

MEMORANDUM

To: Town of Camden Select Board Members
Planning Board Members
Audra Caler, Town Manager

From: Jeremy Martin, Planning and Development Director

Date: June 28, 2023

Re: Joint Workshop Between Select Board & Planning Board- Exploring Regulation of Short-Term Rentals (STRs)

The Town of Camden's Planning Board has been discussing the issue of short-term rentals (STRs) and has held numerous workshops to identify goals and objectives for the regulation of STRs. These workshops and their discussions follow up on prior efforts of the Camden Lodging Alliance to get the Town to more adequately address and regulate STRs. As everyone knows there is a critical shortage of housing (of all types) in Camden and throughout the region. There is concern that STRs are negatively impacting the availability of housing and rental opportunities. Included for your reference and review is a summary of past Planning Board workshop discussions on STRs, a copy of the existing STR regulations for the Town of Camden, and examples of how they are regulated in other towns. The latest Planning Board public workshop on regulating STRs was held June 15, 2023. These workshops can be viewed on the Town of Camden's YouTube page. For more in-depth information on short-term rentals, the Agenda Packets for each of these workshops can be accessed by visiting the Town of Camden's Town Calendar website and selecting the agenda packet for any of the Planning Board's workshops.

The Planning Board will brief the Select Board on the Planning Board's initial development of goals and objectives and is looking for comments on moving forward. The Planning Board has determined that the issues around STRs are significant enough that they warrant further review and regulations. Again, the Planning Board has spent significant time on this issue and has reviewed and prepared a lot of background supporting material. To be as efficient as possible, the Planning Board is providing you with information so the workshop can be as productive as possible. The attached materials include a goals/objective document, an outline summary detailing how four (4) other Maine communities regulate STRs, and the Town's current regulations on STRs. Based on the Planning Board's discussions and their goals and objectives document, the Planning Board strongly believes that the Town should take further steps to regulate STRs.

Camden currently has regulations that apply to STRs, and those regulations are attached for your reference. STRs are currently minimally regulated through **Chapter 215, Rentals-Short-Term**, and through the definition of "dwelling unit" in **Chapter 290, Zoning**. Chapter 215 requires the registration of dwelling units that are used as STRs if they are not someone's primary residence. The definition of "dwelling unit" notes that "...a dwelling unit may not be rented for periods of less than seven consecutive days." Enforcement of these existing regulations is extremely challenging. At this point in time, the Planning Board has been discussing the creation of additional regulations on STRs to either be included within *Chapter 290* or elsewhere in the Town's Code of Ordinances, such as a revised *Chapter 215*. Again, Enforcement of these existing regulations is very difficult, if not impossible for several reasons. Based on information obtained from consulting firms that assist communities with regulating STRs it is estimated that depending on the time of year, there are between 270 and 325 STRs in Camden.