



Trinity County Planning

Memo

To: Planning Commission
From: John Jelichich,
Date: October 13, 2016
Re: PW-16-05; Vacation Rentals

Vacation Rentals (a.k.a. residential short term rentals; transient lodging) have been used as a secondary source of income by Trinity County residents for many years; however, with the advent of on-line promoters, this arrangement of renting out one's dwelling to vacationers has grown enormously. Even in other areas of the State which have a long history of vacation rentals, such as the Tahoe area, Yosemite area and Mammoth, the impact of large numbers of these rentals has been felt. A major concern is the effect this use can have on surrounding properties.

A "vacation rental" can be defined as the: "use of any dwelling or portion thereof that is offered or used for lodging accommodations for a period of 30 consecutive days or less."

Staff has begun collecting ordinance examples from other very rural, frontier counties (eg: Amador, Mono, Alpine, Mariposa, Modoc) to see how they are addressing the impacts associated with vacation rentals. All have been working on amendments to their zoning ordinance to address the issue. One county is considering adopting an overlay area for vacation rentals. All are establishing development/performance standards for them. Some of the issues of concern expressed during their review include: a limitation on the number of structures that can be rented on a single property; an occupancy limit tied to the number of bedrooms and capacity of the approved sewage disposal system; a limitation on 'events' such as weddings, parties, reunions fundraisers; noise; outdoor fires; parking; pets (wandering off property or continual nuisance barking; signage (whether to allow them; size limits); trash disposal; and compliance with other laws (eg: building, health).

All of these counties are requiring a permit to monitor activities. One important factor was notification of surrounding land owners that the permit is being considered. A similar approach in Trinity County would be processing of a Planning Director's use permit.

Within the next couple of months, staff will bring a draft copy of a zoning ordinance amendment pertaining to Vacation Rentals for a workshop review by the Planning Commission.

It should also be noted that the Planning Department has received a request for a Planning Commission issued use permit for development of a vacation rental. The applicant is currently working with the Building Department to meet structural standards for some improvements being proposed. This matter may be ready for your consideration in November. Since vacation rentals are not adequately addressed in the zoning ordinance, staff is processing this permit request in a manner similar to a resort.

Recommendation:

This item appears on the agenda under "Departmental Reports"; therefore, no significant discussion, elaborate direction or formal action should be given.

The Commission can, however, direct that the matter not be scheduled for a future agenda, if there is no desire to address this issue.