

From: [Anna Lutz Mathieu](#)
To: [Courtney Hamilton](#); [Amanda Breen](#); [Michael David](#); [Jim Slanetz](#); lakecreeklakester@gmail.com; [Neil Bradshaw](#); [Participate](#)
Subject: Letter for Dec 6 Meeting on Short Term Rentals
Date: Sunday, December 5, 2021 8:26:57 AM

Dear Ketchum City Council,

We are all aware of the acute affordable housing issue going on in the Wood River Valley. It would be nice if it were easy to solve, but it is not. And it is not going to be solved by trying to use the “health and safety” clause in Idaho Code to try to get around the property rights of a small portion of the property owners in town and vilifying Short Term Rentals.

I understand the issue of affordable housing. I was on the Blaine County Housing Authority Board from 2007 to 2010, serving as Vice Chair 2008 to 2010. I have long been involved with ARCH. I co-created the first (and perhaps sole) Affordable Housing Continuing Education Class for Realtors in the Valley. I have identified land that could be donated and used for affordable housing. I advocated for affordable housing for a long time, and continue to do so.

The Recent Sun Valley Economic Development forum repeatedly mentioned that Short Term Rentals (STR) have barely gone up in two years. I know anecdotally, and from our personal experience, that during the pandemic many STRs were rented out on longer basis. We rented ours out for 6 months at a stretch. STRs are able to flexibly respond to the needs of people; a hotel wouldn't be affordable for such a stretch and most long-term rental owners wouldn't consent to less than one-year leases. So STRs serve the community not only in accommodating tourists and providing jobs, but also accommodating others who need seasonal/mid-term lodging options.

I take issue with using Health and Safety and calling out Wildwood in particular. Let's review the facts.

- Yes, it is an older building, but it was originally built as a hotel, i.e. for short term use. It is a rectangle that is very simple to exit in case of emergency. It has large sliding glass doors on each unit, and each unit's front door leads to two exit doors on opposite sides of the hallway.

- I understand there are at least four owners who are firefighters and one police: Mathieu Unit #21 (Wood River Fire), Steve Bush #36 (Retired Firefighter), and Fred Kline #34 (Volunteer Firefighter Utah), and Boxall #15 (Police Park City area). I think these folks know a little something about safety.
- Short Term Rentals have less people in them than long term tenants or owner occupants due to turnover. There is less kitchen use as vacationers are generally out spending money in our restaurants. There is generally more oversight between property managers and cleaners (decent local jobs) who put eyes on the property multiple times a month and report/correct issues. Most property managers also require and verify that there are fire extinguishers and smoke detectors in the unit that work. The same cannot be said of properties that are not getting this kind of oversight and care.

It is great to see the local governments exploring solutions for affordable housing. But let's look for solutions that move the needle and not that create a huge burden on the few (and jeopardize their property values) without creating any discernable positive impact for affordable housing.

We STR Wildwood owners are not evil moguls, we are working people for the most part. Some of us are supplementing a second home, and spending our money in the community as well as creating jobs and facilitating visitors who come spend money. We are also locals who care about the community and who are simultaneously trying to build our own financial position so we can retire someday.

I understand the city has few tools for affordable housing but I oppose trying to leverage the health and safety language in Idaho code to take away my property rights. And if it were really health and safety that was the concern, you would be concerned with finding solutions for the long term renters and owners who live in these units.

Respectfully,
Anna Mathieu
Wildwood #21
Full time resident of Hailey, ID

