

September 26, 2022

Dear Dorchester County Business Owners,

I wanted to make you aware of an ongoing appeal and litigation that may outlaw short-term rental of properties in Dorchester County. I ask that you participate in the process to make your voice heard in support of reasonable short-term rental uses in Dorchester County.

My wife and I own the property at 608 Hills Point Road in Cambridge. We purchased the home to use as a second home and intended to defray our ownership expenses by utilizing the property as a short-term rental, to ensure that we could justify owning the property. The Department of Planning and Zoning, through its attorney, sent a cease and desist letter stating that our use of the property “may only be described as a hotel” and threatening civil and injunctive action if we did not cancel the reservations at our home and remove the property from VRBO.

The County then filed a lawsuit against us claiming that the Dorchester County Code prohibits short-term rentals in the RC zoning district (most of the properties near the water in the County) and that our use of our property as a short-term rental violates the Dorchester County Code. We have appealed the County’s action to the Dorchester County Board of Appeals and have filed an answer in the Circuit Court.

This letter is meant to notify you of the ongoing appeal and litigation and to inform you that if the County wins, it will have forced a decision that short-term rental of property is not permitted in the County. That means that the County will have determined that rental of homes is not permitted and must stop. Our County cannot host events like Ironman using the hotels alone, and short-term rental of homes brings in a unique type of tourist looking to enjoy all of what Cambridge has to offer.

As tourism is a large part of our County’s income and likely a major part of your livelihood, I urge you to contact the County staff and County Council to inquire about the ongoing litigation and steps being taken by the Department of Planning and Zoning to outlaw short-term rentals. We appear before the Board of appeals on October 13, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. (501 Court Lane, Cambridge) and all members of the public will have an opportunity to speak on behalf of short-term uses in the County. If you do not make your voice heard, the County may take away the ability to rent personal property on the water. Feel free to contact me at the email address below with any questions or for more information. All court filings and maps are at www.triquetra.ventures if you want more facts.

Sincerely,

Alex Cross

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