

Deb Graber

From: shells27272 <shells27272@...>
Sent: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 5:54 PM
To: Deb Graber; Randy
Subject: Public Hearing #2025-3

Please include my letter at the August 6th, 2025 hearing.

I am writing as a homeowner who strongly advocates for the continued legal right to operate short-term rentals (STR) within WWT.

Many residents rely on the income generated through STRs to support their families and maintain the enhancement of their properties. This income not only helps prevent potential foreclosure but also contributes to the overall well-being and vibrancy of our neighborhood.

Responsible hosting is already a common practice here; the majority of STR hosts diligently inform their guests of community rules to ensure safety, cleanliness, and respect for our neighbors. An ordinance formalizing the legality of STRs will help clarify regulations and ensure that all hosts adhere to community standards. It also holds accountable the few instances where issues have arisen, encouraging all owners to maintain high standards for their guests.

Our community benefits from the presence of well-reviewed, responsible hosts whose guests often leave positive feedback and contribute to the local economy. Living in a tourist-friendly region, it is not realistic to expect visitors to rent stays of 28 days or longer; short-term rentals meet the demands of tourists and event participants, such as those attending the GLEF, who seek convenient and hospitable lodging options during busy seasons.

Furthermore, STRs do not diminish the availability of housing for local residents. Many homeowners rent their properties seasonally or year-round to meet different demands—whether for tourists, event attendees, traveling workers, or families in transition—adding flexibility and diversity to our housing options. Some homes offer individual rooms or suites, providing additional housing solutions without displacing long-term residents.

I urge the community and local authorities to consider the positive impacts of STRs, including supporting local families, fostering economic activity, and maintaining our neighborhood's character. It is unfair and unethical to let a single problematic property overshadow the many responsible hosts who contribute positively to our community.

Thank you,
Michelle Rohraff, LMSW
7 year homeowner in WWT

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S24, an AT&T 5G smartphone

Deb Graber

From: Randy and Rachel Steelman <[REDACTED]@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, July 20, 2025 8:40 AM
To: Deb Graber; Randy; Keith DeYoung; Wendy; Linda Slopsema; Tim Arends; Jill Koester
Subject: 8/6/2025 Public Hearing 2025-3 (STR Correspondence)

Esteemed members of the Board,

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed Short-Term Rental Ordinance, which addresses a critical need in our community. Having reviewed the ordinance, I believe it provides a solid foundation, even if it may not satisfy everyone perfectly. Over time, we can refine it through amendments if necessary to ensure it meets our community's evolving needs.

Property ownership has always been tied to the opportunity for financial gain, whether through agriculture, industry, or residential use. A farmer sells crops, a homeowner enhances their property's resale value, and a remote worker utilizes their home for professional purposes. Short-term rentals are a natural extension of this principle, allowing property owners to benefit from their investments. However, to balance this right with the well-being of our neighborhoods, a well-crafted ordinance is essential.

This ordinance equips neighbors with the tools to address potential issues caused by irresponsible STRs, fostering harmony and accountability. I urge you to move forward with its adoption for the benefit of our entire community.

Sincerely,

Randy Steelman

WWT Resident

Wendy

From: Marcy Ford <[REDACTED]@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, July 21, 2025 11:39 AM
To: Linda Slopsema; Wendy; Jill Koester; Randy; Tim Arends
Subject: Civil Infraction Policy for Whitewater Township

We support the township's enforcement of restricting short term rentals.

Rob and Marcy Ford
11507 Clearview Drive
Williamsburg
231-642-7985/231-310-0000
Sent from my iPhone

Deb Graber

From: Dallas Steelman dallassteelman@juno.com
Sent: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 8:59 AM
To: Randy; Deb Graber
Subject: August 6th STR PH Correspondence

Hey Planning Commissioners,

I'm reaching out to throw my support behind the STR ordinance for our community. I'm 26, working as a laborer here in Whitewater Township, and I live with my brother and his family because affordable housing is super tough to come by. I'm lucky to have a place with them, but it's no secret there's a serious shortage of long-term rentals for someone like me on my income.

If folks couldn't rent out parts of their homes—or even their whole place—I think the housing situation would be even tighter. Owning a home here feels like a pipe dream for me right now, but I'm hopeful I'll get there someday.

When I do, I'd love the chance to help others out by renting part of my place.

I'm all in for this STR ordinance and hope you'll move forward with it.
Thanks for hearing me out!

