

February 21, 2021

San Juan County Council

Cc: San Juan County Planning Commission, Erika Shook, Adam Zack, Mike Thomas County Manager

RE: Vacation Rental (VR) Moratorium - Please REVOKE

Dear Council Members,

I am asking that the VR Moratorium be revoked. The changes that were made by the Council in 2018 are working and if those cease to work, we can address specific issues through the normal process. Please take the time to read my personal letter below.

My name is Tina Grace I live in Bellingham full time, but travel to Orcas Island once a month to our second home, which I plan on making my retirement home one day. We are active members of the community and are in close contact with 6 of our immediate neighbors and several friends throughout the island. We bought the land in 2012 and built the house in 2013 and filed for and received our Vacation Rental Permit in 2014. Since then I have been renting the house on vrbo.com as a way to pay for the maintenance and upkeep of the home. I'm 53 yrs old and probably have another 12 years before I can retire and become a full-time member of the community. I got married at Rosario Resort in 1998 and since then I have been coming back to Orcas several times every year. My 12-yr old son has spent his whole life coming to the island. In fact, he looks forward to his monthly trips. Enjoys visiting with neighbors and riding his bike into town for a sweet treat at Con's Pit Stop.

In keeping the house active and well maintained I've hired these local business:

Orcas Electric	D&M Home Services
Orcas Island Concierge	San Juan Interiors
Orcas Island Freight Lines	Island Sash & Door
Bion Plumbing	Orcas Island Hardware
Odie Plumbing	Island View Construction
Tony's Terrific Carpet Care	Sands Inc
Salt Spray Window Cleaning	

Besides contributing to the economy with the above local business I also have a local housekeeper who takes care of and cleans the house between each guest. This is a vital source of income for housekeeper.

I also pay San Juan County Accommodations Tax (\$1025.80) and San Juan County General Sales and Use Tax (\$886.60) and Washington State General Sales and Use Tax (\$3333.93) for a total of \$1912.40 each year. And since the VR Permit has been in place for the last 6 years that's approximately \$13,387 in County revenue.

I also want to point out that I'm in the heart of the controversy of Eastsound. In fact I found a map of my street on the county website. That certainly didn't sit well since it's completely inaccurate. I keep a very diligent eye on the neighborhood, because I am a member of the community, so therefore I know this map is not up to date. I know of only 3 active permits on my street Geer Lane, but the map used as an example has 9 listed just on Geer Lane.

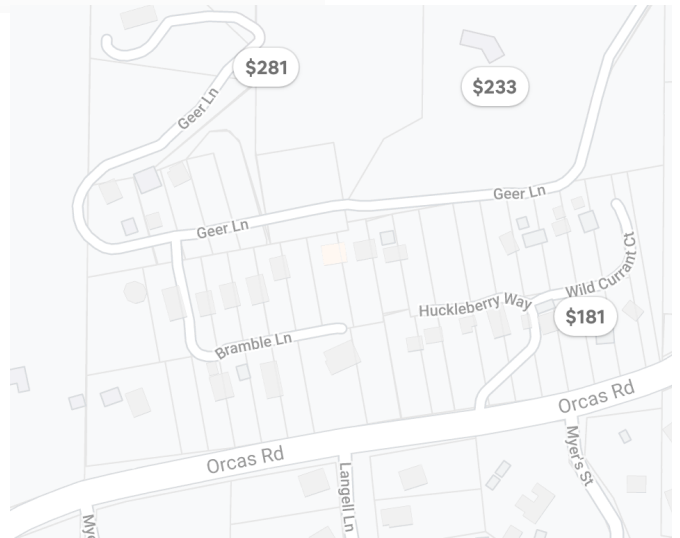
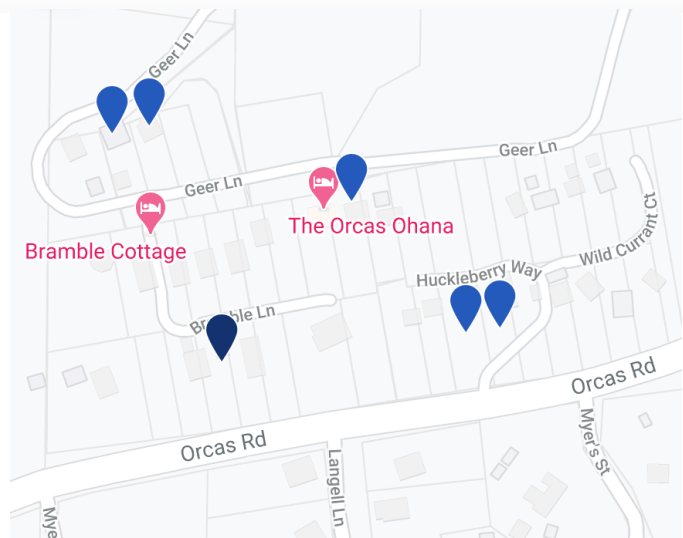
The aerial map on the next page is what was listed as 'all' VR permits. Below that is the map from vrbo.com showing 'active - in use' VR. You'll see there is a big difference, from 19 to 6. The second parcel map is from airbnb.com, which only shows 3, all of which are already represented by the vrbo.com map.

The higher density in UGA neighborhoods can exacerbate the negative affects vacation rentals might have on neighbors. First, having homes closer together can increase impacts because the land use is physically closer to other residential uses. Furthermore, denser residential development can result in more vacation rental permits per acre than what normally occurs outside of the UGAs. A common complaint about vacation rentals is that neighborhoods can be 'taken over' by vacation rentals. Map 1 below shows one neighborhood in Eastsound, north of Orcas Road in the southwest corner of the UGA that illustrates neighborhood saturation. The achieved density in this neighborhood is roughly four dwelling units per acre. This neighborhood is designated Eastsound Residential with a density of 2 dwellings per acre.

Map 1. Vacation Rental Permits in Southwest Eastsound.



Source: SJC GIS.



Sincerely,

Tina Grace
336 Geer Lane
Eastsound, Orcas Island