



City Council Worksession

Meeting Minutes – Planning Conference Room – 1st Floor

March 24, 2026

I. CALL TO ORDER

5:00 PM

Philip Cromer, Mayor

Members of Council in attendance - Philip Cromer, Neil Lipsitz, Michael McFee, Mitch Mitchell, Josh Scallate.

II. EMPLOYEE NEW HIRE RECOGNITION

A. City Manager's Office.

Traci Guldner, City Clerk, introduced Danny Rozek.

B. Public Works Department.

Nate Farrow, Public Works Director, introduced Tyler Olivieri.

III. PRESENTATIONS

A. Mayoral Proclamation being presented to the American Red Cross for American Red Cross Month.

Mayor Cromer presented Meaghan Silsby and Brooks Tucker with a Mayoral Proclamation for American Red Cross Month.

B. Cummings Foundation Grant Program update.

Stephenie Price, Police Chief, introduced Dr. David Baker with the Cummings Foundation who provided an overview of the success the program has had over the last year.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

A. Short-Term Rental Ordinance.

Curt Freese, Community Development Director, went over key changes that came out of first reading on March 10, 2026, that included modifications to the six percent cap calculation, removal of the prohibition on short-term rentals in The Point neighborhood, expanded allowance for accessory structures to be used as short-term rentals, and direction to revisit provisions related to ownership transfers, appeals or exceptions, and enforcement mechanisms.

Councilman Lipsitz inquired about notifications regarding short-term rentals. Mr. Freese stated they are notified when the permit is issued. Councilman Lipsitz feels it should be sooner. Mr. Freese stated the challenge is that this would not be considered a public hearing. Mr. Freese stated if Council wanted it on the application they could change the code. Mr. Freese will consult with the City Attorney.

Each member of Council addressed the question raised by Conway Ivy as to what has caused the urgency, and he stressed urgency, to remove The Point short-term rental exemption.

Councilman Scallate stated he is impressed by the way The Point neighborhood has coordinated and influenced policy through the efforts as shown by the numbers present tonight. He provided an overview of what has brought him to this point. He stated there is no real urgency to strike the language and has told himself since the beginning he would likely not have voted in favor of a special exception for The Point, because he feels as policy makers they represent an entire City, it is their job to pass fair and flat policies that are in the best interest of the entire City. Was not in favor of passing this without first bringing it up for discussion. He feels the best course of action for the City would have been to do exactly what was originally directed, and that was to close the exemption in T4-N and factor in a 300 foot distance requirement. He mentioned the concerns brought up by the residents are notable but does not feel the decisions should be based on those things as they relate to short-term rental policy. Feels some of the concerns should be addressed independently and not built into how the City regulates short-term rentals.

Councilman Lipsitz feels a “can of worms” was opened up when this amendment was proposed and is against removing the prohibition of The Point and will not change his mind.

Mayor Cromer stated he voted no as well and stated there is no urgency. He has never been a big fan of STR’s and if we are going to have them, he would rather they be owner occupied. Not a big fan of Investors. He gave some examples of provisions from other jurisdictions in the area. He stated Beaufort has 14,600 people with 24 square miles. The Town of Mount Pleasant has 100,000 people with 50 square miles. They capped their STR’s at 400. Since they are so spread out it is not a big deal, and the City has a problem where they are clustered.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee provided some background information on how the changing of this ordinance came about. He stated he voted on Tuesday for the discussion of the STR’s and wanted the rest of the amendments they had spent time working on that evening to be considered and that was the only reason. He will not vote for them to be continued.

Councilman Mitchell stated he voted in favor of removing the exemption of The Point. After listening to the public comments, he mentioned that maybe they need to go back and reconsider some things. Maybe the answer is to grandfather everyone who has a short-term rental now and ban new ones from forming. He does not know the answer. Told Mr. Ivy what drove his decision is he is very much aware he was elected at-large. He is not sure he is at the point where The Point should be exempt, however, what he is hearing from other areas is why is The Point special. He has yet to talk with anyone, in any neighborhood that is in favor of short-term rentals. Thinks the City should ban investment short-term rentals throughout the City. He feels an obligation to share and be the voice of the Northwest Quadrant. He certainly does not know the answer, but before moving on there needs to be more discussion and personally does not think the answer is that The Point be exempt.

B. Southside Park Phase II and Parks and Tourism Revenue Bond Reallocation.

Alan Eisenman, Finance Director, started off by saying during the February 17, 2026, Quarterly Capital Projects meeting, there was discussion about whether remaining 2024 Parks and Tourism Revenue Bonds could be spent on the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park Project. The City contacted Lawrence Flynn, City's Bond Counsel with Pope Flynn, and he stated the City can ask for the bond purchaser's consent, which is Webster Bank, to amend the 2024 Series Ordinance and expand the scope of the projects to include Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park.

Mr. Flynn sent a letter to Webster Bank on March 6, 2026, to ask whether it would be willing to consider providing consent to an amendment to the 2024 Series Ordinance and the proposed reallocation of Bond proceeds. Webster Bank responded they were fine with this modification.

Southside Park Phase I project is complete and site design for Phase II is expected to be completed in August 2026. There will be approximately \$1.2M remaining in Parks and Tourism Revenue Bonds funds. The estimate for Option 1 is \$1,197,522.00, and Option 2 is more scaled back with a cost estimate of \$816,312.00. Council will also need to consider whether to reallocate remaining funds to the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park project.

Councilman Lipsitz is in favor of moving forward with Option 2 and his hopeful the City will receive CDBG grant funds to go towards the cost. Definitely wants to see the inclusion of Disc Golf and Dog Park upgrades.

Brandon Turkse, PE with Davis and Floyd answered a question from **Councilman Scallate** about a cost of \$50,000.00 for demolition.

Councilman Scallate stated the Waterfront Park is his number 1 priority, and we need to put a bow on Southside Park and roll as many funds as we can into the Waterfront Park to get it back open. He has scaled this down by spending no more than \$250,000.00 out of the 1.2 million that remains. Wants to see about a million moved over to the Waterfront Park. If funding is delayed on the Waterfront Park it would be a detriment to downtown and the City.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee feels no one sees the Waterfront as not being a priority. We need to be very conservative on all funds with reference to the ability of grant funding. Fortunately, and hopefully, we will have our regional, state and federal partners helping us as well. Grant funding requires matching, so we need to keep our reserves for that.

There was a discussion about what particular items should be funded within Option 2.

Scott Marshall, City Manager, stated the primary objective for staff is to find out what Council would like to see funded as a priority within the park.

