Short Term Rentals Working Group Meeting #2
Meeting Summary

Date: February 1, 2021
Location: WebEx Teleconference
Attendance: Rafe Sacks, Aihua Ji, Rob Ferguson, Eldon Wong, Noam Dolgin, Kenny Hammond, Hanna Wolff, Patrick Audley, Mo Vaziri, Karen Dar Woon, Rob Takeuchi, Kelly Riopelle, Kristie Starr, Claire Thompson, Matthew Yong, Koji Miyaji, Caroline Hulbert, Maria Stanborough
Regrets: Rebecca Apostl

Meeting started at 6:32 pm

Introductions

- Land Acknowledgement
- Introduction by Facilitator and City staff
- Acknowledgment of the passing of Ulrike Rodrigues and the loss of her voice in the group. Recognition of one new member of the Working Group.

Recap and Takeaways (Maria)

- There is tremendous engagement and level of commitment in this group
- Ensure different opinions and voices are heard
- The first meeting included setting up the information. This time we want to focus on hearing from all of the attendees and have a facilitated dialogue.

Agenda Question #1: *What do you find most confusing or unclear about the City of Vancouver Short Term Rentals Program?*

- Enforcement processes seem unclear and take a long time
    - Legal avenues
    - What happens to 'bad operators'?
- Definition of primary residence
- Licensing process and lack of documentation upfront required to obtain a licence
- Hosts shared challenges with 'bad guests' and lack of means to do anything about them
- How does City enforcement intersect with Strata By-laws and independent enforcement
    - Public information availability for buildings that allow or prohibit STRs
- What are the STR platform relationships like with the City? What are the specifics of the partnership with the City and Airbnb

7:20 Three minute break

7:25 Highlighting commonalities and differences (Maria)

- Is there a way to look into changing the licensing process ?
- It seems the City has to be a detective agent. Can the STR platforms do more work?
- The issue of how 'primary residence' is defined - can someone have a primary residence that they don't live at?
- Multilayers of province, City and Strata relationship to be explored.

Agenda Question #2*: In your opinion, what would help to make the Short Term Rentals program more clear?*

- Enforcement process needs to be more transparent so community knows what happens to bad operators
    - Increased ticketing for offenders
- Documentation requirement at application stage, including landlord and strata approval
- Additional support for stratas to enforce bylaws
- Increased transparency regarding operators in public registry
- An STR industry oversight body to have industry regulators
- Multi-language support lines to assist
- Increased platform accountability for shutting down non-compliant listings
- Restrict the number of days that allowed to operate to ensure primary residence
- Increased cooperation between the various levels of government
- Registry of properties that allow/prohibit STRs
- Enforcement data on unlicensed operators

Agenda Question #3: *What would you like to have covered at the next meeting?*

- To see the City's long term rental plan, dovetailed with their drive for more rental stock
- An easy way for owners to get information on compliance and what is eligible for STR license
- The responses from the City to the questions posed tonight
- What are the constraints regarding enforcement ideas? Guidance on what is realistic, what is feasible and if something isn't and why
- To hear what the City can do to pressure and regulate Airbnb and other online platforms
- Whether the current housing strategy or housing engagement is going to include short-term rentals
- What the City is offering to support stratas
- To explore the relationship of Airbnb and Vancouver, vs other cities. Seeing where we fall on a city basis could be insightful
- Rationale of the primary residence decision

Closing - one word from the participants

- Hopeless, Helpless, Engaged, Concerned, Curious, Hopeful, Frustrated, Good, Deep, Optimistic

Meeting ended at 8:10pm. Next meeting April 5, 2021