Deb Gruber; Zoning Administrator

7-24-2025

Regarding 2025-3 proposal.

I am against the proposal to have short term rentals of less than 30 Days. We do not need the aggravation of less than 30 day rentals. Appreciate your time on this matter.

Sincerely

John M Rogers

RECEIVED
7/31/25
msh

RECEIVED
7/28/25
CMB

To: Deb Grabner
Whitewater Township Zoning Administrator
5777 Vinton Road, P.O. Box 159
Williamsburg, MI 49690

July 25, 2025

Dear Deb,

I am writing with respect to the proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment, Case No. 2025-3, regarding Short Term Rentals. I have read the proposal submitted by Rachel Steelman to be discussed at a hearing scheduled for August 6, 2025 at 7 pm. Because I cannot attend the meeting, I am writing to you with my thoughts on this proposed Amendment.

I am a homeowner on Island Lake. Part of Island Lake falls within Union Township and part falls within Whitewater Township. My property is in Whitewater Township. There are currently about 5 short term rentals operating on Island Lake (some presumably without a license, as they fall within Whitewater Township). As you may know, Island Lake is a relatively small lake and is a bit of a "fish bowl". Voices and other noise easily carry across the lake, unfortunately. Even with the current short term rentals operating on the lake, it has become much less pleasant at times. The quality of life on the lake during the summer season, when most of the rentals occur, has decreased over the last few years. This is very sad, as Island Lake is a treasure, set back on a private road and surrounded by woods. Renters, of course, come to the lake to have a good time. They are louder and drive their boats and jet-skis more aggressively than the residents of the lake. Many seem to be unfamiliar with boating safety and respect for the wildlife (resident loons). Loud partying and music on the boats, hot tub parties, loud, late campfires are the norm. Finally, with renters who are effectively strangers coming and going, residents feel less safe.

I see that the proposal has enforcement and penalties provisions. However, it is not fair to subject the residents to endless policing of the rentals. Responsible short term rentals may be possible in some parts of Whitewater Township, such as on large parcels of land spaced apart from neighbors. Based on our actual experience to date, there is very little chance short term rentals could be successful on a small lake like Island Lake.

Whitewater Township's website boasts of rural charm and peaceful living. Decreasing the quality of life of permanent residents goes against these values. While there may be some areas in the Township appropriate for short term rentals, I urge you to strongly consider the detrimental effects to residents in other areas, such as on a small private lake like Island Lake.

Sincerely,



Jean Rogers
Island View Drive
Traverse City, MI 49696

Deb Graber

From: Wendy
Sent: Monday, July 28, 2025 2:31 PM
To: Deb Graber; Keith DeYoung; Rene Stratton
Cc: Denise Peltonen; Carl Wroubel; David Boesler; Sadie Merchant
Subject: FW: Comment for Public Hearing on 8/6/2025

Wendy Hoeksema

Whitewater Township Clerk

Ph (231)267-5141 ext 24

Fax(231)267-9020

5777 Vinton Rd

PO Box 159

Williamsburg MI 49690

clerk@whitewatertownship.org

NOTEnew address of clerk@whitewatertownshipmi.gov

From: John Kallis [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, July 28, 2025 1:35 PM
To: Randy <trustee01@whitewatertownshipmi.gov>
Cc: Wendy <clerk@whitewatertownshipmi.gov>; Linda Slopsema <supervisor@whitewatertownshipmi.gov>
Subject: Comment for Public Hearing on 8/6/2025

I oppose the proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment 2025-03 as written. As a long-standing (20 years) property owner at [REDACTED] Fairview Rd., I believe short term rentals are incompatible with our fairly dense residential zone and should continue to be prohibited.

Thank you.
John Kallis

Deb Graber

From: Randy
Sent: Tuesday, July 29, 2025 11:19 AM
To: Deb Graber
Subject: FW: Comment for Public Hearing on 8/6/2025

-----Original Message-----

From: Jean Kallis [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 29, 2025 11:18 AM
To: Randy <trustee01@whitewatertownshipmi.gov>
Cc: clerk@whitewatertownship.gov; supervisor@whitewatertownship.gov
Subject: Comment for Public Hearing on 8/6/2025

I oppose the proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment 2025-03 as written. As a longstanding (20 years) property owner at 9389 Fairview Road, I believe short term rentals are incompatible with our fairly dense residential zone and should continue to be prohibited.

