

Mendocino County

NOV 16 2021

Planning &amp; Building Services

**pbscommissions - Replacement letter - darker one page**

**From:** Elizabeth Swenson <eswenson@mcn.org>  
**To:** <PBS@mendocinocounty.org>  
**Date:** 11/16/2021 10:25 AM  
**Subject:** Replacement letter - darker one page  
**Attachments:** replacement Ltr to Planning Commission re STVR on Albion Ridge Road v2.docx

From: Elizabeth Swenson

To: [PBS@mendocinocounty.org](mailto:PBS@mendocinocounty.org)

November 10, 2021

Case ID U2021-0001(Kung)

I am writing in support of the Planning Commission's denial of the proposed Short Term Vacation Rental (STVR) at 32125 Albion Ridge Road for the reasons referred to in the Planning Department's report.

The county ordinance referenced in the denial of the application is sufficient for this denial, though the fact that the ordinance was written to govern boarding houses indicates it is very old and needs revision as boarding houses have not been popular since the early 1960s.

The number of STVRs on the other hand is growing rapidly - there are approximately 500 registered on the Mendocino coast.

STVRs are no longer about community members renting an extra bedroom; corporate owned and managed vacation rentals are the new owners and they're rapidly buying single-family homes, particularly in tourist communities like ours.

The Housing Action Team - North Coast Mendocino County (HAT) has been researching local and California based STVRs to learn how they're regulated by other cities and counties. Below are few ideas and recommendations from our research.

- **Move fast** - corporations are accelerating the rate at which they purchase houses for STVRs and the resulting depletion of workforce housing is choking the coastal economy.

- **Invoke an immediate STVR moratorium.** It could be permanent or transitional; if temporary two years would be sufficient to create a well-considered, comprehensive ordinance with a robust enforcement.

- **Create an ad-hoc citizen advisory council** to study and recommend elements of a permanent ordinance.

The City of Santa Cruz's citizen committee delivered their ordinance in 6 months.

- **Enforcement**

o Ensure STVRs are registered. HAT's research discovered that up to 50% of STVRs are not permitted and that the average compliance in many communities is between 20 and 40 percent.

o **Make STVR information public** and readily accessible. Publish a website which includes searchable addresses, a location map, contact numbers for on-site managers, and a way to report unpermitted rentals and site modifications; noise, occupancy, parking and fire violations.

o **Enforce violations** with significant fines and revoke licenses of repeat offenders.

o **Anticipate that enforcement costs will be recovered** through permit fees and collecting unrecovered taxes and fines paid by scofflaws.

We cannot build housing fast enough to create the housing we need for our workforce but we can stop further erosion. Active enforcement grounded in good policy will result in fewer short-term rentals and retrieving lost workforce housing.

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