

## MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION

July 6, 2022

Call to Order: The Public Comment Session of the Greene Township Board of Supervisors, held in the Municipal Building on Brink Hill Rd., Greentown, PA, was called to order by Chair Justin Wittenbrader at 6:39pm, who led the audience with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Purpose: Discuss a proposed ordinance to regulate short-term rentals in the township.

In Attendance: Chairman: Justin Wittenbrader, Vice-Chairman: Barry Krautter, Supervisor: Gerald Obert, Solicitor: Jeffrey Treat, Secretary: Amanda Seagraves, Treasurer: Sandra Oziemblo.

New Business:

- a. **Short-Term Rental Ordinance** – Mr. Treat explained that we are here to see if the residents of the township have any suggestions, criticisms or questions for the board of supervisors regarding the draft ordinance to regulate short-term rentals. The purpose of this proposed ordinance is to address these rentals to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the township residents. Topics that are addressed in the draft ordinance include parking, guest limitations, building requirements and penalties for violations. Mr. Treat opened the floor to visitors:
  - i. **Mike & Merilee Ulisny** – Mrs. Ulisny inquired as to if the enforcement agency has references or history in this department. Mr. Treat explained that there is a new, local agency who is enforcing similar ordinances in Dreher and Lehigh townships. The agency is owned by a man who is looking to take on more townships and hire more employees to specialize in short-term rental ordinance enforcement. Mr. Treat is setting up a meeting with the agency to discuss his fees, contact information and other necessary topics. If our township decides not to use an outside agency, we have the option to assign enforcement to a township employee who has experience in building codes.
  - ii. **MaryLou Reilly** – Observing.
  - iii. **Donna Colby** – Mrs. Colby explained that one of her concerns is for Home Owner's Associations (HOAs) who do not have gates. She asked how they would be able to ensure rental owners comply with this ordinance's regulations, such as parking. Mr. Treat said the board of the HOA would be able to submit their concern and the enforcement officer would investigate. If a property was found to be in violation of the ordinance, the owner would be subject to the penalties. The regulations that the HOA could enforce would be contained to what their bylaws state.
  - iv. **Amy Marciano & Patti Cuartas** – Observing.
  - v. **John & Jane Master** – Observing.
  - vi. **Lori Christopher** – Ms. Christopher is concerned with the rental's garbage encroaching on her property. Mr. Treat said that the draft ordinance requires adequate garbage pick-up.
  - vii. **Robert & April Hartman** – Observing.
  - viii. **William B. Ross** – Mr. Ross said he has the same concern as Ms. Christopher.
  - ix. **Kathleen Prendergast** – Ms. Prendergast stated she thinks the ordinance is comprehensive and reasonable.
  - x. **Rick & Cyndy Wells** – Mr. Wells asked if there will be inspections required before being able to rent a property. Mr. Treat responded that yes, sewage and building inspections would be required before a permit would be issued. Mr. Wells asked if existing rentals would be subject to these inspections. Mr. Treat said yes, they would have to apply for a permit and pass inspections just like new rentals. Mrs. Ulisny asked about Section 12 Operational Standards and Conditions, where it states "Occupancy of recreational vehicles, camper trailers and tents shall not be allowed." If this refers to in addition to a rental house, or if it refers to all of these structures in general. Mr. Treat clarified that the intent was to restrict all recreational vehicles, camper trailer and tents in general. Mr.

Obert said that there are quite a few campers set up in campgrounds with working septic systems that are listed for short-term rentals. Mr. Treat said the decision would be up to the board of supervisors, whether they would allow these types of rentals or not. Mr. Obert further explained that he's aware of a treehouse being rented. Mr. Treat said that as long as a structure conforms to the building and septic codes, then they may be accepted if the board permits.

- xi. **Niki Santelli-Wolff** – Observing.
- xii. **Joseph DePaolo** – Observing.

**General Discussion** – Mrs. Santelli-Wolff commented that there are alternative septic systems and asked if they would be permitted. Mr. Treat responded that that would be up to the Sewage Enforcement Officer (SEO) and Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Mr. Wells asked if there will be any regulations to keep dogs off neighboring properties. Mr. Treat said that dogs are not addressed in the ordinance, but Pennsylvania Dog Law would apply. Ms. Reilly asked who would respond to issues at night and Mr. Treat answered that that is part of the problem with enforcement. This is one of the questions he would ask the agency or the township employee hired to handle this ordinance. Mrs. Santelli-Wolff wondered if the permit fees would offset the cost incurred to the township. Mr. Treat clarified that this would be a revenue neutral situation; therefore, all administration and inspection fees would be covered by the application fee from the applicant, and all violation fees would be covered by the penalties. Mrs. Santelli-Wolff also asked if motels would have to conform. Mr. Treat explained that if it met the definition in the ordinance, then yes. However, most motels will not meet the definition because they are not a residence.

Mr. Treat asked if there was anyone else who would like to comment. There was none.

Adjournment: Mr. Obert made a motion to close the session. Mr. Wittenbrader seconded; motion passed. Comment Session was closed at 7:18pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Seagraves  
Secretary/Alternate Treasurer