A figure of \$275,000.00 was recommended to use in Southside on the Dog Parks and apply for grants to fund the rest. The remaining amount will go towards the Waterfront Park.

C. Hospitality Fee 1.1% and 5% distribution.

Alan Eisenman, Finance Director, stated the City Ordinance includes a 5% hospitality fee distribution to the City's Designated Marketing Organization (DMO) and 1.1% hospitality fee distribution to non-profits for advertising to increase tourism and revitalization of the downtown economy. He stated after receiving input from the Beaufort Area Hospitality Association, staff would like to know the will of Council moving forward.

Nick Borreggine, Chairman of BAHA, provided some history on the formation of the original Beaufort Hospitality Association back in 2005 and how the hospitality funds were received back then.

Ashlee Houck, Executive Director of BAHA, mentioned a few years ago they were asked to work with other organizations within the community and how they have been doing so. She stated the ordinance as written is specific to the downtown core, and she feels it should be spread throughout the City.

Council is supportive of this change as long as all the funds are spent on marketing for City establishments and not those outside of the City limits.

The following addressed Council with their comments and concerns on topics discussed:

Beth Grace (written comments attached), Gene Grace, Nancy Russell, Tierny Stone (written comments attached), Bobby Malia, Karen Schwartzman (written comments attached), Matt McAlhaney, Brenda Litchfield, Alexandra Hendrickson (written comments attached), Jeff Hamrick (written comments attached), Tom Kline, Dave Russell, Conway Ivy (written comments attached), Alison Guilloud, Sarah Scudder, Douglas Storrs, Edie Rodgers, Graham Trask, Rob Cahill, Josh Gibson, Gloria Kurz (written comments attached), Jared Madison, Joe Macdermant,

Two petitions were given to the City Clerk. These two petitions had 375 signatures in opposition of allowing STR's in The Point. These will be on file with the Clerk's Office.

V. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section 70 (a) (2) of the South Carolina Code of Law: Receipt of legal advice regarding appropriateness of activity in the Commerce Park.
- B. Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section 70 (a) (2) of the South Carolina Code of Law: Discussion regarding the conveyance of property located in the Beaufort Commerce Park:
 - 1. Lot D - 5.25 Acres
 - 2. Lot B - 6.64 Acres
 - 3. Lot K - 7.0 Acres
 - 4. Lots A,C,E,F,H and J - approximately 31.79 Acres
- C. Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section 70 (a) (1) of the South Carolina Code of Law: Discussion regarding personnel employed by City Council.

Councilman Lipsitz made a motion to go into Executive Session and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem, McFee.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Councilman Lipsitz made a motion to come out of Executive Session and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem, McFee.

All were in favor, motion carried.

No actions from Executive Session.

VI. ADJOURN

10:47 PM

Disclaimer: This document is a summary. All City Council Worksessions and Regular Meetings are recorded. Live stream can be found on the City's website at www.cityofbeaufort.org (Agenda section). Any questions, please contact the City Clerk, Traci Guldner at 843-525-7024 or by email at tguldner@cityofbeaufort.org.

In accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80 (a)(d)(e), as amended, notification of regular meetings was given at the beginning of the calendar year. A copy of the agenda

was posted on the City's bulletin board and website www.cityofbeaufort.org twenty-four hours prior to the meeting. A copy of the agenda was given to the local news media and requested public on file.

approved: April 14, 2026

Traci Wilder



Traci Guldner

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2026 6:55 PM
To: Traci Guldner
Subject: Updated version of Public Comment for Council records

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Public Comment Tuesday March 24, 2026- City Work Session

My name is Beth Grace and I live at [REDACTED]

As a backdrop to the STR ordinance, I want to give a bit of history.

In my memory, after the financial downturn in 2008, some newer residents wanted City Council to address STRs in the City. The thinking was that it would fix up older homes in the National Historic Landmark District (NHLD) yet be good business opportunities. The City then included all neighborhoods except those exempt by HOA regulations.

I have no clue as to how or why the NWQ and Old Commons were exempted from the 6% cap. Apparently, according to the staff's First Reading background, the numbers are now around 20% which has a negative impact on the community culture. It also limits long term rentals and affordability on many levels.

When the ordinance was being debated in the mid 2000's, The Point Neighborhood Assn took a poll of all residents on The Point. It was almost unanimous to prohibit STRs because we are already commercial enough so we responded to City requests for input to be exempt BECAUSE;

1-We have many tours already licensed by the City and more with business licenses which daily pass through our neighborhood;

2- The streets are narrow with many homeowners having to park along the streets effectively making some streets one lane;

3- Core Commercial being next to us creates employers, employees and tourists parking on our streets;

4- Downtown festivals, parades and events create parking problems, congestion and safety issues;

5- Many streets have tight corners and blind view of oncoming traffic;

6- Emergency vehicle access is so hampered;

7- The NHLD and Reconstruction Era Park designations create heavy tourism traffic;

8- The many hotels/motels/inns/STRs already permitted in the Core Commercial and Office Commercial plus the many STRs already permitted throughout the City create a great deal of congestion for us;

The residents of our neighborhood are supportive of the NHLD and the Reconstruction Era Park. We are very welcoming to all tourists and tours. We voluntarily allow charities and community organizations to be hosted by us with strict rules on how/where to park and notifying our neighbors of an event.

The PNA represented the residents of The Point in 2018-18 to ask the City to be exempt. The City staff and Planning Commission and City atty all recommended it. They again recommended the exemption, in this version of the Ordinance, that The Point remain exempt for the many issues expressed.

We are respectfully requesting that City Council maintain their trust in the Planning Commission, the Staff and the City Atty who all concurred that The Point remain exempt from Short Term Rentals.

This document has been prepared to present research at the City Council Amended Worksession Meeting on Tuesday March 24th 2026 regarding the discussion of Short Term Rentals Ordinance.

Executive Summary

Many areas across the country either ban or significantly limit short-term rentals to preserve the integrity of their communities. Here are some of the most notable:

Charleston, SC - In 2018, the City of Charleston passed a comprehensive STR ordinance that banned whole-home/non-owner-occupied short-term rentals in most residential zones, requiring the owner to be present during guest stays. Rules require that STRs in Old & Historic Districts must be on the National Register of Historic Places and require host presence (one full-time resident on-site nightly) with a maximum of 4 adults.

New Orleans, LA - In 2019, the City Council passed an ordinance banning whole-home STRs (non-owner-occupied) in the Garden District and most of the French Quarter (except a small entertainment district on Bourbon Street blocks 200-700).