Thank You,
Jean Marie Kallis

Wendy

From: Julie Zenas <julie.zenas@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 30, 2025 3:52 PM
To: Randy; Wendy; Linda Slopsema
Subject: Comment for Public Hearing on 8/6/2025

Resubmitted with a subject

I oppose the proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment 2025-03 as written. As a long-standing (25 years) property owner at ~~9078~~ Skegemog Pt Rd, I believe short term rentals are incompatible with our fairly dense residential zone and should continue to be prohibited.

Thank you.
Julie Zenas

Deb Graber

From: Deb Graber
Sent: Tuesday, July 29, 2025 2:38 PM
To: Keith DeYoung; Sadie Merchant; Denise Peltonen; David Boesler; Carl Wroubel; Rene Stratton; Randy
Subject: Fw: Elk Lake Trail Short Term Rental - Hearing 8.6.2025
Attachments: 20250728_084220.jpg; 20250728_091548.jpg; 20250728_091553.jpg; 20250728_091638.jpg; 20250728_091652.jpg

Fyi

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone
[Get Outlook for Android](#)

From: Michael Mims <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, July 29, 2025 2:33:33 PM
To: Deb Graber <zoning@whitewatertownship.org>
Subject: Elk Lake Trail Short Term Rental - Hearing 8.6.2025

Hey Deb,

My name is Michael Mims. I live on Elk Lake Trail.

We had a drunk driving incident this morning involving the renters from Denise Heidisch at 9276 Elk Lake Trail.

The Sheriff came to conduct an investigation. I do not know the details, but a pickup truck was found in a ditch on the side of the road and a woman was arrested for being intoxicated. I have attached a photograph of the incident.

This is alarming. We live on a private road and are accustomed to peace and tranquility that comes with living in a residential neighborhood. The road gets more foot traffic than vehicles. We walk with our children and pets. We ride bikes and many enjoy the solitude of a pleasant walk in nature. Watching out for deer has been our biggest threat, now we must guard against drunk drivers? I expect this in a big urban setting not in our rural community.

This seems to be a consequence the new business trend of renting your property for profit instead of personally investing and participating in the community yourself.

You have an absentee landlord who does not care about being a good neighbor coupled with irresponsible tenants who don't care about disturbing the peace and it's a recipe for disaster. Fortunately, no one was hurt this time.

I live in a residential neighborhood. Why is my neighborhood subjected to all the headaches and problems of a rental income business? Are there not designated areas for such commerce?

The bottom line is the health and safety of the community was compromised as a result of a rental property. Can we afford more mishaps?

The zoning ordinances were created to help protect the community. I trust that those laws will remain in effect and enforced.

If I can be of service in any way, please feel free to contact me.

All the best,

Michael Mims

~~(818) 700-1770~~



Mims attachment - Elk Lake Trail

Deb Graber

From: Gaurav Chadha <gauravchadha11@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, August 2, 2025 6:46 PM
To: Deb Graber
Cc: Adrienne Green
Subject: 8/6 Public Hearing Comment; Support of STR Ordinance

Dear WWT Planning Commission,

My name is Gaurav Chadha and I am a resident of Whitewater Township, residing on Fairview Dr.

I am writing on behalf of me and my wife to express our strong support for the proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance regarding Short-Term Rentals, as outlined in ZA Case #2025-3.

I believe it is crucial for the Township to adopt a common-sense approach that respects property owners rights while also protecting the integrity and peace of our community. Property owners should have the right to use their homes as they see fit, provided it does not negatively impact their neighbors. An ordinance that establishes clear, reasonable guidelines is the perfect way to achieve this balance. It allows residents the flexibility to rent their homes, while holding all owners accountable to a consistent set of rules.

It is also worth noting that our neighboring townships have already taken this step. Communities like Acme, Milton, Clearwater, Kalkaska, Union, East Bay and Elk Rapids have all adopted ordinances to allow & regulate short-term rentals in some shape or form. This demonstrates that a regulatory framework is a practical and widely accepted solution to this issue. We must learn from their experiences to create and adopt an ordinance that works for Whitewater Township.

A thoughtful ordinance like one under review, that includes elements such as a registration program, a local contact person for each property, and clear rules on occupancy and parking will ensure public safety and mitigate potential nuisances. This should not be about banning a type of property use, but about managing it responsibly to benefit everyone, through rental income for owners and registration revenue for the Township.

Thank you for your time and for your dedication to our community.

