



*"Homes Are
Not Hotels"*

Good Neighbours Alliance February 2022 Newsletter

We need your continued financial support, we are entering a critical phase just ahead of the Ontario Land Tribunal hearing on March 22. Continuing the fight is essential, we are facing a well-financed, litigious and determined opponent. The graphic below contains a link to our website contribution page.

In addition we have provided a more comprehensive update. "Notice to Associations", for those who are interested in more detail about what is going on in the Township. Finally, please see the attached CBRE Report on Tourism Gaps that recommends the use of Short-Term Rentals as a jump-start for a hospitality industry and the Township's plans to incorporate this into the Official Plan of Oro-Medonte.



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Oro-Medonte Good Neighbours Alliance

PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY - STOP SHORT-TERM RENTALS (STRs)

Disruptive Short-Term Rentals destroy enjoyment of your neighbourhood, safety, and property values. For some of you, they have already. In March you can stop this.

Short-Term Rental operators are making millions of dollars at your expense. Even during COVID prohibitions, their profits increased 30%+ year-over-year. They are litigious and have deep pockets. They intend to block all attempts by the Township to prohibit their exploitation of your neighbourhood. Operators are forcing the Township and residents to defend our zoning by-laws so they can keep their party going. **This is your last chance to stop them.**

The Township will only provide a technical legal defense of its by-laws and actions, leaving the residents to pay the price of having a voice at the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) hearing in March 2022. It is imperative for the OLT Chairperson to hear our story of the ongoing damage caused to residents and neighbourhoods by STRs. We can only do this with your support.

To protect your property value and safety, **please contribute \$100 or more towards** the legal costs of Good Neighbours representing you at the Appeal. Please click here – <https://www.goodneighboursoromedonte.ca/contribute/>

Or Scan here



Short Term Rental Update

There has been a troubling development on STRs. There are indications that the Township is looking at legalizing and integrating short-term rentals (STRs) into residential zones as part of a plan for commercial tourism. Your help is needed to stop this potential threat.

On December 8, 2021, Township Staff presented a consultant's report (the 'Report') to Council on potential opportunities to increase tourism in the Township. The Report recommends that the Township update its Official Plan to recognize, allow and encourage STR's in established residential neighbourhoods, targeting resort areas and the shoreline. A copy of the abridged report that includes the STR chapter, Chapter 8, is included. If you would like the entire report please contact us.

The Mayor acknowledged immediately after the presentation that the Township has had all kinds of problems with short-term rentals and that the Report recommendations were not in line with Council's direction on STRs. The Mayor also noted that short-term rentals are non-compatible uses with residential uses. The Oro-Medonte Good Neighbours Alliance strongly agrees with these statements. There have been many problems with STRs that have been frequently reported yet remain effectively unaddressed, since at least 2017.

However, and surprisingly given the Mayor's comments, Council then took the unusual step of receiving and adopting the Report, something it rarely does when receiving a consultant's report.

The timing and adoption of the Report is highly concerning given that the appeal of the Zoning By-law amendment (which clarifies the meaning of 'commercial accommodations') is scheduled for a hearing in March 2022 before the Ontario Land Tribunal ('OLT'). We are participating in this hearing, at considerable expense, to help the Township defend its existing zoning by-laws that prohibit STR's in residential zones. We strongly believe that failure to make the case at the OLT that this by-law is "iron-clad" will cause major property value losses and even more neighbourhood disruption. Witness statements submitted to the OLT show that taxpayers just paid \$30,000 for the Report that the STR operators are trying to use to support their attempt to overturn the existing zoning by-laws.

On January 6, 2022, the Alliance and others formally asked Council to reconsider their decision to adopt the Report. So far, Council has failed to do so.

A review of the Township's Official Plan and Zoning By-Law is currently underway. By Council having adopted the Report, we expect that Township Staff will recommend changes to the Official Plan that will support legalizing STR's in residential zones. Add in the Staycation Tax Credit that operators are already advertising, plus the sharp 30%+ year-over-year profit they have realized even during COVID prohibitions and the net result will be a ramp up STR activity in Oro Medonte as the pandemic wanes.

The immediate, most pressing concern is to fend off the OLT challenge by the STR operators. This will establish that our existing zoning by-law is good planning that can and should be retained and enforced. Longer term, we must prepare to resist the Official Plan and zoning by-law changes that in the future would legalize short-term rentals and allow them to proliferate in residential neighbourhoods.

While we hope that we can continue to rely on the unanimous word of Council that STRs are prohibited in residential neighbourhoods, we are very concerned about these recent events. We are asking that you and your Association assist us in the following ways:

1) Inform your members ... they should know how they will be permanently impacted by events transpiring over the next couple of months. Shining the light on the truth is the most powerful tool we have;

2) Write ... let the Mayor and Council know your views now. Send them to: council@oro-medonte.ca

3) Help with our fundraising ... further funding is required for the OLT hearing. We are attaching a letter which we ask you to circulate to your membership.

Your support and contributions toward protecting our residential neighbourhoods are greatly appreciated. February 10, 2022

Read the [CBRE Report on Tourism Gaps](#) abridged