New York City, NY - Built on a 2010 state law banning rentals under 30 days in apartments unless the host is present. Local Law 18 (2023): Requires registration, host presence during stays, and a maximum of 2 guests, effectively banning whole home/un-hosted STRs.

Santa Monica, CA - Mid-2015 Home Sharing Ordinance: Prohibits entire-home rentals under 30 days unless host lives on-site throughout the stay.

Fort Worth, TX - Fort Worth ordinance bans STRs in residential/single-family zones. Grapevine, TX (nearby) has banned STRs in single-family neighborhoods since 2018.

Miami, FL - Historic districts and many single-family zones have outright bans or additional requirements. Miami Beach prohibits vacation/STRs (less than 6 months +1 day) in all single-family homes and many multi-family residential buildings.

These are not radical ideas — they are proven, court-tested approaches that balance tourism with resident rights.

Charleston, South Carolina (Historic Districts)

Charleston has implemented some of the stricter short-term rental (STR) regulations among historic Southern cities, with a strong emphasis on protecting residential neighborhoods, historic character, and housing availability—particularly on the peninsula where the iconic Old & Historic District is located. The rules distinguish sharply between owner-occupied (allowed with limits) and non-owner-occupied/whole-home rentals (largely banned in most residential areas).

Key Actions:

- In 2018, the City of Charleston passed a comprehensive STR ordinance that banned whole-home/non-owner-occupied short-term rentals in most residential zones, requiring the owner to be present during guest stays.
- STRs in Old & Historic Districts must be on National Register of Historic Places and require host presence (one full-time resident on-site nightly) with a max of 4 adults.
- Additionally, only one STR unit per property is allowed, plus extra off-street parking requirements (e.g., 1 additional space beyond standard needs).
- This was part of efforts by a Short-Term Rental Task Force to balance tourism with resident quality of life.
- Current focus is on enforcement, compliance (e.g., platforms required to de-list non-compliant listings), and addressing loopholes. The whole-house ban remains in place citywide in residential zones, with allowances primarily for owner-present setups or specific overlay zones.

What Won the Fight:

- Resident advocacy, neighborhood associations, and historic preservation groups emphasized impacts on housing affordability, noise/nuisance in dense historic areas, parking strain, and loss of community character in places like the peninsula/South of Broad.

- Courts and city councils upheld the zoning-based approach (local authority over land use), with no major successful challenges from platforms or hosts. Enforcement ramped up via permit requirements, inspections, and reporting.

Outcome:

- Significant reduction in non-owner-occupied/whole-home STRs in historic and residential peninsula areas—most listings are either compliant owner-present or funneled to commercial/tourist zones.
- This has preserved neighborhood stability, reduced investor-driven conversions, and is viewed as a resident win similar to New Orleans' historic districts. Outside the city (e.g., county or North Charleston), rules are more permissive but still regulated with permits, caps in some spots, and ongoing tightening.

New Orleans, Louisiana

Historic Districts - French Quarter and Garden District

New Orleans has some of the strictest and most successful STR regulations in the US, particularly protecting historic neighborhoods.

Key Actions:

- In 2019, the City Council passed an ordinance banning whole-home STRs (non-owner-occupied) in many areas and outright banning them in the Garden District and most of the French Quarter (except a small entertainment district on Bourbon Street blocks 200-700).
- Further tightened in 2023: Limits to one permit per square block in residential areas, lottery system for oversubscribed blocks, ban on corporate ownership, live-in operator requirement, and caps in certain zones.
- Enforcement ramped up, with platforms like Airbnb required to delist non-compliant properties.

What Won the Fight:

- Strong resident advocacy from neighborhood groups (e.g., French Quarter Citizens, Garden District Association) highlighting damage to historic character, housing costs, and quality of life.

- Multiple court challenges (including by Airbnb and hosts in 2023-2025) were dismissed or upheld. A federal judge in 2024 (and again in 2025) ruled in the city's favor, stating no fundamental right exists to use residential property for short-term rentals. Courts affirmed local zoning authority over STRs.

Outcome:

- Significant reduction in STRs in historic areas; French Quarter largely purged of non-compliant listings by 2025.
- This preserved neighborhood stability and is hailed as a win for residents over corporate interests.

New York City, New York

NYC's near-total ban is one of the most high-profile successes.

Key Actions:

- Built on a 2010 state law banning rentals under 30 days in apartments unless the host is present.
- Local Law 18 (2023): Requires registration, host presence during stays, max 2 guests, effectively banning most whole home/un-hosted STRs.
- Effective September 2023; Airbnb listings dropped dramatically (from ~38,000 to ~6,800, many neighborhoods saw an 85-90% reduction).

What Won the Fight:

- Years of advocacy by housing groups and residents over housing shortages and neighborhood disruptions.
- Airbnb sued (claiming "de facto ban"), but courts dismissed their challenges in 2023.

Outcome:

- Massive drop in illegal STRs; while housing affordability issues persist, it shifted units back to long-term and boosted hotel use.
- Seen as a model for urban areas prioritizing residents.

Santa Monica, California

Santa Monica's rules amount to an effective ban on un-hosted whole-home STRs.

Key Actions:

- Mid-2015 Home Sharing Ordinance: Prohibits entire-home rentals under 30 days unless host lives on-site throughout the stay (hosted only).
- Wiped out ~80% of Airbnb listings initially, strict enforcement with business licenses, taxes, and penalties.

What Won the Fight:

- Advocacy over housing loss and neighborhood impacts.
- Survived challenges; city continues aggressive enforcement (e.g., 2026 lawsuit against serial violators for millions in penalties).
- Outcome: STR market drastically reduced; no widespread successful reversals.

Miami, Florida

Miami (and Miami Beach) has strict, zoning-based regulations on short-term rentals, with outright bans or heavy limits in many residential and historic areas to protect neighborhood character, housing availability, and prevent issues like nuisance or traffic congestion.

Key Actions:

- Regulations vary by municipality: In the City of Miami, STRs (rentals under 30 days) require specific permits and compliance with zoning.
- Single-family/duplex areas are ineligible for STR/lodging use, based on court rulings and code.
- Historic districts and many single-family zones have outright bans or additional requirements; other areas allow case-by-case or flexible approvals.
- Miami Beach prohibits vacation/STRs (less than 6 months +1 day) in all single-family homes and many multi-family residential buildings in certain zoning districts. Approved STRs need zoning authorization, a Business Tax Receipt, and Resort Tax account; illegal operations lead to evictions and fines.
- State-level requirements apply (e.g., Florida DBPR license, Department of Revenue registration for taxes), but local rules dominate enforcement.
- Enforcement includes requiring hosts to display permit numbers in listings, and platforms face pressure to remove non-compliant ads.

