

**Committee:** Committee of the Whole – Community Development

**Date:** September 7, 2021

**Department:** Community Development

**Topic:** Short-Term Accommodations

**Background:** The Township has received a number of inquiries regarding short term accommodations. Comments have ranged from concerns about noise, parking or animals, to general inquiries about whether or not a short-term accommodation (for example; Air BnB), is a permitted use for their property.

Short-term accommodations are an alternative to a traditional hotel stay and a preferred option for some travelers as they provide a unique vacation experience with more comforts of home. When traditional lodging establishments are not available, short-term accommodations can increase overnight stays and provide a boost to local businesses that benefit from Tourism. For those that offer short-term accommodations, it can help supplement a household income.

Short-term accommodations can create a public nuisance when not properly managed. In general, complaints are made regarding noise, parking and waste. Other concerns related to building or fire code compliance and appropriate taxes may also be raised. In municipalities where short-term accommodations are more widely used, some concerns regarding available housing and vacancies in the off-season have also been raised.

In the existing zoning bylaw, a Bed and Breakfast is defined as:

*a private dwelling designed to be used in part for the accommodation of the travelling or vacationing public, containing therein four (4) or fewer suites or guest rooms and other related services and facilities within the occupant's dwelling. A Bed and Breakfast Establishment shall not include a restaurant or Tourist Establishment.*

This definition has been interpreted to include short-term accommodations. A Bed and Breakfast is a permitted use in all Commercial zones (MCR, CC, MC, HC)

The draft new zoning bylaw provides more clarity in defining a Bed and Breakfast, requiring the owner to reside in the dwelling:

*a business conducted in a single dwelling in which the owner resides in the dwelling and supplies for financial gain a maximum of four (4) guest bedrooms with or without meals for the purpose of providing temporary lodging on a daily basis to the travelling public and shall not include a lodging establishment as herein defined.*

It is believed that accommodations operating with the owner present is less likely to create a public nuisance. The draft new zoning bylaw proposes that a Bed and Breakfast, as defined, be permitted within a single dwelling that is permitted as a principal use in the zone in which it is located, except in the Limited Services Residential (RLS) zone.

The draft new zoning bylaw does not include provisions for short-term accommodations, except where defined as a Lodging Establishment, which includes a Seasonal Camp, Cabin, Hotel or Motel.

With a growing number of inquiries and concerns raised, Committee may consider recommending that Council create some provisions to manage short-term accommodations in the Township. If Committee feels that provisions are necessary, staff would appreciate feedback from the Committee on the below items.

For Clarity, a short-term accommodation is a business conducted in a dwelling or dwelling unit that is not the primary residence of the owner and supplies for financial gain a number of guest bedrooms for the purpose of providing temporary lodging for a maximum occupancy of *30 consecutive days*. It does not include a bed and breakfast, as the owner/operator may not be present during the stay.

#### **1. Where to permit short term accommodations**

Short-term accommodations could be permitted anywhere a dwelling or dwelling unit is permitted, as long as it can meet appropriate screening and parking requirements. Careful consideration should be given to the Residential Limited Services zone as the sites cannot be accessed from Township roads. Guests would need to travel across private roads on private properties to visit the accommodation.

#### **2. Occupancy restrictions**

A Hotel is an establishment containing four or more guest rooms. It is suggested that a short-term accommodation be restricted to no more than three guest bedrooms. Occupancy restrictions could allow no more than 2 adult guests per room. If an owner would like to have a higher occupancy and a hotel is not a permitted use, owners could apply for a zoning amendment.

### **3. Second Dwellings and Second Dwelling Units**

Committee should consider that the draft new zoning bylaw provides provisions to allow second dwellings, which creates more opportunities for short term accommodations. It is suggested that the number of guest rooms available in a Second Dwelling be included in the total count of guest bedrooms.

### **4. Parking**

Consistent with parking requirements for a Bed and Breakfast or Lodging Establishment, one off-street parking space should be provided for each guest room.

### **5. Screening**

Careful consideration should be given to screening requirements, where the short-term accommodation abuts another residential use. Screening provides privacy and helps reduce noise. The Township may require that a privacy fence be in place where a short-term accommodation abuts any residential zone.

### **6. Amenity areas**

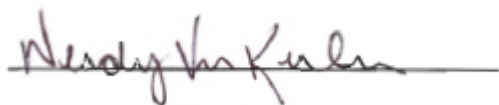
Provisions for a short-term accommodation may require that the dwelling or dwelling unit offer an amenity area in a rear yard, yard fronting a waterbody or balcony. This may also help to reduce noise concerns as it ensures the guests have somewhere to visit that will have a low impact on neighbours.

### **7. Permitting**

Some municipalities now use a permitting system to manage short term accommodations. Note that this approach may be helpful where there is a concern about a large number of short-term accommodations within a defined area, affecting housing availability. Staff are not aware of this concern caused by short-term accommodations.

Note that where the use of a building or structure changes, the owner must obtain a change of use permit. Requirements of the Building and Fire Code must be met before a change of use permit is issued.

**Next Steps:** Should the Committee feel that provisions for short-term accommodations are required, Staff will review feedback from this discussion to bring a more formal recommendation to Committee at a future meeting.



Community Development Coordinator