



Warren County Planning Group members discuss the topic of short-term rentals.

Planning Group Meeting Summary

Date: 8/13/2024

Topic: Short Term Rentals

The purpose of this meeting was to reconvene the Planning Group, discuss the current state of short-term rentals within the County, go over the County's current role with Buildings and Codes and the Treasurers Office, understand common issues across towns, and identify areas for collaboration.

The group began with introductions, a bit of background on the planning group, used to meet quarterly and COVID threw us off, but we are back and plan to meet quarterly with a different topic for each meeting.

The group walked through the short-term rental spreadsheet which includes all town's STR regs in the county, broken out into specific "tools" that municipalities can use to regulate and enforce STR regulations. These tools include permits, fees, zoning limitations, etc.

Charlie Wallace from county Buildings and Codes talked about his experience at the county level dealing with inspections and occupancy determinations for short-term rentals. He said he primarily encounters occupancy issues such as converted bedrooms, and limiting septic capacity.

County Treasurer Christine Norton and Lisa Mandy from the Treasurer's Office spoke about the Treasury's role in collecting occupancy tax. They discussed using the software Granicus which has the ability to help identify STR properties within the county and has multiple tools to help make occupancy tax estimates, generate lists of STR properties, and can retroactively search dates that properties were rented and for how much. An initial investment into using the software yielded significant results and the Treasurer is hopeful for the use of the software into the future. There was discussion over this software being a shared service between towns and county, Lake George and Queensbury already use this software. County being more diligent enforcing short-term rental owners registering and paying their occupancy tax. Discussed communication and notification pathways between county and towns to ensure both town and county lists are up to date and accurate. Also mentioned was the short-term rental law at the state level, on the Governor's desk to be signed, unsure of the impact that the legislation would have.

An open discussion began of each town's administration of their short-term rental law and led to a lengthy conversation. Topics covered were septic limitations, three strike rule for STR owners, permits tied to owner not the land, garbage, police presence, parking considerations, historical trends of short-term rentals in Warren County, closing of more traditional short term lodging and preference of consumers for single family homes as rentals as two factors pushing this industry in Warren County, Warren County Housing Study, assessment of single family homes operating as STR's, etc.

Talked about some next steps moving forward:

- Municipalities can reach out to the County to get a generated list of STR addresses to check against lists they have. Please email Lisa Mandy: mandyl@WarrenCountyNY.gov
- Explore the options of a notification system where changes to STR lists are communicated between county and municipality.
- The short-term rental laws matrix has been made public and downloadable on the Warren County short-term rental website which is: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/278ea4b2e83d413fb2384352ea86cc6c>
- County will research best practices for short-term rental laws.
- Next meeting date will be Tuesday 11/19, subject to change, possible next meeting topics include but are not limited to: climate planning, zoning codes/updates, housing, APA considerations. If you'd like to see a certain topic, please reach out and let us know.