What Won the Fight:

- Strong local zoning authority, focused on preserving residential integrity, historic character, and quality of life in areas like Miami Beach's residential/historic zones.
- Advocacy from residents and officials emphasized preventing conversion of housing to transient use, reducing nuisances, and protecting against related crimes.
- Courts and city codes have upheld these limits (e.g., no broad challenges overturning zoning bans noted recently). Platforms must comply or risk de-listings.

Outcome:

- Significant restrictions in historic/residential neighborhoods; STRs are channeled to commercial/hotel-like zones or specific approved buildings, preserving housing stock and neighborhood stability.
- A balanced win for residents over unrestricted tourism-driven rentals.

COURT CASES BY CITY

Nantucket, Massachusetts – Ward v. Grape and Nantucket Zoning Board of Appeals (Massachusetts Land Court, decided June 2025)

- Longtime Silver Street resident Catherine Ward filed suit in 2022 against her neighbors (Peter and Linda Grape) and the Zoning Board of Appeals after the board approved their whole-house STRs in the Residential Old Historic district.
- Ward argued that the town's zoning bylaw does not permit rentals shorter than 31 days for primary dwellings in this historic zone, except for rooms inside an owner-occupied home, in order to preserve residential character and prevent tourism overload.
- Land Court Judge Michael Vhay ruled in Ward's favor, vacating the ZBA's approval and declaring that such short-term rentals of primary dwellings are not a lawful use under the current bylaw.
- The decision effectively banned non-owner-occupied whole-home STRs in the historic district and was celebrated by residents fighting to maintain the island's quiet, historic neighborhood fabric.
- The town initially appealed, but dropped the appeal in November 2025 after voters legalized STRs island-wide; the court victory still stood as a precedent for resident enforcement of zoning protections.

McCall, Idaho – STR Owners Lawsuit vs. City of McCall (Fourth Judicial District Court, decided July 2025)

- Five short-term rental owners sued the city in 2024, claiming its ordinance (with permits, occupancy caps, extra parking mandates, and large-event limits) was overly burdensome and violated property rights.
- The city defended the rules as reasonable measures to protect public health, safety, and residential neighborhood integrity against transient impacts from booming tourism.
- District Judge Jason Scott ruled overwhelmingly for the city, calling the regulations “rational” and a valid use of local police powers to safeguard the community.
- The court explicitly upheld occupancy limits, parking requirements, and event restrictions as necessary to preserve neighbors’ right to a quiet, safe living environment.
- Only one vague noise provision was struck; the near-total victory allowed McCall to keep enforcing strong STR controls that prioritize long-term residents over investor-driven short-term operations.

New Orleans, Louisiana – Hignell-Stark v. City of New Orleans (and related Airbnb/platform challenges, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana and Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, key rulings in 2025)

- Residents, neighborhood groups, and city officials long advocated for strict short-term rental (STR) regulations to combat housing loss, noise, parties, and overtourism impacts in historic and residential areas, including near-total bans in the French Quarter and Historic Garden District.
- In ongoing litigation starting around 2019 (Hignell-Stark case), STR operators, homeowners, and platforms like Airbnb sued the city multiple times, challenging density caps, permit requirements, on-site operator rules, corporate ownership bans, and platform verification mandates as unconstitutional violations of property rights, equal protection, First Amendment, and Commerce Clause.
- In September 2025, U.S. District Judge Jay Zainey dismissed almost all claims in Airbnb’s lawsuit with prejudice, upholding the city’s broad authority to regulate STRs, stating there is no fundamental right to short-term renting and that rules rationally protect neighborhoods, preserve housing, and support resident quality of life.
- The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals (October 2025 ruling on appeal) affirmed most of the ordinance, rejecting claims of a constitutional right to STRs and upholding core elements like separate owner/operator permits, advertising disclosures, and on-site presence requirements as valid for community protection.

- While the appeals court struck narrow provisions (e.g., corporate ownership ban and single-listing ad rule) on equal protection and First Amendment grounds, the overall victory reinforced the city's (and residents') ability to enforce strong limits, especially in historic/residential zones, prioritizing neighborhood stability over unrestricted investor or platform-driven rentals.

Park Township, Michigan – Allen v. Park Township (Ottawa County Circuit Court, Case No. 25-008303-AA, decided November 2025)

- Longtime residents and township officials had pushed for enforcement of a zoning ordinance banning short-term rentals (STRs) in all residentially zoned neighborhoods since at least 1974, citing hundreds of complaints about noise, traffic, and loss of family-friendly character from unchecked Airbnb-style operations.
- When STR owners (represented by the nonprofit Park Township Neighbors) sued, arguing that decades of non-enforcement and prior zoning statements made the ban invalid and that the township could not suddenly prohibit a long-tolerated use, the township defended the rule as a valid, longstanding residential zoning restriction never legally permitted in those districts.
- Ottawa County Circuit Court Judge Jon Hulsing ruled in favor of the township and its Zoning Board, holding that prior erroneous administrative statements were not legally binding and that STRs have never been a permitted use in residential zones under the 1974 ordinance.
- The decision dismissed the owners' challenge, affirmed the township's authority to enforce the ban immediately, and directed any remaining disputes to the Zoning Board of Appeals—directly protecting the quiet, family-oriented residential neighborhoods residents had fought to preserve.
- STR operators announced plans to appeal or file further suits, but the ruling stands as a major victory for the township and its residents, finally allowing enforcement of the decades-old prohibition after years of legal battles.

Fayetteville, Arkansas – Hause v. City of Fayetteville (Arkansas Supreme Court, Case No. CV-24-663, decided October 2025)

- Local residents and city leaders enacted a comprehensive STR ordinance with licensing requirements, density limits, and owner-occupancy-style rules to curb overtourism impacts and preserve housing for long-term residents amid growing complaints about neighborhood disruption.

- Out-of-state property owners (Stephen and Shelley Hause) sued the city, seeking a preliminary injunction to block the ordinance, claiming it violated property rights and was overly burdensome.
- In a 4-3 decision, the Arkansas Supreme Court upheld the lower court's denial of the injunction, ruling that the city had acted appropriately and that the ordinance could remain in full effect while the underlying lawsuit proceeds.
- The justices sided with the city's position that the regulations were reasonable exercises of local authority to protect residential stability, rejecting the operators' request to halt enforcement.
- The outcome was hailed by city officials and neighborhood groups as a clear win for residents, keeping strict STR controls in place and preventing the flood of short-term operations that had threatened Fayetteville's housing affordability and quality of life.

