

Communication from Public

Name: Arthur Levy

Date Submitted: 11/05/2023 09:32 AM

Council File No: 14-1635-S10

Comments for Public Posting: Many homes in my neighborhood serve only as short-term rentals. Nobody lives in them. Whether or not they have obtained a permit, they are operating outside the law and it is an extreme nuisance. Two months ago my sister and her two young children (two and six months) came to visit me for a week. I was excited to show her my neighborhood. Unfortunately this was the same weekend (in early May) that my neighbor on Devlin Drive decided to rent the house out again for six days of non-stop parties, including with an outdoor stage. The noise was unbearable and my sister's children could not sleep. It was a truly awful experience and I spent the whole week trying to get the police to come shut it down, which they did at times. We need people living here who live here, not these short term partiers. Whole house unhosted rentals, particularly those whose owners are not community members, create serious problems. It is well documented that they are used globally as locations for criminal enterprises and that they are sites for nuisance activities. On top of that, they take scarce housing off the market. Los Angeles must not let this continue. Improve enforcement of the short-term rental ordinance, bring safety back to neighborhoods and stop giving bad actors an incentive to game the system.

Communication from Public

Name: Brian B

Date Submitted: 11/05/2023 01:03 PM

Council File No: 14-1635-S10

Comments for Public Posting: I am very concerned by the vast amount of illegal short term rentals that have become commonplace in the Hollywood Hills. We have 3 homes within 500 feet of ours that are all owned by the same couple, who do not occupy them as a primary residence. All 3 homes are operating illegally under one permit number. All 3 homes have hosted frequent parties that create disturbances of noise, traffic, illegal parking, garbage, and more. We must better regulate home rentals in the Hollywood Hills to protect values and to ensure resident safety. I've added more security cameras and beefed up an alarm system out of fear of non-residents visiting the area who have no vested interest here, but may have interest in burglary or vandalism. This is not why I pay taxes! The city has created rules and seems afraid to enforce them. It's time to take action. I have many photos to support my comments. Thank you.

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 11/05/2023 01:48 PM

Council File No: 14-1635-S10

Comments for Public Posting: Please see attached letter.

November 5, 2023

Dear Councilmembers,

I am writing to convey the concerns of my family and neighbors regarding the detrimental impact of short-term rentals on our community. We have been proud residents of our neighborhood for about four decades, but over recent years, our once-peaceful lives have been besieged by the proliferation of illegal short-term rentals, which lack primary residents.

These properties have essentially transformed into unregulated hotels and nightclubs, disregarding the typical standards and personnel one would expect in such establishments. The consequences have been deeply distressing. Our neighborhood has become a hub for unending disturbances, including incessantly loud music, raucous late-night conversations, heated arguments, and rampant drug use occurring at all hours of the day and night.

The continuous noise and the resulting stress have pushed me into a constant state of sleep deprivation, which is nothing short of torturous. It has become impossible for me and my family to enjoy peaceful weekends in our own home, whether indoors or in our backyard, as inconsiderate guests continue to disrupt our lives with their blaring music. Simply keeping our windows open day and night has been a challenge, due to all of the noises and frequent exposure to the unpleasant odors of drug use. All of these disturbances have exacted a severe toll on my mental and physical health.

The situation has grown to the point where we feel like prisoners in our own homes, as our neighborhood transforms into something unrecognizable. Notably, none of these disturbances would be tolerated at legitimate establishments like hotels, restaurants, banquet halls, or other venues accustomed to hosting similar clientele.

My family and neighbors have had to call the police multiple times due to the ongoing disturbances at these various short-term rentals. I personally have also reported these issues to various city officials, including our local City Council representative, the LA City Attorney's office, and Los Angeles City Planning. However, it appears that our efforts have yielded little in the way of relief, leaving us feeling utterly abandoned while unscrupulous individuals profit from our misery.

A handful of individuals manage numerous illegal short-term rentals in our neighborhood, acting on behalf of homeowners. Moreover, there are homes in our neighborhood where real estate agents, who incidentally have an influence on market price of homes in our city (see <https://www.cnn.com/2023/10/31/economy/national-association-of-realtors-commissions-high>), appear to be participating in this unethical practice of illegal short-term rentals. These individuals are not local residents seeking supplementary income to make ends meet but are effectively running these rentals as businesses. These violators are not confined to renting out entire homes; they are also exploiting apartments that are likely subject to the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. Beyond merely causing a nuisance, these operations permanently remove housing from the market, which could otherwise serve

long-term residents. It is truly remarkable that both the city and the state continue to talk about an affordable housing shortage while allowing unscrupulous individuals to deplete valuable housing stock for profit.

