Comprehensive Plan reference to Strategy 4c and 5e

Strategy 4c: Study the nature of and extent to which transient lodging is currently taking place and consider whether policy and regulatory changes should occur to better accommodate this use. If such changes are determined not to be needed or appropriate, develop and implement a plan to bring errant operators of transient lodging into conformity with the County's regulations in a timely fashion.

The quantity of historic buildings, multiple houses on large properties, and large estates in the Rural Area creates many opportunities for rural transient lodging. Such uses can provide additional income to help owners retain their land and thereby avoid pressure to subdivide. Current regulations for transient lodging allow for B&Bs in the Rural Area. The Zoning Ordinance states that a homeowner may have up to 5 guestrooms inside a home and up to 5 additional guestrooms in a second residential structure on the same property. A resident manager must live on the property and the second residential structure must comply with density standards of the County, as well as health and safety standards.

While there are a number of licensed B&Bs in the Rural Area, internet research shows that there may be many more B&Bs that have not been properly permitted. In addition, it appears that some of these B&Bs and guest lodges lack a resident manager. This can be problematic -- the chief concern being that, absent an on-site manager, emergency situations cannot be quickly or appropriately addressed. Neighbors may not know whom to contact when a rental house is being abused. Some of the facilities advertise accommodations in excess of the number of rooms or buildings allowed by the Zoning Ordinance.

The City of Charlottesville studied this issue in 2014 to determine the extent to which transient lodging was occurring in City neighborhoods and its impacts to neighborhoods and on availability of affordable housing. The City is currently looking at these issues as well as potential revenue impacts for the City.

The County should undertake a similar study of both the Rural Area and Development Areas to decide if B&B and tourist lodging regulations should be changed in the County. The County might benefit from using the same research techniques to develop data for analysis. The County could also benefit by reviewing the issue in a broader community context than just at a County-level. In the Rural Area it is important to understand the extent to which new guest cottages or residences are being built for transient lodging or whether such facilities are helping to preserve historic buildings and sites. For the Development Area, the County will want to understand the impacts to neighborhoods when guest houses are operating with non-resident managers.

Strategy 5e: Study the nature and extent to which transient lodging is currently taking place and consider whether policy or regulatory changes should occur to accommodate this use. If such changes are determined to not be needed or appropriate, develop and implement a plan to bring errant operators of transient lodging into conformity with the County's regulations in a timely fashion.

As indicated in the Rural Area Chapter, rental vacation and tourist homes are operated throughout the County and some are in the Development Areas. The Zoning Ordinance allows tourist lodging in the Development Areas which means that a homeowner may have up to 5 guestrooms inside a home provided that the owner or a residential manager lives in the home. Internet research shows that some of these facilities are operating without permits.

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