (AG, RR, R2, R3, PUD, RMH, BPL, PA, PAR, and SB). PA and SB require special use permits for residential uses.

--Excerpt from the background submitted by City Staff at July 2021 City Council meeting

During this meeting, City Council heard from six members of the community on this subject. Three said they each own multiple houses in Carbondale and spoke in favor of the change. One stated that Low, Medium, and High Residential could continue to keep the owner-occupied requirement for VRU's.

Two are property owners and VRU hosts in Carbondale, spoke against the change, and one, speaking as a private citizen, cautioned against making a decision without considering the implications and potential effects of such a change and suggested that the Professional Administrative, and Professional Administrative Residential, Districts be left out.

Staff has drafted a revision to Title 15 (Please refer to Exhibit A). These revisions:

- a) Take away the 'owner-occupied' requirement of VRU's in all zoning districts where they are permitted, excepting those in R1, AG, and RR Districts.
- b) Allow for the use of VRU's in nonresidential districts that allow residential uses: PAR, Professional Administrative Office, Residential, district; PA, Professional Administrative Office, district; SB, Secondary Business, district; PAD, Planned Airport, district; and NB, Neighborhood Business District.
- c) Would replace the Zoning Certificate requirement for a VRU with a VRU License acquired through Building and Neighborhood Services.

PART B. ANALYSIS

The ordinance, as it currently stands, requires all VRU's to be the hosts' primary residence, except those in the Primary Business, BPR, District. This requirement limits the amount of

VRU's a host can manage to one. It also vastly limits the type of accommodations that can be offered through a VRU platform, to spare rooms directly attached to the hosts' residence (with just a few unique exceptions).

As proposed in Exhibit A, the revisions to Title 15 would take away the owner- or lessee-occupied requirement from vacation rental units in all districts except R-1. Staff is presenting this proposal in response to many requests from citizens to expand VRU possibilities. The revision would also expand VRU's to nonresidential districts that allow residential uses. PA, PAR, and SB require a special use permit for some or all residential uses. It could be possible for a property in one of these districts with a special use permit for a residential use to be permitted to host a VRU.

Staff has considered input from the community, the City's VRU experience since 2016, and past case decisions and discussions and information from the short-term vacation rental industry as a whole, in compiling its analysis and recommendations. Community input is included as Exhibits B, C, D, and E.

Many guests of VRU's choose this type of lodging instead of hotels because they are seeking the amenities of an entire house, such as the availability of a full kitchen and comfortable space to spend down-time. Exhibit B is a statement from Carbondale resident David Schroeder. His primary residence is his house on Pinewood Drive, and as he and his family spend summers out of town, he has the unique ability to rent out his entire house. He has held a license from the City to do so since 2017. Schroeder states that the vast majority of his guests are families that want a space where everyone has their own bedroom. They can cook in a full kitchen and spend time together comfortably in a living-room setting. This experience is often not available in traditional hotels, or in an owner-occupied VRU.

According to City hotel inspection records, there are approximately 613 traditional hotel/motel rooms in Carbondale. In May 2019, nearly 2600 students graduated from SIU. Assuming each graduate has family or an out-of-town guest attending commencement, there would be a need for 2600 lodging accommodations for graduation weekend - more than four times the amount of available hotel rooms. Expanding VRU allowances would greatly expand the lodging options in Carbondale.

Several VRU hosts in Carbondale, if not all, have significantly improved their homes in order to offer a higher-quality space and, in turn, increase their profits. Commissioners and Councilpersons are likely aware of some of these properties: Main Street, East Oak Street, Pinewood Drive, and Schroeder's newly renovated second VRU on South Marion (in the BPR district which does not require owner-occupancy). Chris Payne has purchased several houses and buildings in Carbondale, such as 510 West Walnut Street, and made significant improvements. He stated at the July council meeting that having the ability to rent out properties as VRU's would be the only way he could continue to invest in these properties and make a profit. Currently, VRU's are limited to only owner-occupied residences, and only in residential districts except for the Primary Business District. The intent of this rule is that hosts are more likely to keep up the property if it is their own residence and that the host is immediately available if there

is an incident. Last year, City Council ruled to allow non-owner-occupied VRU's in the Primary Business District.

