

Minutes
Short-Term-Rental (STR) Task Force
Thursday, March 17, 2022
City Council Chambers

Members of the STR Task Force met on March 17, at 11 a.m. in City of Brevard Council Chambers, with council members, Aaron Baker and Geraldine Dinkins, presiding.

Present:

Co-Chairs Aaron Baker and Geraldine Dinkins

Task Force members: Nory LeBrun, Jeremy Owen, Madeline Offen, DeeDee Perkins, Hannah Bowers

Volunteer Presenter: Annelise Hagedorn

Absent: Tripp Presnell, Isaac Allen, Aaron Bland, Mack McKeller

Council member Baker called the meeting to order at 11:07

A. Quorum established (7 members present),

B. Agenda for today's meeting and Minutes from the February 17 meeting approved, so moved by task force member LeBrun and seconded by task force member Offen.

C. Sub-Committees Updates:

Data Gathering Sub-Committee

1. Task force member Jeremy Owens let the group know that the economic study commissioned by the task force is half-way completed with the economic impact numbers and data in, but the second half that will study the impact of STRs on housing remains to be finished and is expected to be completed by early summer. Task force members opted to not see the report when it is complete, instead of in pieces. And directed Owens to let the study group know that the task force would like to receive the completed study in advance of a presentation to the task force. In response to a question from Baker, Owens said that the only other study to compare ours to will be the one from Buncombe. Henderson has not done a specific STR study to his knowledge.
2. Owen's also updated the task force updated on the latest real-estate market numbers (mid-January through Mid-February) Within this timeframe we had 72 active listings within Transylvania County, 24 of them were for properties valued at \$750,000 and up. In all, our county has about one month of housing inventory making it a very constricted market with high demand low supply. A balanced housing market in comparison has 6 months' worth of inventory, spread out over different price points. "Competition for properties has gotten stiff," Owens said.

“People routinely pay more than asking price and often with cash.” This trend is comparable regionally and nationwide, according to Owens. Locally, the housing market is a tough market for buyers for a few different reasons, Owens said. There is population growth, because of our desirable location, we are still making up for homes that were not built during the recession years and are still catching up, and the pandemic has increased the demand especially from people who have learned they can live where they want, not where they work. “We are still an affordable market for people from Atlanta, the East Coast and other areas.”

In a brief discussion responding to task force member Perkins’ question whether we are monitoring our local STR market and looking at other communities policy actions in response to STRs, Baker and council member Dinkins said that they plan to ask task force members Aaron Bland and MackMcKeller to make a presentation to the entire task force to clarify exactly what the limitations of possible contemplated policies currently are, what other towns have been doing, and what legal bases have to be met for council to initiate policy changes that are legally defensible. Baker and Dinkins aim to schedule this presentation for the May meeting at the latest.

Community Survey Sub-Committee

1. The task force reviewed the latest draft of the survey as presented by Annelise Hagedorn. It was cut from 27 to 25 questions, and several questions were amended for brevity, clarity or to avoid bias. The task forces as a whole agreed that survey takers can skip any question and still be counted in the survey, as long as they answer some questions. “Just because someone skips one of the open-ended questions, we should not throw out the data,” Hagedorn advised the task force. Furthermore the task force directed council representatives, Baker and Dinkins to bring a budget request before the city council to pay for mailing and postcards for the survey. It would be sent out to anyone who receives a water bill. Hagedorn will come up with “the magic number” of needed responses that make the data usable as a representative percentage of the city’s 7,000+ population. Hagedorn also advised the task force that the post cards should represent a “first wave” of survey requests, accompanied by a public awareness campaign and a “second” wave” if necessary, should be reaching out to stake holder groups, groups with newsletters etc.

Task force members agreed to meet April 21, at 11 a.m.

Adjourn

There being no further business, Jeremy Owen moved, seconded by Dee Dee Perkins, to adjourn the meeting at 12:21 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes Approved: April 21, 2022

X 

Aaron Baker
Chair, Council Member

X 

Geraldine Dinkins
Co-Chair, Council Member