

From: Jason Metcalf <jmetcalf@wrightmetcalf.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 20, 2022 10:32 AM
To: suttonsbay@suttonsbayvillage.org
Subject: October 17, 2022, Council Meeting

To the Suttons Bay Village Council,

Many of the comments made during the above referenced meeting were very concerning if not disturbing. Rather than argue with fellow community members while the council looked on, I wish to address some of those comments by this means.

While Ms. Penfold's email of September 26, 2022, was praised by many in attendance, it sets forth some fallacious arguments. She echoes the argument that STRs have raised property values in the village to such a degree that families have to resort to purchasing in Kingsley. This argument has become tired and is less than complimentary to the village of Kingsley. According to her logic, people would buy all the affordable housing stock in Kingsley, convert it to STR, and cause the property values to skyrocket there. That has not happened though because there are qualitative differences between the two villages. Kingsley offers a similar commute time to Traverse City, but it is not situated along the shores of Grand Traverse Bay. Nor does it have a decades long history of being a resort town surrounded by recreational opportunities. Suttons Bay possesses all of these benefits and thus, is more desirable in the real estate market. Desirability has caused property values to increase in Suttons Bay, not STRs. As stated by a member of the community in attendance, "nobody like STRs". How would that work to increase property values anywhere? You need not adopt Ms. Penfold's fallacious argument to justify your actions in reviewing Suttons Bay's STR ordinance.

Regarding the "devastating" effects Ms. Penfold blames solely on STRs, it has not prevented her from marketing properties in other communities based on the availability of STR use. What's good for the goose is . . .

The most concerning comments were those labelling me, the other STR operators, and by implication the tourists who visit the village to be a "cancer destroying the village." Whether the statement was quoting the words of a villager not in attendance or otherwise is irrelevant, given the speaker endorsed it as a basis for eliminating STRs. This is alarming stereotyping and is worrisome given it came from an individual likely to fill your ranks in the near future. He knows nothing about me, or the tight ship I run at my STR, nor does he know the great people who have stayed there. I have acknowledged the issues surrounding STRs in the village and made my case in favor of them without resorting to name calling and alienation. Who else is unwelcome in this community, and what names may be applied to them? No one at the meeting was phased by the comment and in fact, it appeared to elicit smiles, and giggles. I certainly hope the members of the council do not subscribe to such beliefs about certain community members and property owners. By not disavowing his comments, it appeared that the council was in agreement with them.

Another villager in attendance blamed STRs for the lack of children in the village. This is admittedly due to high property values - and the fact that retirees decades beyond their childbearing years have a stronghold on ownership in the village. No one is suggesting that these property owners are a "cancer". According to the October 13, 2022, edition of the Leelanau Enterprise, student enrollment in Suttons Bay is up 7.7% over last year. The biggest increase in the area.

As I stated above, the council has all the legitimate reasons it needs to review and revise the STR ordinance. Please take care not to adopt fallacious or prejudicial arguments that only serve to alienate and divide. After all, those being disparaged will not simply vaporize upon the conclusion of this issue. While the council may feel pressure to adopt the positions of their neighbors, your decision will have far reaching consequences on all businesses in the area. A balanced, fair resolution is most likely to minimize a negative outcome.

As I requested in the October 17, 2022, meeting, I wish to have my prior letter of October 10, 2022, made part of the record, and available for public review along with this communication.

Jason A. Metcalf