



The voice of our community

Montecito Association

Statement for Short-Term Vacation Rental Ordinance Workshop

July 30, 2015

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The Montecito Association is dedicated to preserving the semi-rural residential character of Montecito. The short-term rental of residences can adversely affect residential neighborhoods as was documented in our survey of the community on this issue and is further documented by a long history of complaints to our office about this use. Given the explosion in the marketing of residences in our local community, county, state and across the country, we are very pleased that the County is moving forward to clarify applicable zoning ordinance provisions. Thank you for coming to Montecito to gain input from community members.

In late October 2014, the Montecito Association conducted a survey of Montecito residents on the topic of short-term vacation rentals. The survey link went to approximately 1200 current and past Montecito Association members. We received 300 responses. A copy of the survey responses has already been forwarded to the County. Of particular note is that a substantial number of people said activities of a vacation rental in their neighborhood had impacted their daily life. When asked how they were affected, most responses were related to noise, including loud parties, increased traffic and parking congestion. The survey results are available on the Montecito Association website for anyone who is interested.

For years, the Montecito Association has fielded complaints from residents regarding short-term vacation rentals that have adversely affected the enjoyment of their home. Unfortunately, since about 2007, there has been no recourse because the County stopped enforcing ordinance provisions that disallow transient occupancy of residential dwellings. This effort needs to be carried forward to address the current state of ambiguity in ordinance interpretation.

As you move forward, please keep in mind the intent of the residential zone in Montecito to “protect the residential characteristics of an area and to promote a suitable environment for family life.” Residential properties in residentially zoned areas should not be used for commercial purposes, consistent with the ordinance limitation on accessory uses to those that “do not involve a commercial enterprise on the site.”

We look forward to working with the County to develop an ordinance that protects residential neighborhoods and includes clear criteria for expedited and meaningful enforcement.

Thank you,

Cindy Feinberg, President