
From: James Stolpestad <jastolpestadii@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2019 3:48 PM
To: Dadlez, Kady (CI-StPaul)
Cc: Nelson, Mitra (CI-StPaul); Privratsky, Matt (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Hotel Zoning Study concerns

Think Before You Click: This email originated outside our organization.

Kady,

I am writing to express concern about the recommendations from the Hotel Zoning Study.

First, I must say that I found the specific recommendations a bit confusing. I appreciate that the zoning code itself is confusing. So, I apologize if my comments are off point in any particulars. And pardon me for approaching this proposed amendment with a high degree of skepticism, as it is not immediately clear to me the public benefit of the study and proposed language change. On its face it seems to be restrictive, to add potential licensing obligations, or to otherwise “preserve the character” of a neighborhood and thereby thwart the needed evolution of our land use regulations to provide more safe roofs over the heads of more people.

My concern, in a nut-shell, is that I think it’s important for the clarification of what a hotel is within the St. Paul Zoning Code to not inadvertently thwart the good progress made under the ADU ordinance.

Accessory Dwelling Units are broadly popular and highly flexible housing structures that can address a wide range of housing challenges facing the city. I think it’s important to read and draft the proposed hotel language (if any such language is really needed) carefully and ensure that it in no way impedes on the owner’s ability to use an ADU in the range of ways typically and practically used in the marketplace today. And this means I think a property owner or renter of an ADU should be able to rent out an ADU as an AirBnB or through another service or informally. For example, the text requiring a member of a “family” to be resident in a main dwelling at the time of the rental is problematic in my view.

The way city residents adapt to the housing crisis, and the way properties are used for “hospitality” functions, are changing rapidly. I think it’s important not to overly constrain city residents or somehow undertake “back door” rezoning through definitions and licensing protocols.

Thank you.

Jamie

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