Cities such as Los Angeles and London see negative impacts to their housing markets from the "AirBnB Effect"¹. Property owners see more profit potential renting out their spaces to tourists than they might from long-term renters. These are also places where the housing market is already very competitive and rent is already very high.

Based on the discussion on this topic at the July 13th, 2021 meeting of the City Council, citizens' and council members' concerns for VRU increase in Carbondale are more about the possibility of guests throwing parties, the deterioration of neighborhood and zoning district character, and the opportunities for current property owners and international companies to make more money with no further investment in the community. No one can say that a party will never happen in a VRU, one has been reported to staff since VRU's began operating in Carbondale. To mitigate some of these risks, the city can mandate hosts of VRU's have a local agent who would be responsible for responding to concerns, as is done with traditional landlords.

Jim Keller is a real estate agent and VRU host in DuQuoin (Exhibit C), and is interested in expanding his business to Carbondale. He has hosted with AirBnB since 2015 and reports zero negative incidents. He does not live on-site, is often out of town, and employs staff to maintain the spaces when he is gone.

At the July 2021 meeting, there was also discussion of whether short-term vacation rentals are a completely self-regulating industry. AirBnB (the first major short-term rental internet platform and covers more than 50% of the short-term rental market) asks the guest for a review of the host and accommodations after each stay, with specific questions on friendliness of host, cleanliness of space, whether the post and photos accurately described the space, etc. These reviews are posted directly on the hosts' page for all potential renters to read. If a host or guests gets a certain amount of negative reviews or complaints, they are removed from the platform. Creating a new profile would be a challenge, if it is even possible. The site requires every user's credit card number and a government-issued ID, at a minimum. There may even be more requirements for hosts.

Another concern is that of diminishing neighborhood quality by making a single-family home less desirable to a potential buyer if its neighbor is a VRU. Staff believes that focusing VRU expansion in R-2, R-3, PA, and PAR is more likely to have the opposite effect on those districts. The many deteriorating properties in these areas would only be profitable on a VRU platform if significantly improved and invested in. Still, further restrictions in regulating the number of VRU's in a neighborhood or district, could be considered.

The industry of short-term rentals has already significantly evolved during its short lifespan, even since 2016-2017 when Carbondale decided to permit the use with contingencies. All hosting platforms are now responsible for paying the local lodging tax. This cost is passed on to

¹ Barker, Gary. "The AirBnB Effect on Housing and Rent." Forbes Magazine, February 21, 2020. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/garybarker/2020/02/21/the-airbnb-effect-on-housing-and-rent/?sh=615417e62226>.

the host, and then passed on to the guest. Since July 2019, the City has received a payment from AirBnB every month (except March 2020) between the amount of \$382 and \$3,864, for a total of \$52,960. The City has received \$4,351 from VRBO. AirBnB encourages hosts to abide by their local zoning regulations, and offers a direct way for neighbors of rentals to directly report problems through their website.

With the added mandatory lodging tax and other additional fees most hosts add on to cover their own costs, plus the steadily-rising percentage the platform cuts from the top, a standard AirBnB rental is no longer as cheap as it once was. One would be hard-pressed to find the \$20 room that originally brought AirBnB its popularity. Staff believes that in order for one to significantly profit from hosting a VRU, they have to offer a unique, comfortable, clean experience. In order to do that, a property owner would need to improve and maintain that property in a more than satisfactory manner.

Carbondale does not suffer from the housing shortage of many large cities and major vacation destinations. Rising property values are desired in Carbondale, and staff believe expanding VRU allowances is one way to boost property values and improve existing properties, while allowing citizens to provide enjoyable experiences to the area and benefit from it as an industry. Staff can continue to amend the way permits are regulated, and use this system to mitigate some of the risks of this allowance.

