
**Town of Nags Head
Planning Board
September 18th, 2024
- DRAFT -**

The Planning Board of the Town of Nags Head held a Public Input Session on Accessory Dwelling Units on Wednesday, September 18th, 2024, in the Board Room at the Nags Head Municipal Complex.

Chair Vaughan opened the workshop at 6:00 p.m. Chair Vaughan welcomed everyone and encouraged them to take the survey to facilitate the discussion.

Members Present

Megan Vaughan, Meade Gwinn, David Elder, Molly Harrison, David Thompson, Gary Ferguson

Members Absent

Kristi Wright

Others Present

Kelly Wyatt, Joe Costello, Andy Garman, Mayor Ben Cahoon, Chris Trembly, Lily Nieberding

Presentation

Planning Director Kelly Wyatt presented an overview of the topic including a brief history of ADUs, proposed regulations, and what had been presented to the Planning Board and Board of Commissioners. Ms. Wyatt noted that the Planning Board really wanted community awareness and engagement on this issue.

Ms. Wyatt proceeded to present slides highlighting what the Town currently allows and doesn't allow, definitions of similar terms including "Boarding House" and the difference between Accessory Structures and ADUs. Ms. Wyatt emphasized that many of the existing partial-home short-term rentals within the town share similar characteristics and functions with accessory dwelling units. Both provide additional living spaces that can be rented as separate, independent units, with comparable operational features. Ms. Wyatt noted that additionally, many of these existing partial-home short-term rentals, along with attached ADUs, if permitted, would resemble duplexes in terms of structure and use. Ms. Wyatt then discussed the Pros and Cons of allowing ADUs.

Deputy Planning Director Joe Costello then led the audience through the public input survey, discussed real-time results and encouraged public comment.

The following persons spoke concerning this issue:

Webb Fuller, Nags Head Resident – Doesn't think that the Town really needs to do anything, but if they do, they need to keep it simple; we are making things more complex than we have to. Don't need detached ADUs, don't want increased density (houses), don't add more houses in environmentally protected areas, consider impact on infrastructure.

Susan Lee, Nags Head Resident – Concerns about safety, too many cars, traffic and parking issues, concerned about septic impact, stormwater, how would regulations be enforced? Whatever is allowed she wants it to be respectful for the people that are already here.

Winborne Evans – Born and raised in Nags Head, was drawn to Nags Head because it wasn't over developed. Look at the dwellings that exist instead of adding more. Looking at possibly limiting STRs. Wants to preserve the integrity and heart of the town.

Shelly Gates, Nags Head resident – She has a partial home STR, helps pay her bills; this area is no longer an affordable place to live. The definitions need to be cleared up; she was grateful for the Town having an evening workshop, look at what is good for the entire community, doesn't understand why there is a distinction between STRs and long-term rentals.

Steven Smith, real estate agent on the beach, spoke against deed restrictions, a lot of smaller homes that used to be for long term residents were sold and turned into STRs; deed restrictions limit buyers' ability to increase wealth.

Brooke Burr, Nags Head property owner, rents her home for a few months out of the year. Need to focus on what the goal is, believes workforce housing should be the focus; also regulations need to be better enforced.

Louisa Farr, Nags Head resident, hard for young people to find housing and make a living; she doesn't understand why there is such a distinction and limitations between a STR and long-term housing.

Kim Ansell, Nags Head resident - believes in property owner rights, let property owners decide whether to rent long term or short term.

Bethany McKenny – Nags Head resident – She and her husband have a partial STR in their home; they also use it for extended family members and friends needing temporary housing. They rely on the income from the STR to help pay their bills.

Tim Koch, Nags Head Resident - believes in property owner rights, agrees in relaxing rules when it comes to long-term rentals; before the town looks at more development let's look at what is already available, allowing partial home (long-term) rentals might alleviate some of the problem.

Lauren Nelson – Nags Head resident – ADUs are an essential need for the community that should be considered as possible workforce housing.

Dave Siler – Nags Head property owner – lives in Richmond, STRs his entire house, we need to control density which has increased over the years, if you allow additional structure on a lot you are increasing density.

Jodie Futch – Nags Head resident - has had a partial STR for the last four years; there is a saturation of STRs so has seen diminished rentals, after listening to others' comments she now agrees with allowing long-term partial home rentals.

Mark Dunlevy – Nags Head Resident – Agrees that we need more housing for workforce; asked if Town decides to allow ADUs what happens if they conflict with neighborhood covenants? Staff confirmed for him that the Town does not enforce HOA covenants.

Ms. Wyatt confirmed that for the Town, 30 day is the maximum for a short-term rental and it's part of the definition in the town ordinance. However, the Town defines long-term rental as anything over 90 days.

Paula Houck, Nags Head resident – Concerned for Public Safety, septic contamination of water, etc. Absentee owners create issues by not maintaining the integrity of their properties and because they don't live in Town, they don't see the impact of parking and trash issues.

Ms. Wyatt reminded everyone that ADUs can be attached or detached and noted that there are a lot of properties that could support an attached ADU. However, she confirmed that staff has not done an analysis of how many lots could accommodate a detached ADU, but it would be dependent on lot coverage; most lots have already maximized their lot coverage, so she doubts that it's an incredibly high number; Ms. Wyatt stated that they were not looking at changing lot coverage requirements.

It was suggested that maybe they should be looked at separately, for example, allow attached ADUs but not allow detached ones.

Chair Vaughan thanked everyone for coming to the session and encouraged continued input.

The Public Input Session concluded at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Lily Campos Nieberding