Town Board Members
Town of Taghkanic, NY

December 7th, 2023

RE: Proposed Local Law No. 3 regarding Short Term Rentals presented at the public hearing of the Taghkanic Town Board on December 4th, 2023

Dear Board Members,

After attending the Public Hearing for the Short Term Rental Regulations this past Monday, December 4th, I heard the citizens of this town clearly articulate their concerns about permitting privately run hotels in our small rural town. I believe strongly that these regulations are in need of revision.

I have been a resident of the Town of Taghkanic for 37 years, regularly vote in all elections in Taghkanic, and have enjoyed the rich rural countryside of this little part of the Hudson Valley. I have witnessed the political changes that time has presented our town and participated in the Committee that successfully brought Broadband to Taghkanic. Now I am experiencing a direct impact of these illegal short-term rentals with my neighbor to the left running an STR and my neighbor to the right frequently renting their home as an STR and a wedding venue.

I joined the STR Committee at its inception in 2019 and worked with this small band of dedicated volunteers over four years to finally produce a Draft of Regulations that reflected the current research on the effect of STRs in a community. This Committee spent days researching the effects of STRs on other US municipalities, interviewed Supervisors in nearby towns to hear their experiences with passing regulations, and requested a presentation from Granicus, a host compliance service for monitoring STRs, that designed regulations specifically for Taghkanic emphasizing the need to make all STRs hosted by Primary Residents Only. The Committee's Draft of Regulations was submitted to the Town Board in the winter of 2022 .

The Town Board has now presented a version of STR Regulations that do not reflect the many issues addressed in the STR Committee's draft. As I listened to these strong objections to the current Regulation, I noted that all of these issues were addressed in the STR Committee's Draft of Regulations. The residents speaking at the Public Meeting wanted to include: restricting the clustering of STRs, caps on the number of STRs in our town, better monitoring of septic systems, noise ordinances for loud music, limitation of guests, stronger definition of Resident to include proof of ownership and home owner insurance policies, contracting Trash removal, permit revocation for violation of regulations, and a belief that these regulations will impair the rights of homeowners to enjoy the existing rural and residential character of the town.

It was my hope that the final Regulations would be a reflection of both sides of the issue to help this community live peacefully with the growing influx of small commercial hotels that are changing the rural nature of our town. The present STR Regulation does not in any way reflect what the community wants. I believe this Town Board is ignoring all the recent data available regarding the destructive impact of STRs in both cities and rural communities. For example, the most recent study by New York State Controller Thomas DiNapoli shows how the growing number of STRs will "hollow out a community." Don't let this happen in our town.

This Town Board now has the opportunity to consider new revised regulations that can serve all residents of Taghkanic better and show that this Board can be good stewards of the town.

Regards,

Susan Raymond
9 List Bypass
Craryville, NY 12521