

## Sophia Cassam

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**From:** Katherine Bryant Ingman <katherinebryant@fuller.edu>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 16, 2022 9:28 PM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments; Jamie Stephens; Christine Minney; Cindy Wolf  
**Subject:** Vacation Rentals

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Hi Jamie, Christine and Cindy:

We urge you to ban new permits for vacation rentals in San Juan County. Just on our street on Port Stanley here on Lopez, there are at least five VRBO or Airbnb that could be providing housing for San Juan County residents who contribute to our society in meaningful and essential ways. It's disappointing to see a perfectly good family house right next door sit open seven months out of the year just to make room for more visitors in the summer months.

Where will we be as a community in five years? Where are we as a community today as many of our businesses can't operate at full capacity because they can't find staff. Those missing staff have no place to live. People who are providing those essential jobs are forced to live in severe substandard housing like trailers, RVs, shacks without running water and tents.

I'm especially disappointed that vacation rental permits carry over onto new buyers of properties. Recently a friend from Seattle and her husband bought a condo on SJ as an investment property and to airbnb the space because the vacation rental permit was grandfathered in as a condition of sale. They would not have otherwise bought the property had it not come with the permit. That condo could have housed a local couple instead. Who are we?

We are fortunate as a young couple to have bought a house on Lopez in 2020, off market from our departing neighbors. Still, our house needed a costly remodel to make it livable. There are many young couples here who will be forced off the island because they can't find adequate housing. We have moved many times on Lopez because of this very issue.

Big changes that could help our community thrive and become more equitable:

- Stop the grandfathering of vacation rental permits when a property is sold. New owners should have to re-apply and wait.
- Increase taxes on second home owners who don't spend the majority of their time here. This is being done elsewhere and is effective. Redistribute those funds to the schools, affordable housing, mental health support and food justice efforts through the three island food banks.
- Continue to pause the issuing of vacation rental permits until more time has passed in the pandemic. SJ County has not recovered as a whole and the pandemic is certainly not over.
- Redistribute funds that go only to the Land Bank into other community needs like affordable housing. Land Bank certainly does not need more property, they can barely manage the properties they have.

We appreciate your service to the community and look forward to seeing some of these changes take place to insure the equitable and affordable place we call home.

With care and admiration,  
Katherine + Joseph Ingman