

PUBLIC HEARING

MONDAY, JUNE 14, 2021

6:30 P.M.

Roll Call Walt Sackinsky presiding. Board members Ed Snee and Brian Lucot were present. Also in attendance were: Karen Fosbaugh, Township Manager; Dennis McDonough, Chief of Police; Aaron Laughlin, Director of Public Works; Irving Firman, Solicitor; and Tom Bonidie, Code Enforcement Officer.

Purpose of Hearing The purpose of the Public Hearing is to take oral or written testimony on the following ordinance:

ORDINANCE NO. 703: AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF SOUTH PARK, COUNTY OF ALLEGHENY, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING THE TOWNSHIP OF SOUTH PARK ORDINANCE NO. 556 (“ZONING ORDINANCE”), TO PROVIDE A DEFINITION FOR “SHORT TERM RENTAL,” AND TO CREATE NEW DEFINITIONS FOR “MOTEL/HOTEL,” “FAMILY,” AND “DWELLING,” AND ESTABLISHING CERTAIN OTHER REQUIREMENTS PERTAINING TO SHORT TERM RENTALS.

Testimony **Cortney Sweeney, 2873 Amy Drive** – Ms. Sweeney stated that she resides next door to the subject Airbnb. She explained that she has two children, and the rental is a safety concern since there are continually different people staying at the house. She added that many nights, past midnight, she can hear loud music coming from the house. One Sunday morning, she witnessed approximately 15 people in the driveway and street blasting music, using vulgar language, fighting, yelling, and drinking liquor from bottles. They were walking down the street and performing vulgar dancing. Mr. Snee asked if there have been people in the backyard after midnight, making loud noises. Ms. Sweeney replied that there have been many parties during the weekends. Mr. Snee inquired about the parking, and Ms. Sweeney replied that there are generally four cars in the driveway and sometimes in the garage. She added that they park in front of her house and two other residences nearby. Chief McDonough commented that they have had two complainants. One call was for the Sunday morning incident. When the officers arrived, the renters were packing up to leave; but apparently, the party had gone on for a couple of evenings. The officers witnessed empty liquor bottles and instructed the renters to

clean up the property. Ms. Sweeney provided letters from other residents residing near the house who have the same concerns.

Thomas Barkand, 2867 Amy Drive – Mr. Barkand thanked the Board for taking the matter under consideration. He mentioned that where he resides, he is not immediately affected. Mr. Barkand remarked that he has concerns for Ms. Sweeney and her family, and he feels that it is an issue of public health and safety. The owner is never present to provide any supervision, which can lead to underage drinking, drugs, firearms, etc. He mentioned that after the party on that Sunday, the Sanitation Department had to come and clean out the sewers. Mr. Barkand also does not feel that the Police Department should have to monitor rental properties, and an ordinance prohibiting short-term rentals is the only way to prevent this issue. Mr. Snee asked if Mr. Barkand can hear loud noises coming from the house, and Mr. Barkand replied that he can hear the noise from his backyard up to midnight and beyond.

Donna Lassige, 2870 Amy Drive – Ms. Lassige commented that she has resided in the Township for 44 years and has never witnessed any such type of incident. She remarked that she works late in the evening and is intimidated by the number of different strangers staying at the rental house. Ms. Lassige stated that she has video of the Sunday party incident and pictures of whiskey bottles that were left.

Robert Larkin, 1818 Renee Drive – Mr. Larkin stated that he moved to South Park Township in January of this year. He has a teenage daughter and is very concerned about the rental property. For the safety of the children, something needs to be done to prevent these types of incidences.

Arthur Nardelli, 3609 Downing Street – Mr. Nardelli commented that he travels throughout the winter for his job and stays at many Airbnbs. For someone that has no other source of income, renting a house can help pay the mortgage. He feels that passing an ordinance prohibiting short-term rentals, just because of one bad incident, is not fair. However, Mr. Nardelli agrees that some type of supervision is needed. Mr. Snee asked how Mr. Nardelli would feel if the incidents occurred next to his house. Mr. Nardelli replied that he would contact the owner. If he could not get in touch with the owner, then he would agree to shut it down. Mr. Snee commented that the Board is concerned for the safety of the residents and added that the Township is one of the safest communities in the area. Mrs. Fosbaugh commented that the Ordinance does not restrict these types of facilities in the entire Township; it restricts them to certain districts.

Thomas Barkand – Mr. Barkand requested a copy of the ordinance.

Mr. Snee – Mr. Snee had no further comments.

Mr. Sackinsky – Mr. Sackinsky had no comments.

Mr. Lucot – Mr. Lucot commented that perhaps the meeting should not be adjourned until everyone has a chance to read the ordinance.

Mr. Firman – Mr. Firman explained that the ordinance was available, so it is not as if there is a due process. Everyone here was able to talk about the issue at hand. From a procedural standpoint, the public hearing can be closed. After Mrs. Fosbaugh circulates the copies of the ordinance, everyone will have time to review it. Additional comments can be made, as it appears on the agenda.

Close Public Hearing

Motion by Mr. Snee and seconded by Mr. Lucot to close the public hearing. All members voted aye. Motion carried.

Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Snee and seconded by Mr. Lucot to adjourn the public hearing. All members voted aye. Motion carried.

Time: 6:56 p.m.