PART C. RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the proposed text amendment for PC 22-01.

Exhibit A - Use Table

§2.29 PERMITTED AND SPECIAL USES, NONRESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS REGULATIONS

TITLE 15. ARTICLE 2. DISTRICT

NONRESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS USE TABLE												
USE CATEGORIES	USE TYPES	NB	PAR	PA	SB	BPL	BWA	BPR	LI	GI	PAD	USE STANDARD
trade (See §3.1.10.D)	Commercial and industrial machinery and equipment									P	P	
	Construction equipment								P	P		
	Drugs, chemicals and allied products						P		P	P	P	
	Dry goods and apparel						P		P	P	P	
	Electrical and electronic goods						P		P	P	P	
	Farm equipment						P		P	P		
	Farm and grain mill products								P	P		
	Furniture and home furnishings						P		P	P	P	
	Groceries and related products						P		P	P	P	
	Hardware, plumbing, and heating equipment and supplies				P ⁴		P		P	P	P	
	Lumber and other building materials				S		P		P	P	P	
	Machinery, equipment and supplies						P		P	P	P	
	Mail-order house				S		P		P	P		
	Merchandise vending machine operators				S		P		P	P		
	Motor vehicles, equipment, parts and accessories						P		P	P	P	
	Paint, glass and wallpaper				P ⁴		P ⁴		P	P		
	Paper and paper products						P		P	P	P	
	Professional equipment, instruments and supplies						P		P	P	P	
	Transportation equipment									P		
	Welding equipment and supplies						P		P	P		
	Wholesale trade of products produced on the premises						P		P	P		
Other Uses												
	Cannabis craft grower				P		P		P	P		
	Cannabis cultivation center				P		P		P	P		
Agriculture (See §3.1.11.A)	Plant nursery or greenhouse	S			S		P		P	P	P	
	All agricultural uses										P	
Resource Extraction (See §3.1.11.B)	All resource extraction except hydraulic fracturing ⁶								S	S		
Vehicles and access	Private access roads or streets to or from a permitted use in an adjoining zoning district	S	S	S	S		S		S	S	S	§3.3.1.V
	Motorized recreational vehicle use				S		S		S	S		
Accessory Uses	Vacation Rental Units	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u> ¹⁰	<u>P</u> ¹⁰			P			<u>P</u>	§3.4.2.C

¹ In BPL, day care centers for children including child care centers, day nurseries, nursery schools, kindergartens, play group and centers or workshops for mentally or physically handicapped children shall be permitted as a permitted use only when they are approved as part of the development plan.

² Within 250 feet of property owned by a public school agency and used for elementary or secondary school educational purposes, uses identified with this footnote shall be considered as special uses in the respective districts.

³ In PAR and PA, Bed and Breakfasts are subject to the Special Use Standard detailed in §3.3.1.F.

⁴ Only if within completely closed buildings.

⁵ In BPL, automotive repair services are permitted only as accessory uses to: a) the retail sale of motor vehicles, or b) the retail sale of automotive accessories.

⁶ Hydraulic fracturing (fracking) shall not enter or infringe upon the City of Carbondale's zoning jurisdiction from a location outside of the zoning jurisdiction.

¹⁰ Property must have Special Use Permit for a residential use in order to operate a Vacation Rental Unit.

Zoning Ordinance

Exhibit A - VRU Standards

criteria set forth in paragraph 2 below may be allowed as a Special Use by the City Council, in accordance with §6.8.

