



May 28, 2020

Attention: City of Sarasota

Jen Ahearn-Koch, Mayor	Tom Barwin, City Manager
Shelli Freeland Eddie, Vice-Mayor	Marlon Brown, Deputy City Manager
Willie Charles Shaw, Commissioner	Robert Fournier, City Attorney
Liz Alpert, Commissioner	Gretchen Schneider, Development Services
Hagen Brody, Commissioner	Bernadette DiPino, Chief of Police

RE: Hotel Houses in City's Barrier Island Neighborhoods

Dear City Officials and Staff,

High-occupancy rental properties, also known as "Hotel Houses," continue to be a problem in the City's barrier island neighborhoods.

As a reminder, these properties seem purpose-built to be rented out to large groups that do not meet the City's own definition of a family as required in our residential districts. This has proven to be impossible to enforce and has resulted in the following:

1. Disruption of the quality of life of nearby residents (police have been called numerous times lately due to loud noise late at night)
2. Potential decreases in property values (would you want to live next to one of these?)
3. Changes to the character of the City's barrier island neighborhoods (not in a good way) for the benefit of out-of-area, big-money investors

These problems have not gone away since my January 21 presentation at the City Commission Meeting (over four months ago), after which the Commission instructed the City Attorney to research this issue and to return with recommendations.

And now, with the COVID-19 threat, there is an additional public safety issue: these properties attract large groups of people from who-knows-where and many of these Hotel House properties seemingly continued to rent despite the Governor's orders suspending vacation rental operations. This has been documented and reported by many nearby residents.

I look forward to hearing the City Attorney's recommendations, and I look forward to the City Commission acting to provide relief to nearby residents, to safeguard public health and to preserve the character of the City's neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

Chris Goglia, President
St. Armands Residents Association

st.armands.residents.assoc@gmail.com