

## Jeannie Veegh

---

**Subject:** FW: Airbnb ordinance

Tiverton Council Members,

My name is Alex Buffman and I own a home at 26 Pierce Ave in Tiverton. I rented out my house through Airbnb all summer and would like to continue whenever it is prudent for me to do so. I attended the last town meeting and spoke at the meeting but I was unprepared and public speaking isn't my strong suit, I would like to put in writing all my thoughts and concerns in regards to the ordinance being discussed to apply to Airbnb, VRBO etc in Tiverton.

Airbnb was intended for a method for people with homes to rent out their house or apartment while going on vacation or to try living somewhere else entirely for a stretch and generate income from your home. More than ever a house is an investment and this app allows it to be more of an active investment. Staying at an Airbnb provides a different staying experience in a locale instead of going to a hotel etc. Of course now it has morphed into something other than I believe the makers of the apps intended with large companies buying properties with the sole intention of renting them out as Airbnbs. I think we can all agree that this is wrong and should be addressed. However I can assure that I am not a large company and my situation is exactly as the makers of Airbnb thought to utilize. I work as a merchant mariner and am at sea for 3 plus months at a time. I also like to travel a great deal which is why I work at sea. This house I've bought is both a home base to check in with family and friends and as investment to supplement my income while at work and or away on a trip.

I understand and am sympathetic towards people that are having a negative experience due to bad actors renting properties with parking issues and parties but I think that is a pretty large brush to paint all Airbnb providers as you saw in the meeting. I have a property manager through a local realtor company that provides a concierge service and is available for any problems 24/7 while the property is rented. I have plenty of parking. I've checked with my neighbors before and afterwards to make sure there were not any issues with renters all summer. I set up my house to be family friendly and the clientele for the most part has been families. There are not a lot of options to stay around in Tiverton and Little Compton area and these vacation Apps definitely provide a necessary service. The \$1,000 fee to run an Airbnb is laughably obscene. How is that going to dissuade some sort of corporate entity from buying up properties to run Airbnbs? If anybody can absorb a \$1,000 fee it is some conglomerate buying up properties in desirable areas. And I assure you all those wealthy home owners that like to rent their properties will have no problem paying that fee and continuing to list their house on the apps. Often those guys don't use Airbnb because they have an established clientele and or because it is a different renting demographic, they just list their properties with a local realtor. I originally intended to do just that but my house isn't quite to that standard. The only thing the \$1,000 fee will do is squeeze out the little guy. Think of the retirees that may want to pad their bank accounts by renting their homes, their asset, during the summer months, why should they be punished?

I'm not saying the complaints are not valid and if you have home with insufficient facilities, ie parking, that should be taken into account. The gentleman that stating that everyone is just leaving Tiverton to go to Newport couldn't be more wrong. Not everyone wants to go to Newport in the summer. In fact I believe there is a large number of people that don't want to go to Newport. Look at the numbers in Tiverton and Little Compton during the summer, do you think these guys are making the drive over there because they couldn't find a spot in Newport. It's a red herring.

The trash issue is a concern but I don't think it's that strong an argument. I have a cleaning service that can be trained accordingly and the renters can be informed through easily understood instructions. Parties can be dealt with on a case by case basis, and I don't believe there is some epidemic of crazy house parties occurring in Airbnbs in the summer.

I've already registered my home with the State of RI for whatever reason,; perhaps Tiverton can access this information to get a handle on the number of houses listed on these Apps. Again, making it onerous to afford to

rent out your Airbnb is unfair and not really going to solve any of the main issues here. I hate to bring it up again, but it certainly won't stop wealthy home owners or large companies from continuing so let's try to have an ordinance that works for everyone. Perhaps some sort permit system that isn't more than a small fee and if your listing violates some of these concerns; parking, parties, etc, then your permit can be revoked. It's 2023 guys, and I suspect that a lot of the complaints come from people that want to arrest the progress and changes occurring in Tiverton and Little Compton. I bought this home as an asset as well as a home and I don't think it's fair to impede this income because of a few bad actors and or the imagined 'what if' threats or problems that could occur.

Best Regards

Alex Buffman