

**TOWN OF TWISP
PLANNING COMMISSION
September 13th, 2023
REGULAR MEETING**

Call to Order: Commissioner Battle called the meeting to order at 5:01 pm.

Attendees:

Commissioner John Battle
Commissioner Art Tasker
Commissioner Mark Tesch
Council Member Katrina Auburn
Planner Kurt Danison-Remote
Council Member Alan Caswell
Commissioner Ken Borg
Commissioner Rachel Levi

Absent:

Public Comment:

Isabelle Spohn-
Regarding Short Term Vacation Rentals:

The public was very patient in waiting for about a year for the Task Force to be formed. We were told to wait until the Housing Action Plan was approved, but when it was finally brought to the public, it excluded important deliverables in the contract such as:

Step 1.7 - Identify areas or existing rentals in Twisp that may be at higher risk of displacement or conversion to short term rentals and

Step 3.2: Develop anti-displacement strategies.

The Task Force could be making up for these omissions at this time, but so far it hasn't been given the time.

For example:

My residential neighborhood, across Twisp River Bridge, is zoned C-2. It would be at-risk of short-term rentals and displacement of residents.

According to the Action Plan, the Town of Twisp is **most** in need of affordable rentals for single people, such as older adults living alone and young working people. Our neighborhood of now-affordable

homes shouldn't be converted to short-term rentals, which drive up taxes and thus encourage displacement of residents.

Also, currently allowed activities in C-2 zoning, such as **adult entertainment**, defined in code as "sexually oriented businesses," have no place in this actual residential neighborhood and could encourage short-term rentals. Such zoning and use issues should be dealt with before significant decisions are made.

This neighborhood was wrongly rezoned from residential to commercial after an error made by the town in the 1980's. The town mistakenly issued permits for a real estate office **despite the residential zoning. The remedy to save the town from liability and avoid financial damage to the realtor was to rezone the area from Residential to Commercial.**

But our neighborhood hasn't succeeded as a Commercial Zone. Like other attempted businesses here, the real estate office went out of business and is now back to an attractive residence. Other commercial establishments such as one overnight rental, Pearl's Place, have come and gone and are now once again residences. The would- be Escrow building is still vacant. The Idle-Awhile motel has been legitimate since the 1950's and isn't an issue. Across the highway, a large berm and temporary display of rental sheds currently protect a significant wildlife and shorelines area from highway issues.

I suggest that in the interest of high quality and lasting decision-making, the town cease its delayed and now break-neck speed in an effort to make up for lost time. Propose a well thought out ordinance instead. Situations such as our neighborhood need to be identified and addressed, relating to displacement risk and loss of affordable homes.

I recommend extending the moratorium on overnight rentals for 6 months and doing it right - with a town planner who should be paid enough to make it a top priority. This isn't forbidden by law and it's in the town's best interests.

Morgan Sicilia-

Commented in favor of the recommendations that were put before the Council. She stated that she feels very strongly about keeping STVRs out of residential neighborhoods. Rooms inside owner occupied homes would be okay to her.

Public Hearing: Blackbirds Garden Apartments

Public Hearing opened at 5:09

Public Hearing closed at 5:43

This public hearing was recorded and is available at Town Hall

Public Hearing: Blackbirds Townhomes

Public Hearing opened at 5:45

Public Hearing closed at 6:12

This public hearing was recorded and is available at Town Hall

Overnight Rental Task Force:

The commission discussed the Council's concerns.

1. There were several council members who asked why the PC recommended prohibiting owner-occupied STVR's in residential zones. The council members thought that owner-occupied units would be managed well enough to avoid the problems we listed. Additionally, some members thought it was important to preserve residential owner's opportunity to earn extra income.
2. The council asked that we clarify how the requirements listed for property owners would be incorporated into the administrative permit.
3. The council asked that the general living provisions be enforced by the property owners, and not require the guests to sign any obligation.
4. There was a feeling that requesting guest's car license numbers was not necessary.
5. There was concern that 20-minute response time for property owners to be available on site was too short. Two hours was thought to be a better response time.
6. There was a request that the administrative permit requirements and the general living provisions comply with existing coded and be enforceable.

Commissioner Battle made a motion to permit STVRs in residential zones in which an owner is occupying the building that is being rented from. Commissioner Borg seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

7-may

10-add to admin permit

11-change to 1 hour

12-in permit

13-A sign displayed shall be no larger than 2 sq ft

14-permit

15-strike

GLP

List provided by owner to guests at stvr

1-leave as code requirements

Commissioner Levi made a motion to adopt changes as discussed. Commissioner Borg seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Next Steps:

The next meeting is planned for September 27th at 5:00 pm.

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Battle adjourned the meeting at 7:19 pm.



Art Tasker, Commissioner



Heather Davis, Secretary