

I am asking the Council to read this letter publicly in its entirety in the next Council meeting.

January 17, 2024

Council Members and Residents,

I am writing this regarding the STR meetings. First, there was a fact-finding committee a few years ago to assess information on what and how many STR's there were in the Village of Empire. What I understood from that report was there was no concern regarding STR's in our Village. There had never been a problem over the years previous in the Village regarding STR's.

Why this was brought up again and another committee of three was appointed to assess this again I do not know. I do believe it is causing concern that the Village Council may feel the STR's have to be regulated. I attended two of the three meetings. Other cities were brought up several times, especially Suttons Bay. I do not think that what happens in other cities, towns, etc. has anything to do with Empire. Several times with discussion in the meetings it would be said maybe, I think, might be, but not be sure about what they were discussing. They did not seem to have actual facts. There is not sufficient data to make any type of decision.

If residents are concerned, we do not bring the tourists here the National Lakeshore does. STR's just accommodate them as best we can. I believe the STR's help to make Empire a lovely place to be as they keep their properties looking genuinely nice. Also, they regulate themselves and guests so as not to be a disturbance in the Village. There are not enough housing rooms in the area to accommodate guests with the Village in the middle of the National Lakeshore. We hear many compliments about how friendly Empire is to the visitors. Guests to our STR's spend quite a bit of money in our Village. One of our guests purchases all their upcoming Christmas presents in Empire. We have two groups that stay in about four different STR's in Empire. These people met here on vacation and continue to have long term friends here. This may not happen in another town.

If the council votes to regulate STR's in some way they may hinder how the STR's run their business. I also do not think the Village Council singles out any other type of business in the Village so why the STR's? If a regulation passes what is next??? There could be a fee for no reason and not benefit the STR? There could be some type of inspection. Who knows what will be next. For our STR we are not at all in favor of any type of regulation. The STR's are just fine without any interruptions.

Ron & Ina Hacker