I wish to clarify that I am not against responsible home-sharing. However, there must be more stringent rules governing who can participate and how homes can be shared. Strict and swift enforcement is required to deter unscrupulous individuals from engaging in these illegal activities while protecting the innocent residents of our neighborhoods. It is important to understand that if we grant these unscrupulous individuals any leeway, they will seize the opportunity to its fullest extent.

In my personal view, I believe that entire homes should not be available for home-sharing, and responsible homeowners should be present on the property at all times when guests are staying. I also believe that only property owners, not renters, should be permitted to engage in home-sharing. This policy is essential to prevent homeowners from exploiting a loophole to “rent” out non-primary residences to individuals involved in the illicit short-term rental business. Homeowners should be required to reside on the property for at least six months annually, and any concerns raised by neighbors about homeowner non-compliance should be treated seriously by the city. There should also be stricter limits on the number of guests allowed in these homes (suggestion: no more than four adults), restrictions on the number of nights a property can be short-term rented (suggestion: a maximum of 30 days per year), and prohibitions on outdoor music, smoking (tobacco and marijuana), as well as any drug use on the properties. A single violation should result in immediate termination of the owner’s ability to operate home-sharing, accompanied by a substantial fine. Multiple violations, including operating without a license, should warrant criminal prosecution.

Moreover, the companies hosting home-sharing on their websites, such as Airbnb and Vrbo, should not be exempt from responsibility. I have submitted numerous complaints to Airbnb concerning a specific troublesome short-term rental with evidence of loud parties and other disturbances. Despite Airbnb's claims of implementing anti-party measures, they refused to take meaningful action when presented with the problems I had documented. I also pointed out that the property in question blatantly violated the rules for short-term rentals in Los Angeles, as listed on Airbnb's website. Once again, they declined to take action. Much like the individuals running illegal short-term rentals, Airbnb appears to prioritize financial gain over the well-being of our neighborhoods. They must also be held accountable.

Proponents of short-term rentals or home-sharing often argue that these are private residences and that owners should have the autonomy to do as they wish on their own property. If the City Council accepts this argument, then it should also permit mom-and-pop-owned apartment buildings to convert their units, irrespective of whether they are subject to the Rent Stabilization Ordinance, into short-term rentals to maximize profits. Otherwise, it would be discriminatory to allow one sector to deplete the housing market for profit while preventing another from doing the same. Let me be clear: I do not support the removal of any homes, whether they be apartments or entire houses, from the supply of permanent housing at a time when there is an affordable housing shortage.

I recognize that there are responsible individuals lawfully participating in home-sharing, some of whom may be facing financial challenges and require extra income to make ends meet. However, cities have

specific zoning regulations for residential and commercial areas for a reason, and a full-time hotel doesn't belong in the heart of a residential neighborhood. Even responsible homeowners can't control the constant influx of guests, some of whom arrive late at night, creating disturbances like excessive noise and blocking streets and driveways. This situation can be a source of frustration for neighbors with no discernible benefits.

Furthermore, the continuous rotation of new people can create a sense of uncertainty and potential safety concerns, as it's difficult to distinguish between "guests" and transient individuals looking for trouble. To address these issues, I earlier proposed a maximum 30-day home-sharing limit to minimize disruptions for neighbors. I understand that some people may disagree with this suggestion, as they seek to generate income for more extended periods. For those individuals, an alternative could be renting out their spare bedroom(s) for a minimum of 30 days, essentially welcoming roommates. This approach allows them to earn extra money while alleviating the concerns of neighbors. It's worth noting that this is my opinion, and I'm aware that others may have different viewpoints. I am optimistic that the City Council can find a balanced solution that takes everyone's concerns into account.

It would be disheartening if the City Council chose to side with individuals and companies driven by profit, thereby allowing long-term residents to continue suffering due to the numerous disturbances associated with these properties. Furthermore, the inherent dangers that can arise from such operations, as exemplified by the murders in Beverly Crest in January 2023, should serve as a poignant reminder of the urgent need for intervention.

In conclusion, I urge the City Council to implement more rigorous regulations and enforcement measures to address the issues posed by short-term rentals. Such measures are essential to preserving our neighborhood's character and safeguarding the well-being of its long-standing residents. Our community's peace and safety should not be sacrificed in the pursuit of financial gain. It is my sincere hope that the City Council will take decisive and swift action to protect the long-term residents who have made our neighborhood their home for many years.

Thank you for your attention and dedication to resolving this issue.