I urge you to approve this amendment and move forward with a solution that is fair, balanced, and consistent with the findings of the 2024 Master plan survey and established practices within our neighboring communities.

Sincerely,
Gaurav & Adrienne Chadha

Wendy

From: Steven Holl <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, August 3, 2025 8:25 AM
To: Deb Graber
Cc: Wendy
Subject: Proposed STR change Comment for Public Hearing 08.06.2025

Dear Zoning Commission Members:

The proposal to change the current Whitewater Zoning Ordinance to allow short term rentals in all districts if adopted would be responsible for turning private residences into commercial operations. As a R1 homeowner on Island Lake I urge the planning commission to reject the application. As an alternative I ask the planning commission to study the creation of a new zoning designation that would allow for a hybrid residential resort commercial zone. I think the creation of such a designation would protect the rights of residents in R1 and allow for the creation of a hybrid residential resort commercial zone for those who prefer that arrangement.

Thank you,

Steven Holl
[REDACTED] Island View Drive
Traverse City, MI 49696

Wendy

From: Jeff Zenas [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, August 3, 2025 12:30 PM
To: Randy
Cc: Wendy; Linda Slopsema; Deb Graber
Subject: Comment for the Public Hearing 08.06.2025

I oppose Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment 2025-03 as written.

Jeff Zenas
[REDACTED] Skegemog Point Rd, Williamsburg, MI 49690

Wendy

From: Julie Zenas [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, August 3, 2025 12:39 PM
To: Randy; Wendy
Cc: Linda Slopsema; zoning@whitewatertownship.org
Subject: Comment for the Public Hearing 08.06.2025

I oppose Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment 2025-03 as written. I believe the current language raises concerns that have not been adequately addressed, and the potential impacts on the community and property rights warrant further review and revision. I respectfully urge the council to revise the amendment before moving forward.

Julie Zenas
[REDACTED] Skegemog PT Rd

Wendy

From: Greg Zenas [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, August 3, 2025 1:08 PM
To: Randy; Wendy
Cc: Linda Slopsema; Deb Graber
Subject: Comment for Public Hearing 08.06.2025

I oppose Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment 2025-03 as written.

Gregory Zenas
[REDACTED] Skegemog Point Rd, Williamsburg, MI 49690

[REDACTED]

Wendy

From: jean rogers <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, August 3, 2025 12:44 PM
To: Randy; Wendy
Subject: Comment for Public Hearing 08.06.2025

Dear Randy and Wendy,

I am writing with respect to the proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment, Case No. 2025-3, regarding Short Term Rentals. I have read the proposal submitted by Rachel Steelman to be discussed at a hearing scheduled for August 6, 2025 at 7 pm. Because I cannot attend the meeting, I am writing to you with my thoughts on this proposed Amendment.

I am a homeowner on Island Lake. Part of Island Lake falls within Union Township and part falls within Whitewater Township. My property is in Whitewater Township. There are currently about 5 short term rentals operating on Island Lake (some presumably without a license, as they fall within Whitewater Township). As you may know, Island Lake is a relatively small lake and is a bit of a "fish bowl". Voices and other noise easily carry across the lake, unfortunately. Even with the current short term rentals operating on the lake, it has become much less pleasant at times. The quality of life on the lake during the summer season, when most of the rentals occur, has decreased over the last few years. This is very sad, as Island Lake is a treasure, set back on a private road and surrounded by woods. Renters, of course, come to the lake to have a good time. They are louder and drive their boats and jet-skis more aggressively than the residents of the lake. Many seem to be unfamiliar with boating safety and respect for the wildlife (resident loons). Loud partying and music on the boats, hot tub parties, loud, late campfires are the norm. Finally, with renters who are effectively strangers coming and going, residents feel less safe.

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Sincerely,
Jean Rogers
[REDACTED] Island View Drive
Traverse City, MI 49696

Wendy

From: Randy [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 4, 2025 9:33 AM
To: Deb Graber; Wendy
Subject: Fw: Proposed Zoning Amendment 2025-03

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From: Lynn DeLong <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, August 4, 2025 4:58:24 AM
To: Randy <trustee01@whitewatertownshipmi.gov>
Subject: Proposed Zoning Amendment 2025-03

I oppose Proposed Zoning Amendment 2025-03 or any other amendment that would allow Short Term Rentals or motels in any Whitewater residential zones!

Lynn DeLong
[REDACTED] Island View Drive