2. Standards

To qualify as a home occupation, the use must meet all of the following criteria:

- (a) No persons other than members of the family residing on the premises in question shall be engaged in such occupation;
- (b) The total horizontal area, including, but not limited to, basement areas and cellar areas, used for a home occupation does not exceed 25 percent of the entire, aggregate horizontal floor area, including, but not limited to, basement areas and cellar areas, of all dwelling units and all accessory buildings located on the premises in question;
- (c) There is no change in the outside appearance of any buildings or of the premises or other visible evidence of the conduct of such home occupations other than any sign permitted home occupations by §4.10.5;
- (d) No sales, other than the sale of goods produced or repaired in connection with such occupation and occasional sales of products normally sold by other businesses similar to the home occupation are made on the premises in question;
- (e) Any need for parking space created because of the conduct of such home occupation shall be met by providing off the street parking space;
- (f) No noise, vibration, glare, fumes, odor, smoke, or electrical interference of any kind that is either noxious or unreasonably disturbing to others not engaged in such home occupation is caused by or results from such home occupation;
- (g) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary hereinabove contained, home occupation shall not be construed to include the occupations of chiropractic treatment, dentistry, law, medicine, optometry and real estate sales and rentals.
- (h) A petition of support, signed by the occupants of all adjoining property and adjacent properties across the street, shall be submitted to the Planning Services Division at the time of application.

C. Vacation Rental Units

1. Applicability

- (a) A Vacation Rental Unit meeting all of the criteria set forth in paragraph 2 below is a use by right; it shall require a ~~Zoning Certificate, to be issued administratively in accordance with §6.2;~~ **license obtained from the Building and Neighborhood Services Division;**

2. Standards

To qualify as a Vacation Rental Unit, the use must meet all of the following criteria:

- (a) Vacation Rental Units shall be limited to owner occupied or lessee occupied property, ~~except for those located in the BPR, Primary Business, zoning district~~

in the R1, Low Density Residential; AG, Agriculture; and RR, Rural Residential, Districts;

- (b) Vacation Rental Units shall be limited to any legally constructed primary or accessory structure designed and built for use as a dwelling;
- (c) Occupancy of the Vacation Rental Unit shall comply with the occupancy standards of the zoning district in which the unit is located;
- (d) For any one renter, Vacation Rental Units shall not be rented for any period shorter than 24 hours or longer than 29 days;
- (e) All advertisements for the Vacation Rental Unit must include the applicable permit number in its listing;
- (f) The homeowner or lessee must maintain a Vacation Rental Unit license as permitted by the Building and Neighborhood Services Division;
- (g) The licensee must maintain Fire, Hazard and Liability insurance on the property;
- (h) The licensee must maintain minimum liability insurance with limits not less than \$500,000 for each individual and \$1,000,000 per occurrence.
- (i) Two parking spaces shall be provided per dwelling unit. A property owner may count one on-street parking space towards the number of parking spaces required. Minimum parking requirements do not apply to Vacation Rental Units located in the BPR, Primary Business, zoning district.

§3.4.3. On-Site Storage and Parking or Use of Major Recreational Equipment or Certain Vehicles

A. Parking, Storage, or Use of Major Recreational Equipment

For purposes of these regulations, "major recreational equipment" is defined as including boats and boat trailers, travel trailers, pickup truck campers not mounted on said pickup truck, motorized dwellings exceeding twenty feet (20') in length, tent trailers, utility trailers and the like, tents, and cases or boxes used for transporting recreational equipment, whether occupied by such equipment or not. No major recreational equipment shall be parked or stored on any lot in a residential district except in a carport or enclosed building or behind the front line of a building. The recreational vehicle must be parked or stored on an improved surface in accordance with the paving standards for the district in which it is located. Such recreational equipment may be parked anywhere on residential premises for a period not to exceed 72 hours during loading or unloading. No such equipment shall be used for living, sleeping, or housekeeping purposes when parked or stored on a residential lot, or in any location not approved for such use.

B. Parking and Storage of Certain Vehicles

Automotive vehicles, trucks or trailers of any kind or type without current license shall not be parked or stored on any residentially zoned property other than in completely enclosed building.