Simi Valley, California – Neighborhood Councils & Residents Advocate for Citywide STR Ban (Planning Commission, March 2026)

- The city had no prior STR ordinance, so ~100 listings operated legally (but unregulated) in residential zones until the issue surfaced in late 2024.
- All four official Neighborhood Councils reviewed the proposed regulatory ordinance and voted against it, with Councils 2, 3, and 4 formally recommending a complete ban to protect neighborhood character.
- Residents packed the March 2026 Planning Commission hearing; all 13 speakers plus six written comments opposed any regulation and demanded an outright ban, citing noise, parking chaos, safety risks from transient guests, and investor-driven loss of family housing.
- The Planning Commission voted 4-0 to reject the regulatory proposal and recommend a full citywide ban to the City Council, citing excessive enforcement costs versus minimal tax revenue.
- The recommendation is now pending before the full City Council, which is considering next steps including a possible community survey.

Long Beach, California – Block-by-Block Resident Petitions to Revoke Unhosted STR Permits (Ongoing since 2020 ordinance, with first success in 2024–2025)

- The city permits up to 800 unhosted whole-home STRs citywide, but built in a unique neighborhood veto: any census block can ban unhosted rentals if more than 50% of residents sign a petition.

- In the College Estates neighborhood, residents formed the Long Beach Safe Neighborhood Coalition, gathered the required signatures, and successfully banned unhosted STRs—the first such block in California—effectively revoking permits and removing those operations from the area.
- Nine additional neighborhood petitions are now circulating or filed, with residents door-knocking and organizing to target existing permitted listings due to commercialization, traffic, and quality-of-life impacts.
- The process works directly through the city's established petition-to-council framework, allowing targeted, resident-driven removal without needing a citywide vote or new legislation.

EUROPEAN CITIES MOVING TO LIMIT OR BAN

Many major tourist cities have imposed strict local rules, often stricter than in the U.S., focusing on primary residences, night caps, and historic/residential zones:

- **Amsterdam, Netherlands:** One of the strictest—primary residences limited to 30 nights/year (proposals to reduce to 15 in some zones), max 4 guests, mandatory permit (€73+), and notification for each rental. Whole-home non-resident rentals are heavily restricted or banned in residential areas to preserve livability.
- **Barcelona, Spain:** Highly interventionist—phasing out all ~10,000 tourist apartment licenses by November 2028 (no new ones since 2014 moratorium), with high fines (up to €600,000). Platforms fined €64 million in 2025 for unlicensed ads; focus on returning units to long-term housing amid rent increases.
- **Paris, France:** 120-night annual cap for primary residences (municipalities can reduce to 90 from 2025), registration required, change-of-use permit for secondary homes, fines up to €50,000. National "Loi Le Meur" (2024) strengthened tools for local enforcement.
- **Berlin, Germany:** De facto restrictions on entire-home rentals (permit required, burdensome process, 90-day limit for secondary homes in some cases), with efforts to return thousands of units to long-term market.
- **Florence, Italy:** Ban on new STR licenses in the historic city center (UNESCO site) since 2023, with Tuscany's tourism law upheld by courts.
- **Other examples:** Vienna (90-day cap + permission), Lisbon (containment zones with thresholds for tourist share), and proposals in Greece (e.g., Athens/Thessaloniki restrictions).

NO PUBLIC PURPOSE !

My name is Karen Schwartzman and I live at [REDACTED] in The Point neighborhood. I'm here to offer my thoughts on the lack of public purpose in the amendment to allow Short Term Rentals in the residential heart of The Point.

From the replies received to so many of the letters that have been written to you on this topic – I understand that your overarching objective is to promote equity and fairness.

First, some context:

Some may not realize that neighborhoods like Islands of Beaufort, Ribaut Island, Cottage Farm, City Walk and Battery Point – are free of Short-Term Rentals by virtue of their Homeowners' Association By-Laws – which prohibit them entirely.

So, knowing that, it appears you are trying to create equity for everyone OTHER than those homeowners who are ALREADY protected against the adverse impacts of Short-Term Rentals – by promulgating a law for The Point that says - - -

“What’s bad for everyone else should be bad for you too.”

Is that the public purpose behind this amendment?

This amendment HAS no public purpose.

Property restrictions are among the most powerful tools local governments have. They shape where families live, where businesses can operate, and what kind of communities we create and promote.

But these restrictions are not one-size-fits-all — and deliberately so. Local governments set rules by district precisely because different neighborhoods have different needs and different pressures. What works in one context can cause real harm in another. Good law respects those distinctions.

The power to allow or restrict property use carries responsibility. It's supposed to be exercised for the benefit of the public, not for the private gain of a few. This amendment fails that test.

Ask yourselves: Who benefits from this?

- Not neighbors – they bear the costs of increased traffic, noise, parking congestion, trash accumulation, public safety risk, and instability. You have acknowledged as much.
- Not hoteliers in Beaufort – who compete with AirBNB's and VRBO's for customers and who pay the price in their reduced occupancy rates.
- Not Beaufortians seeking affordable housing – short term rentals reduce housing supply and drive rents up.
- And Not other neighborhoods – which gain absolutely NOTHING by virtue of having Short-Term Rentals in The Point.

The sole beneficiaries of this misguided Amendment would be a small number of investors who would be able to purchase houses in an historic neighborhood and convert them to Short Term rentals.

Courts have long held that laws must have a rational connection to a legitimate public interest – health, safety, welfare, or the general good of the community.

A measure that transfers benefit from the public to private individuals turns that principle on its head.

I urge the Council to reject this amendment.

Karen Schwartzman



Good evening distinguished members of the Beaufort City Council. My name is Alexandra Hendrickson. I live at [REDACTED] in The Point. I have owned my house since 2011, for 15 years. I am here with many of my neighbors. Our houses are in the south end of the Point, closest to Bay Street. Our greatest concern about Short Term Rentals in the Point are the adverse consequences to **tourism and neighborhood safety** from additional PARKING congestion in our neighborhood.

STRs increase

because they

1. **Parking Congestion Increase**: ~~Short Term Rentals~~ will bring more people and more cars into the historic Point District. Streets in our neighborhood are narrow, and many residents have to park on the street because they do not have private parking. Because of this, a two-way street often becomes an awkward one way street. Often now I have to stop and pull over to let oncoming traffic through, particularly construction and delivery trucks. Furthermore, in our area, retail and restaurant workers as well as downtown shoppers park their cars along The Point's narrow streets because they have no free parking downtown. Short Term Rentals will worsen these parking issues with more cars, RVs and trailers crowding into our neighborhood for overnight stays.

