

Bryce,

We are writing to you again to oppose the approval of the short-term rental conditional use application for 795 Church St. SE.

SRC 240.005(d)(3) requires that the applicant's proposed use will be reasonably compatible with and have minimal impact on the liveability or appropriate development of surrounding property. The applicant's use is not reasonably compatible and will have a significant impact on the liveability and appropriate development of the surrounding property. The surrounding property is a small historical residential neighborhood that the City of Salem and the federal government have carved out in recognition of the importance of maintaining a living community that showcases the past, not only for the benefit of its residents, but for the sake of the city as a whole. The historic district contributes to the desirability of living in Salem. Any short-term rental property within the historic neighborhood destroys the liveability of that surrounding property by converting its use to commercial rather than residential. The neighborhood's history is of a residential neighborhood where Salem's citizens lived in homes that they owned. That sense of ownership and community is part and parcel of what makes this historical district special and preserves its appeal. The overwhelming negative response you are receiving from citizens who live in homes evidences this point. How many concerned community members that are short term rental owners have submitted public testimony regarding this application? Any conversion to commercial use is not reasonably compatible with the surrounding property because it is not compatible with the historic district unique to the surrounding property and it negatively impacts the community's ability to withstand further encroachment by removing another home lived in by its owner. No conversion to a commercial use in this neighborhood can be insignificant because there are so few properties within it.

Under SRC 240.005(d)(2), the reasonably likely adverse impacts of the use on the immediate neighborhood must be able to be minimized through the imposition of conditions. The adverse impacts described above are only possible to minimize if the owners lived in the house or if the tenants were to live in the house long enough to become a part of the community

Based on the Staff Report, it appears that any short-term rental conditional use application must be approved so long as there are sufficient parking spaces. Every short-term rental "is similar to a residential use in that it provides a place where living and sleeping accommodations are provided, albeit on a temporary basis, to guests for periods of less than 30 days." What the Staff Report appears to ignore is that Salem's Code requires a review of the specifics of the surrounding property, not a review of the characteristics of any general residential community. The Gaiety Hill/Bush Park properties' major characteristic is not that their properties merely provide living and sleeping accommodations, but in the fragility of a small neighborhood preserving Salem's history guarded by the strength of the residents of its community.

A final two points: 1) there is sufficient short term housing at hotels within walking distance of this neighborhood and 2) any decision in favor of short term rentals at this time directly harms the City's overarching goal of creating a better housing environment. It is extremely

disappointing to watch every taxpayer in Salem have to contribute heavily toward solving a problem that exists, in part, because of decisions to grant ill-advised short-term rental applications. We will all pay more for the externalized costs created by the Applicant's business opening up in our community than any financial gain Applicant will receive by setting up shop in the midst of our homes.

Sincerely,

Matthew & Claudine Stevenson

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P.S. We reside at 420 Leslie, a house on the National Register of Historic Places.