Exhibit B

My name is David Schroeder. My wife Stacy and I have hosted our house at 27 Pinewood Dr., as a licensed vacation rental unit in Carbondale since 2017. We often spend the months of July and August in New Hampshire and thought renting our house out while we were away might be a good idea. We have found this to be true.

We are Airbnb Superhosts and VRBO premier hosts – the highest level of host on each platform and one that takes numerous metrics to achieve. We have been amazed at the quality of guests who choose our home as their place to stay while in Carbondale. We assumed nearly all of our guests would be affiliated with SIU or Memorial Hospital but that has not been the case. This summer we had a group of 6 people who were competing at the Sparta, IL World Shooting Complex choose our house as their accommodation and we had 2 other families choose our house because of our pool and Carbondale's proximity to the Shawnee National Forest. These groups had no affiliation with Carbondale or SIUC but spend their money in Carbondale, dined at local restaurants and shopped local stores.

In reviewing my messages from guests on Airbnb and VRBO, an approximate breakdown of guests over the last few years is as follows:

SIU parents: 25%

SIU graduates returning to Carbondale: 25%

Doctors/Staff associated with Memorial Hospital or families visiting patients: 10%

The remaining 40% seemingly have no affiliation with Carbondale or SIUC. A few years ago we had a family with brothers/sisters in Alabama and Wisconsin who chose our home because it was a halfway point between where they lived. In addition, the number of guests who are from the Chicago area and choose to stay in our home as a home base for their hiking, fishing, boating vacation in Southern Illinois is significantly higher than we thought.

The quality, friendliness, and cleanliness of guests we have had is excellent. In talking with friends and families who also rent their homes out in other areas of the country, and attending a few Airbnb online symposium's, single family homes seem to have very little guest issues. The problems mainly seem to arise when landlords rent out their entire apartment buildings. Rental cost is also an issue. Much like hotels, the lower the price per night, the more issues there seem to be.

We have never had any issues with parties or large gatherings. Both Airbnb and VRBO allow you to strictly forbid "events" at your house and we have chosen to do this. We also do not rent to those 25 and under, which is another setting that both major platforms allow you to have on your listing. Our house is also somewhat large and has a pool so the vast majority of our guests are families. In our experience both platforms give homeowners the tools they need to adequately "screen" guests and make sure those staying in our home not only take care of our home, but make our neighborhood enjoyable. Our neighbors have told us they enjoy the sounds of families swimming in our pool on a hot summer day.

Two things I would like to point out:

1. Airbnb and VRBO both attract families. Many families going on vacation no longer want to stay in 2 separate hotel rooms and just order pizza. They want to stay in a house where they have the ability to cook and dine together and then relax on a sofa and sleep in their "own rooms" all while having amenities like a patio and washer and dryer available.

2. Carbondale has a lot of very nice homes that are sorely in need of rehabilitation. Expanding the VRU to areas where these houses are would enable investors like me to reinvest in Carbondale. With the student population declining, rehabbing these houses for VRU use seems to be an excellent solution.

Item #1 above attracts families. Item #2 helps our neighborhoods. Enhancing and expanding VRU regulations within the City of Carbondale has the rare ability to both attract families and tourists to Carbondale and help our neighborhoods. With the proper government oversight this is a win-win solution.

Exhibit C

From: [Jim Keller](#)
To: mmaxwell@explorecarbondale.com
Cc:
Subject: ABNB Zoning Restrictions in Carbondale
Date: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 10:54:11 PM

Dear Molly

I want to thank you for a candid and informative conversation earlier today. In addition I am pleasantly surprised that this topic is fresh on the agenda of the council. My apologies if this sounds a bit broken;

Let me first introduce myself as an ABNB host and frequent guest user of the platform. I have been running 2 ABNB lofts in downtown DuQuoin since 2015. During these near 7 years we have logged ~ 220 reviews and hosted over 300 unique guests. Our establishment is on Main St, it is adjacent to the Sacred Heart Church and at the head of a street that leads to long established family neighborhood and a day care center. We pull 1 night stay guests off of I64 and I57 all the time just for a nights stay during their travels. We are 5 Star, Super Host and proof that people are loving their ABNB's. Problems with our guests from the beginning are exactly 0. Over 300 unique guests, many of these become repeat guests and no issues whatsoever. I have not gathered this data but it is safe to say that 90% of my guests come from somewhere else. From area cities as STL and CHI to California, New York, Florida, Texas. You can get my point that our guests are from all over the country. Another point to mention, I do not live on premises. In fact there are many months out of the year that I manage the properties from the east or west coasts while I am working. I have cleaning staff that handle the rest.