STRs

2. **Impedes Historic Appreciation**: The golf carts, horse and buggies and mini vans that show off our beautiful neighborhood to visitors, will be compelled to maneuver around more parked car obstructions which will slow them

down and risk spoiling the sight-seers' appreciation of Beaufort's historic treasures.

3. ^{Short Term Rentals} ~~Creates~~ **A Pedestrian Hazard**: There are few sidewalks in The Point, so tourists who stroll our neighborhood on foot have to compete for street space with cars. If our visitors have to expend energy dodging even more car traffic and parked cars, this will be an additional deterrent to any interested visitors to the charming and famous Point.
4. ^{STRs} ~~Blocks~~ **Emergency Vehicles**: ~~Finally,~~ Emergency rescue vehicles and ambulances which are already challenged to weave through our narrow streets may be blocked from preventing fires and other disasters that could destroy our historic neighborhood.

For these reasons, we would like to request that the current code remain the way it is and that Short Term Rentals not be allowed.

Thanks very much.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: PROTECTING THE POINT

The Economic Case Against Short-Term Rental (STR) Expansion in Beaufort's Historic Core

I. THE ECONOMIC ENGINE: BEAUFORT'S \$1.5 BILLION ASSET

The Point is not merely a residential neighborhood; it is the primary engine of Beaufort's **\$1.5 billion annual tourism economy**. As the centerpiece of the National Historic Landmark District, it drives the "heritage tourism" that attracts **nearly 2 million visitors** to our city and surrounding islands each year. [1, 2, 3, 4]

- **The Value of Authenticity:** Visitors do not come to Beaufort for a generic lodging district; they come for a *living* historic neighborhood. This authenticity is why Beaufort is consistently named a Top Small Town in the South.
- **The Tourism Paradox:** Expanding STRs in The Point trades Beaufort's most valuable long-term asset—its authentic residential character—for short-term, concentrated private gain.
- **The Risk:** When a neighborhood becomes a de facto hotel zone, it loses the "soul" that creates its market value. **Tourism declines when authenticity is lost.** [3]

II. MARKET DISTORTION & HOUSING INSTABILITY

Data shows that STR growth is currently outstripping the city's capacity to house its own residents and workforce.

The Reality of the Numbers:

- **Rapid Growth:** Beaufort has seen a **42% increase** in STR units in just three years (175 → 249).
- **Revenue Gap:** Average STR revenue (~\$40,500/year) is **double** that of average long-term rent (~\$20,000/year).
- **Supply Crisis:** There are currently **~250–280 active STRs** in Beaufort, while fewer than **100 long-term rentals** are available.
- **Inventory Imbalance:** STRs now outnumber long-term rentals by a **3-to-1 margin**.

Economic Impact on the Workforce & Defense:

With **41% of Beaufort households** being renters, the conversion of housing into lodging displaces the teachers, healthcare workers, and service staff essential to a functioning economy. Furthermore, a lack of affordable housing for **Department of Defense (DOD)** personnel poses a direct risk to future **BRAC decisions**, potentially jeopardizing **\$2.5 billion in annual revenue** tied to our military installations. [3, 5]

III. REGIONAL CASE STUDIES: LESSONS FROM PEER CITIES

Other historic Southern cities have already faced the "STR Crisis." Their experiences serve as a roadmap for Beaufort:

Charleston, SC: Faced intense STR growth in historic districts. The city implemented **strict caps and zoning restrictions** specifically to protect livability and housing availability.



- 🏠 *Key takeaway: Even a global tourism powerhouse must limit STRs in residential areas to survive.*

Savannah, GA: Unchecked expansion led to rapid investor purchasing, causing housing pressure and neighborhood disruption. The city eventually imposed **caps and permit freezes** in key areas.



- 🏠 *Key takeaway: Growth triggered regulation after negative impacts appeared; proactive protection is more effective.*

Asheville, NC: Early STR growth significantly reduced long-term rentals. The city had to implement strict owner-occupancy requirements.



- 🏠 *Key takeaway: Loss of workforce housing forced an emergency policy reversal.*

New Orleans, LA: STR proliferation "hollowed out" historic neighborhoods. Strong regulations were enacted only after severe economic and social disruption.



- 🏠 *Key takeaway: Overexpansion damages both community fabric and tourism sustainability. [8]*

IV. INFRASTRUCTURE & EXISTING LODGING CAPACITY

Expansion of STRs in The Point is unnecessary given the current capacity of Beaufort's professional lodging industry:

- **Underutilized Hotel Capacity:** Current hotel occupancy rates are approximately **70%**. There is ample room in existing commercial lodging to accommodate growth without cannibalizing residential housing.
 - **Infrastructure Strain:** Unlike hotels, STR clusters increase the burden on residential street parking and emergency services without providing the centralized infrastructure of a commercial district.
 - **Revenue at Stake:** Tourism and hospitality taxes (A-Tax and H-Tax) are the **third largest revenue source** for the City of Beaufort, supporting Police, Marina operations, and Waterfront Park. We must ensure this revenue comes from sustainable growth, not neighborhood depletion.
-

V. FINAL POLICY RECOMMENDATION

To protect Beaufort's economic future, the city must maintain the residential integrity of its most historic assets. We recommend:

1. **Maintain Strict STR Prohibitions in The Point:** Preserve the neighborhood's status as a residential zone to protect the very "brand" that drives our \$1.5 billion industry.
2. **Prioritize Long-Term Housing:** Shift policy focus toward increasing housing for the local workforce and military personnel to avoid economic displacement.
3. **Density Limits:** Prevent the "clustering" of transient units that erodes community continuity and historic authenticity.

Protect the neighborhood. Protect the economy.

Prepared by: Jeffrey Hamrick

Contact us: [REDACTED]

Date: March 2026

Sources & Citations:

- *City of Beaufort Annual Economic Data (Visit Beaufort & OpenGov).*
- *South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism (SCPRT) Impact Reports.*
- *The Trust for Public Land: Economic Benefits of Parks & Conserved Open Space in Beaufort County.*
- *U.S. Department of Defense Economic Impact Analysis (Beaufort Regional Base Activity).* [3, 5, 7, 9, 10]

[1] <https://www.beaufortsc.org>

[2] <https://explorebeaufortsc.com>

[3] <https://stories.opengov.com>

[4] <https://www.beaufort.com>

[5] <https://www.tpl.org>

[6] <https://www.congress.gov>

[7] <https://www.scstatehouse.gov>

[8] <https://abcnews4.com>

[9] <https://www.beaufortsc.org>

[10] <https://www.wthi.com>

CONWAY IVY COMENTS CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MARCH 24, 2026

I WANT TO THANK THE COUNCIL FOR INCLUDING THE ISSUE OF SHORT-TERM RENTALS IN TODAY'S AGENDA.

