

Re-evaluation of Short-term housing rules

Elisabeth S. Wed 1/25/2023 2:41 PM

To:town comments <tcomments@kitteryme.org>;

Regarding short term rental rules in Kittery Maine.

Dear Ms. Amaral and Members of the Kittery Town Council,

Hello All!

I am, and have been, of the opinion that the residents of our lovely, and very special, town of Kittery/Kittery Point should have the right to rent and manage their homes as they please, provided they are respectful to their neighbors and there are no issues with their short term tenants. As such, I am very grateful that you are considering changing the rules for short term rentals that you set in place a few years ago. I do not believe that capping the number of rentals was fair to everyone.

I have already lost considerable income due to the fact that I was late to the game. When you instituted a first come, first come first serve policy for short term rentals I was not ready to rent my home and I did not know that I had missed the boat. I still had teenagers at home. I was married, and life was very different. When I was ready, and I needed to supplement my income, I filed my application with the town and learned that I was 49th on the waiting list.

Learning this was doubly irksome as I knew for a fact that many people in town, and out of town, who had been granted licenses, did not use them. I had been out and about on numerous occasions and had heard people say that they didn't use their licenses but they liked to keep them, just in case. I could not and cannot see the fairness in that. I also don't see how it is fair that some people have had the opportunity to make a veritable killing on their summer rentals while others have been told that they will have to wait years to have the opportunity to supplement their incomes by making their homes, and the sweat of their labor, work for them.

I have labored on my property for 20 years. I have been a good neighbor and a very, very good steward of my land. Now I am single and facing retirement, rising insurance costs, out of this world medical insurance costs, enormous oil bills, huge electrical bills, and everything else. We all know what I'm talking about. Also, my home and property are evermore expensive to maintain. I can't do it all on my own. I hope to be able keep my home and my property and pass it on to my children, who were born and raised here. My place is a special place, and Kittery is a special community, one that I love, one that we all love, and want to preserve. Lately, as things have been going, I have been on the fence about the need to sell and let go of what I cherish.

Please consider the following—

Firstly, renting my house out year around is not an option, I still use my house, so people who are looking for long-term rental homes in Kittery are not losing out with me, since my house is not an option. I'm not part of that problem.

Secondly, a house that is rented out weekly receives more attention, more frequent cleaning, and can be more more closely monitored, than a house that's rented out by the month, or long term. I have a much better ability to ensure that my home is well-maintained if I have guests coming and going, than if I have people in there for a month, or for multiple months.

Thirdly, if I am away, I will have a professional house manager take care of my renters, my property, and my household. Everything will be carefully maintained and I will be in constant contact with my people. Those of us familiar with Airbnb understand the importance of a five star rating and super-host status. You don't earn that if your property is mis-managed.

Lastly, the people who will come to visit my home and stay with me will dine in our restaurants and shop in our stores and markets. They will come, and they will leave. As far as I see it, that's a good thing.

Thank you for taking the time to read my thoughts on this matter. I hope that you will amend the short term rental rules tonight to be fair to all of us who live here, who love their community, and who want to preserve what they can for themselves, and for children and grandchildren.

Sincerely,

Elisabeth Scholes
47 Cutts Island Lane
Kittery Point, Maine

Hobby Farms and noise ordinance

Christine Barstow Mon 2/13/2023 9:56 AM

To: town comments <tcomments@kitteryme.org>;

To the Kittery Town Council

I am writing in response to a neighbor's concern regarding the keeping of chickens in a suburban neighborhood. I live in the same neighborhood, on the same road, as Mr. Sredzienski. Currently, I keep 6 hens and 1 rooster. I love my chickens! They are housed only 20 feet from the room that my family spends most of their time in and the noise is minimal. I frequently walk Dion Ave and rarely hear another rooster on our road. With that being said, I also don't mind the noise from the chickens, or I wouldn't have them at all. Our surrounding neighbors have not expressed any concern regarding noise level and frequently have stopped, in good weather when the chicks are out, to ask about them.

I mirror the sentiment of Mr. Sredzienski when I tell you that I did not make my life's biggest financial investment to be told that I cannot keep a small amount of chickens, hardly a "chicken farm". I know that my chickens are not the ones in question, but I also know that does not protect me if the council decides to entertain this issue. I know, having been a resident of Kittery most of my life, that our town values community and sustainability. Hobby farms are allowing folks to provide their own food in a time when food costs are rising. Roosters are a critical part of this process as they protect the flock from predators.

I do not see that the noise of backyard chickens is more offensive, or a larger issue, than a barking dog, air traffic from Pease or the noise that permeates from the Navy Yard.

I thank you in advance for your consideration.

Christine Barstow & family
Dion Ave.