

I am writing to express my opposition to the Raymond Short Term Rental Initiative. I believe that this is nothing more than a power play by a minority of Raymond citizens and find that many of their arguments are baseless and shortsighted.

The group's economics do not add up. The Short Term Initiative sponsors state that many out of staters have purchased properties and are using them as Air B&Bs, which is true but there are also many year round Raymond residents doing the same thing. If we start to limit their ability to build the extra income, many may be forced to sell those properties, which are only going to be sold to other out of staters who have been able to pay above asking price, in cash. This will only perpetuate the concern that the town will be bringing in out of state interests and politics. The issue is that we have not invested enough in our own education and jobs infrastructure than other states have and we have put ourselves at a financial disadvantage.

Secondly, although the town may receive income from a registry, this is a gimmick to make it appealing to town officials. Only a few months ago during one of the Budget and Finance Committee meetings in which monies were not accounted for, did one of our townfolk stand up and utter the word "corruption". It was after that meeting that the Town Manager abruptly resigned for reasons that do not make sense given her time with the town. How are we to trust the town in a state of financial and leadership flux to take on this controversial task? How many CEOs have we had over the past 5 years? Will we actually make enough money from a registry to pay for the hours needed to inspect all rentals and cover the legal costs of those that choose to legally fight it?

I question the intent of the sponsors of this initiative, who are trying to build a facade of caring for the town and the environment. I live next to one of the sponsors on Raymond Hill, where there are no short term rentals. It is noticeable that their initiative took out any restrictions on boats, knowing that one of the town select board owns a boat rental, very strategic. And my neighbor complains that short term rentals are using up our resources? It was about 5 years ago that this neighbor invited her son to use their garage to start a cannabis grow operation, Plantadon LLC. They did not care that the smell from their operation polluted my property and some days my kids cannot play outside. The utter hypocrisy is that while they are advocating a false narrative on the environment, they are using up more resources of water and electricity than most anyone else on Raymond Hill. And do I need to also point out that the same person that is advocating for martial law in Raymond does not want any restrictions on her family's cannabis operations? Having been directly affected by the Plummer's cannabis pollution, I encourage you to treat this like other consumer businesses with quality checks and pollution (smell) mitigation.

Ours and other Raymond resident's biggest concern with this initiative is that we have no trust that our town officials can fairly administer a short term rental ordinance. I have also discussed this matter with a Casco select board member and even in its simplest form, their short term rental ordinance is not equally and fairly administered. Personally, I was recently the recipient of a Notice of Violation for having a wedding on my property last August by the Town CEO, Chris Hanson. The NOV arrived 60 days after the incident, but only one business day after an encounter with our neighbor, Kathy Plummer. Please note that there is no ordinance against renting out our property and the Short Term Rental group advertised this point in their November signature drive. Regardless, I had to appeal this decision and found my family in a long meeting where CEO Hanson made several false statements, such as his relationship with Kathy Plummer and her initiative and how I am the only person receiving this NOV when others in the town, including Kingsley Pines, are able to do the same thing without harassment. The meeting was attended by dozens of supporters who were shocked with the Town's assertions and how it bent the facts to its narrative. How is anyone to trust CEO Hanson and the town to apply any ordinance equally and fairly when they are already proven to favor certain contractors in our town, i.e. Starrett and Floyd Brown, as well as Kathy Plummer. He stated in our appeal meeting that he does not know my neighbor but recently admitted at another town meeting that he has signed the initiative and also visited our neighbor for a 15 minute meeting on her porch. I firmly believe that his flexibility with the truth and acknowledgement that he is in favor of the Short Term Rental Initiative presents a conflict of interest with his role in the town. Frankly, I am disgusted that someone proven to be as ethically flexible as our CEO is now running for select board, which may vote on this measure. Please be aware that I continue to gather information on the town's recent actions in order to build a suit against the code enforcement department and the town sanctioned harassment.

And please note that there have been no Sheriff reports about short term rentals yet we are being told that this is a significant problem. Ironically, as I am typing this, there are reports from neighbors of a naked, likely drugged, woman on the property near the Town hall at 8:30 on a Monday night. This incident is not isolated, and the individuals involved are residents of Raymond, yet we are considering the short term rental initiative, a pet project from the same neighbor who has been growing marijuana on their property and complains about music and laughter as she actively monitors us with cameras. Where are the town's priorities?.

Sincerely,

Todd Roma and Jessica Dobson

**Copied from email received @ 8:41 5/13/25 sgf**