INTERESTINGLY. IN THE MARCH 10th CITY COUNCIL MEETING DISCUSSION CONCERNING THE PROPOSED ORDINANCE, I DID NOT SEE ONE ARGUMENT ADVANCED FOR THE BENEFITS OF SHORT-TERM RENTALS.

INDEED, ALL THE DISCUSSION WAS ON HOW THEY MIGHT BE LIMITED TO REDUCE ADVERSE EFFECTS ON NEIGHBORHOODS, FOR EXAMPLE CLUSTERING.

THE ISSUE OF THE POINT'S EXEMPTION FROM SHORT TERM RENTALS CAME OUT OF THE BLUE WHEN MR. SCALLATE PROPOSED AN AMENDMENT TO STRIKE PARAGRAPH 4 WHICH RECOGNIZED THE POINT'S LONG TERM EXEMPTION.

THIS EXEMPTION HAS BEEN IN PLACE SINCE OR BEFORE 2018 WITHOUT COMPLAINT.

STRIKING THIS PROVISION FROM THE ORDINANCE WAS NOT PART OF THE DISCUSSIONS LEADING TO THE PROPOSED ORDINANCE NOW BEFORE COUNCIL.

IT IS THEREFORE NOT A CRITICAL ELEMENT TO THE CURRENT PROPOSAL'S PASSAGE OR IMPLEMENTATION.

SO, I CAN BETTER UNDERSTAND COUNCILS CURRENT POSITION ON THE REMOVAL OF THIS EXEMPTION,

WHAT HAS CAUSED THE URGENCY, AND I STRESS URGENCY, TO REMOVE THE POINT SHORT TERM RENTAL EXEMPTION?

I REQUEST THAT EACH MEMBER OF COUNCIL ANSWER THIS QUESTION INDIVIDUALLY, STARTING WITH MR..SCALLATE.

ANSWERS

IF EQUITY AND QUOTE "SPECIAL PRIVILEGE" ARE THE REASONS, WHY NOT ALLOW OTHER NEIGHBORHOODS TO REQUEST EXEMPTIONS?

THIS WOULD BE TRUE EQUITY.

SHOULD OTHER NEIGHBORHOODS OPT OUT OF SHORT-TERM RENTALS, APPROPRIATE PROVISIONS CAN BE MADE FOR EXISTING SHORT TERM RENTALS.

INDEED, MR. MITCHELL SAID IN THE MARCH 10 COUNCIL MEETING THAT THE PAIN OF THESE SHORT-TERM RENTALS DO NOT JUST REST WITH THE RESIDENTS OF THE POINT, BUT ALSO WITH OTHER NEIGHBORHOODS AS WELL SUCH AS THE NORTHWEST QUADRANT

SOCIAL CAPITAL IS A TERM USED TO DESCRIBE THOSE ASSETS OF A COMMUNITY THAT ARE HARD TO MEASURE BUT VITAL FOR ITS HEALTH AND RESILIENCE.

EXAMPLES ARE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG NEIGHBORS AND THE VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY INDIVIDUALS TO THE BETTERMENT OF THEIR COMMUNITY.

I DO NOT THINK THE IMPACT ON SOCIAL CAPITAL HAS BEEN GIVEN ADEQUATE CONSIDERATION IN FORMULATING THE PROPOSED ORDINANCE

AT A MINIMUM COUNCIL SHOULD WITHDRAW ITS AMENDMENT TO ELIMINATE THE SHORT-TERM RENTAL EXEMPTION OF THE POINT.

COUNCIL SHOULD PROPOSE ALLOWING OTHER NEIGHBORHOODS TO EXEMPT THEMSELVES AS WELL.

AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, COUNCIL SHOULD ADEQUATELY EVALUATE THE POTENTIAL ADVERSE IMPACTS ON SOCIAL CAPITAL.

THE URGENCY OF THIS ISSUE BEFORE US NOT TO PASS THE PROPOSED ORDINANCE.

IT IS TO ALLOW MORE TIME TO CAREFULLY CONSIDER ALL OUR RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT BEFORE ALLOWING FOR FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES IN OUR COMMUNITY THAT WE ALL LOVE. THANK YOU.

BY HAND & VIA EMAIL

March 24, 2026

**Beaufort City Council
1911 Boundary Street
Beaufort, SC 29902**

Attention:

**Mayor Phil Cromer
Mayor Pro Tem Mike McFee
City Councilman Neil Lipsitz
City Councilman Mitch Mitchell
City Councilman Josh Scallate**

March 24, 2026

Dear Mayor Cromer, Mayor Pro Tem McFee, and Councilmen Lipsitz, Mitchell and Scallate,

My husband, Harry F. ("Rick") Kurz, and I own [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in *The Point*, which are abutting properties. 314 Laurens Street is our primary residence. [REDACTED] is a rental property which, in compliance with the zoning regulations in effect at the time of our purchase in 2017, has always been rented for a minimum of 30 days.

We write to express our surprise at, and respectful but firm opposition to, the motion made at the March 10th hearing to remove the existing zoning exemption on short-term rentals ("STRs") in *The Point* historic district.

The motion was advanced by Councilman Josh Scallate, supported by Councilmen Michael McFee and Mitch Mitchell, and passed by a 3-2 vote. Notably, it was never raised in any of the prior public hearings on short-term rentals, was made without advance public notice, and appears to violate the established due process requirements applicable to zoning changes. For these reasons, it is our understanding that this matter does not qualify for — and cannot properly be incorporated into — the "second hearing" scheduled for April 14, 2026. We understand this procedural deficiency has now been acknowledged and will be remedied before any further action is taken on this motion by the Council.

As you know, *The Point* neighborhood is a designated National Historic Landmark District ("NHL") and is among the most picturesque, historically and culturally significant areas in the City of Beaufort. It's a defining feature of the City and a priceless community resource — the site of daily and constant carriage, walking and vehicular tour activity that draw visitors from across the region and the country. To illustrate the vitality this neighborhood generates on any given day, a video taken on March 22nd captured a large walking tour (23 people plus the guide) at the intersection of Pinckney and King Streets, near the *Green*, and is attached to the electronic version of this letter.