As a traveler I use ABNB quite a bit. I am currently in AZ for 16 months and staying in a different ABNB every 6 weeks just for the unique experiences. I stay in backyard casitas, above storefront bldgs, snow bird homes, multifamily units, shared homes, condos. Some of these are in family neighborhoods and some in retirement communities. There are 6 million people in this valley yet they have not found it necessary to place the restrictions that Carbondale has on home and bldg owners? I am puzzled by the data set that Carbondale observed while cities and municipalities throughout US and Europe have not come to the same conclusion.

AirBNB review system

The unique and powerful engine of ABNB is the host and guest review system. If you are an unclean and cluttered host, your guests' reviews will reflect it and your business will suffer as a result of it. If you are an unsafe or an unsavory host, you are going to lose your privilege to advertise or use the platform. Same goes for a guest. If a guest has repeated poor reviews and/or becomes a true menace, they are going to be removed and forbidden to use the platform. it's brilliant and it appears to work. I think I understood one argument that if the host occupied the premises that they could be there to stop a loud party or a rukus going on. I am thinking that 911 gets called just like if someone in your neighborhood were to get out of control.

ABNB Crime Statistics

Good luck making an argument from published data. There might be more frequent issues at the local Circle K.

Southern Illinois is beautiful and Carbondale used to be a mecca for this beauty. Folks in surrounding towns and counties all benefit from being ABNB owners as well as local food and drink vendors who will serve these guests. This zoning issue needs to be resolved and should not serve to benefit but just a few.

Thank you Molly for the platform. I hope that there is change in the city soon.

Regards,

Jim

From: nick hudson <nick.hudson1790@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, August 16, 2021 3:43 PM

To: jlenzini@explorecarbondale.com

Subject: Vacation Rentals

Hello,

I recently received two tickets regarding operation of a vacation rental within city limits. After reading the city code I have realized I would not be eligible for approval of a license to operate a vacation rental in Carbondale. My properties are in the R3 and PA zone. This is unfortunate to me, and I feel a disservice to the transient people of the City of Carbondale.

Laws and codes should be thoroughly planned out and approved for good reason. I'm having a hard time wrapping my head around why the City of Carbondale would have such tight restrictions on vacation rentals.

Airbnb is the platform I use for marketing, booking, and payment processing. Airbnb collects and remits all state and local taxes. The City of Carbondale will receive an annual payment for all tax collected from those listings within city limits. This obviously covers any concerns the city would have regarding hotel/lodging taxes. Airbnb also encourages a review system like peer to peer. Both the host and the guest are allowed to leave a public review at the end of the stay. This helps with quality control. The support team at Airbnb also assists if there are any issues that that seem to be unresolved. Airbnb also has the authority to suspend or remove listings if a host does not comply with their standards of service. I have on site management and third-party cleaners to make sure the quality of my units is satisfactory.

The people that have stayed with us have come to Carbondale for a wide variety of reasons. We can offer a feasible and affordable place for anyone who wants to visit Carbondale and all it has to offer. Many of our guests have become repeat guests. We leave brochures and make recommendations for guests to spend their time and money here in Carbondale. During this current pandemic we had several 13-week contracted nurses stay with us. Two of them have enjoyed the area so much they found a long-term home here in Carbondale.

I think it's important to consider why a code placing restrictions on vacation rentals in Carbondale is a good idea. If you find a good reason for there to be restrictions, you should carefully plan out the code.