Any policy decisions affecting *The Point* must be approached with great care and respect for its unique character. We're deeply concerned that the proposed removal of the exemption on STRs in *The Point* has no basis in public policy, ignores community concerns and well-established practices in other municipalities. If implemented, it risks undermining the historic integrity,

livability and long-term stability of the neighborhood, with impacts that would be significant and irreversible.

In addition to being a homeowner and full-time resident of *The Point*, I am the principal, founder, and Broker-in-Charge of *Mansions & Manors*[®], a real estate firm licensed in both Rhode Island and South Carolina. I have practiced as a Realtor for approximately 40 years, with a specialization in the coastal, resort communities of Newport and Jamestown, Rhode Island — markets that bear numerous and well-documented parallels to Beaufort. That breadth of experience has given me a high degree of familiarity with short-term rental issues and with how other communities have effectively and equitably addressed them. It is from that vantage point, as well as being an owner/neighbor and long-term stakeholder, that the following observations are made:

I. Communities Have Broad Authority to Regulate STRs Without Eliminating Longstanding Exemptions

The arguments advanced by Councilmen Scallate, Mitchell, and McFee rest on a false premise: that stripping *The Point* of its longstanding exemption is the only meaningful way to address concerns about short-term rentals citywide. That is simply not the case.

Presently, it appears the City is just considering capping the percentage of lots in a given neighborhood that may operate as STRs at 6%; establishing a 300 ft. separation requirement between STR properties to prevent clustering; and creating a formal waitlist for new licenses, with no automatic rollover or grandfathering upon sale. This would also serve as a tool to ensure attrition and the reduction of STRs exceeding the 6% rule over time.

Municipal governments across the country have demonstrated that STRs can be regulated effectively through a broader range of targeted tools, including:

- Prohibiting STRs entirely in residential zones where appropriate (Newport, RI did this in 2022);
- Limiting them in transitional or mixed-use zones through special use permits;
- Permitting them in commercial zones such as Carteret Street;
- Restricting STR licenses to owner-occupied properties only;
- Requiring dedicated off-street parking as a condition of licensure;
- Limiting the number of unrelated occupants per STR unit;

At their core, STRs convert residential use to commercial use — an impact recognized as part of the discussion on STRs in other communities. The appropriate response to that challenge is not to eliminate a neighborhood exemption that has been in place and relied upon by property owners, but rather to craft a regulatory structure that addresses legitimate concerns while respecting both property rights and established community character.

The record reflects that some 500 municipalities nationwide have recently revisited and updated their STR ordinances, including major South Carolina tourist destinations such as Charleston, Myrtle Beach, Hilton Head Island, and Folly Beach. Each of these communities found ways to balance the interests of residents, property owners, and the broader public without simply eliminating the rights of owners who made long-term decisions about their residences in good-faith reliance on existing regulations.

II. The Motion Raises Questions of Equity

The suggestion by Councilmen at the March 10th meeting that preserving *The Point's* exemption represents a special privilege; and, in particular, Councilman Mitchell's suggestion that it implies some degree of favoritism warrants a direct response. With respect, Councilman Mitchell himself resides in a double-gated community whose HOA covenants and deed restrictions effectively preclude short-term rentals — not by municipal ordinance, but by private contractual arrangement.

That distinction does not diminish the protection he enjoys; it is a clear demonstration that tools for managing STRs are varied, and that different neighborhoods are appropriately governed by different mechanisms. If Councilman Mitchell and his colleagues feel that the real burden of unregulated STR activity falls disproportionately on the northwest quadrant and comparable neighborhoods that lack either HOA protections or a historic district designation then a future, equitable STR policy should be focused there, not on eliminating longstanding exemptions in a well-defined historic area.

Further, Councilman Scallate's recommendation that properties with both a primary residence and an ADU, e.g. a carriage house, garage apartment, pool house, etc., be allowed to have both a long-term rental and a STR is ignores existing neighborhood concerns and suggests – whether correct or incorrect - a bias towards investors over owners and residents.

It's important to note the Council's position suggesting 'special privileges' or 'favoritism' contradicts its own actions in other zoning matters presently under consideration. More specifically, in its proposal to create a downtown social district, the Council has identified a very discrete subset of streets/businesses to be the beneficiary of the proposed district. This specifically excludes businesses in other locations that would/could also benefit. Interestingly, Councilman Scallate appears to be a vocal advocate of the social district so is inherently advocating a zoning policy that arguably shows 'favoritism' and provides those businesses with 'special privileges'. The Council can't "have it both ways".

Although I'm not aware of any potential conflicts of interest, it's important to note that there should be full transparency on the part of any Council member regarding any potential conflicts of interest (direct or indirect) when voting on land use matters that directly affect specific neighborhoods and property values.

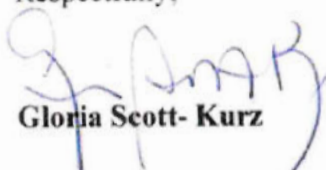
III. The 2025 Planning Recommendations Provide a Sound and Balanced Framework

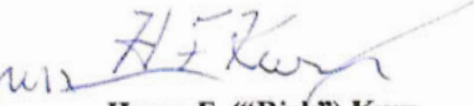
The City's own 2025 Planning recommendations offer a thoughtful framework that deserves serious consideration and should serve as the foundation for any revised ordinance. Those recommendations include: prohibiting new non-owner-occupied STRs; imposing a 300-foot separation requirement between new STR licenses to prevent clustering; establishing a formal waitlist with no automatic rollover; grandfathering existing licenses for current owners (with the license lapsing upon sale or revocation); limiting each parcel to one STR; and restricting pool and ADU use to owner-occupied STR properties. These are reasonable, targeted measures that address the legitimate concerns driving this debate — without arbitrarily eliminating the exemption that has defined and protected *The Point* for years.


The Point should remain exempt from STR restrictions, consistent with its status as a National Historic Landmark District and consistent with the reasonable, good-faith investment expectations of its property owners. The neighborhood's historic designation, its daily role as a cultural and tourism asset for the entire City of Beaufort, and the longstanding reliance of its residents on the existing regulatory framework all argue strongly for preserving that exemption.

As a result of the above, we urge the Council to reject any current or future proposal to eliminate *The Point's* existing STR exemption; and to channel its regulatory energy toward adoption of a fair, well-structured, STR ordinance modeled on the 2025 Planning recommendations and the best practices adopted by comparable South Carolina and other similar communities nationwide.

Respectfully,


Gloria Scott-Kurz


Harry F. ("Rick") Kurz


The Point,
Beaufort, SC 29902