If you have any questions or are looking for recommendations feel free to contact me.

Below is info regarding tax remittance.

<https://www.airbnb.com/help/article/2303/occupancy-tax-collection-and-remittance-by-airbnb-in-illinois>

From: Phillip Carrier <pgcarrier@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2020 4:45 PM
To: bdion@explorecarbondale.com
Subject: Vacation Rental Code

Hi Brice,

Kate and I are casually looking at various rental opportunities. After booking an Airbnb in Knoxville this weekend for a trauma recertification course Kate needs, I looked at what is available in Carbondale. To be honest, minus a handful of decent ones, it's pretty pitiful. Most listings that I found that I would want to rent are outside of town.

The first thing I thought was that nobody must have really tried to do nice Airbnb's here and that seems like an opportunity. I got on Zillow and was looking at some properties and decided to investigate what Carbondale Code says and found that it has a requirement for the owner to live on site. I think this is a huge burden and missed opportunity.

I understand the value of these types of policies in cities with limited housing stock where high levels of tourism means that vacation rentals are in high demand. In those places vacation rentals increase property values and often big rental companies come in and buy up lots of houses which pushes out the local folks who then can't afford to live there. In many places I believe this type of code protects its citizens. In Carbondale, we have a situation where there is an abundance of rental stock rotting away and a lack of people to fill it.

The City has done some things to address this and promote redevelopment including the Single Family Housing Conversion program, upper story TIF incentives, and other City funded programs. These programs are great but as I believe the City has seen - the impact they have made is very limited. Much more funding needs to go into these programs to make them successful.

Obviously the other tools that the city has available to direct redevelopment are the code, zoning, and policy. Right now the vacation rental code in Carbondale does not allow for people who have money to purchase and update properties to serve as vacation rentals. For example, I have an interest in purchasing properties and updating, furnishing and landscaping them to a high level, because I believe there is a need and the opportunity to make a profit is there. I also already have a house and don't have a desire to live on site in an Airbnb.

It seems to me that redevelopment of properties for vacation rentals within certain parts of town could have a positive impact for those neighborhoods and adjacent business districts. They also would fill a need for people looking to travel to Carbondale. You can look through reviews of the properties available on Airbnb and see that people travel here for many reasons including visiting SIU students, working at Memorial Hospital, and outdoor recreation to name a few. I think there needs to be an acknowledgement that how people travel has changed and many people prefer an Airbnb over a hotel. In Carbondale I think there is a shortage of high quality choices. People who travel who use vacation rentals have high expectations for quality and the success of a rental hinges on good reviews. There is massive incentive for hosts to keep their properties nice. Shouldn't that be something we want?

Allowing development of Airbnbs with the owner living off site would be mutually beneficial for the City and the business owner. With higher quality vacation rentals available, hotel tax revenue would increase. Downtown would see more people if there were more lodging options close, resulting in more sales for local businesses and therefore more sales tax revenue. Neighborhoods that are deteriorating would see money pumped into them. And those that have chosen to invest in updating these properties would make a profit. Win, win.

I'm no expert on the different types of vacation rental code, but there seems like there isn't a happy medium in Carbondale. The current code seems like an adoption of a policy from a place that needed to protect its citizens from tourism displacing them. Can you imagine if only Carbondale had that problem? I think we're about a hundred steps away from that extreme. There should be ways to write a code where it can both allow for development of this type of business and find ways to put in protections if needed. I think the implementers of this code were trying to be proactive by trying to solve a problem that wasn't there and in fact has stunted the development of a sector of lodging that is crucial to making Carbondale an attractive place to visit. I'm sure there are reasonable examples of vacation rental code across the country and the City should investigate them. I believe the Carbondale code is worth revising.

Anyway, I know you are mainly the enforcer, but wanted to share my thoughts on the topic. I'm sure I'm not the only one who wants to put money back into this town.

Cheers,

Phillip