



Etta Armstrong <etta.armstrong@lacity.org>

Item 14-0593 (8-19-14)

1 message

Sharon Gin <sharon.gin@lacity.org>
To: Etta Armstrong <etta.armstrong@lacity.org>

Mon, Aug 18, 2014 at 10:51 AM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **rachel davis** <doctorrae@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Aug 18, 2014 at 10:47 AM
Subject: Planning & Land Use Mgmt Committee re: Item 14-0593 (8-19-14)
To: gilbert.cedillo@lacity.org, Englander@lacity.org, jose.huizar@lacity.org
Cc: Sharon.Gin@lacity.org

Dear Councilmembers, as you begin your gigantic task of preparing your comprehensive report on the "sharing economy" I urge you to remember that this broad term actually refers to lots of very real people like me. I am a retired homeowner and I am so lucky to be living in a great community, Venice. Venice also happens to be a place that many people from around the world want to visit too. By sharing my home with some of these visitors I am able to purchase more things that I might otherwise not be able to afford. I definitely eat out more often at my favorite local restaurants, which I also recommend to my guests. I am sure that when you

"follow the money trail" you will find that those of us who are renting out our spare bedrooms provide, between our own patronage and that of our guests, quite a strong support for our local neighborhood businesses.

As a home-owner I find that utilities and property taxes are always on the rise. In a "sharing economy", I can generate some extra income from something I have actually already worked and paid for - my home can now help me have a better retirement.

That is only the economic side, there is also a richness and depth of experience for both parties when one is visiting from far away, in a new and unfamiliar place, and the others open their own home to to provide a comfortable and warm experience - priceless!

And so, please, as you gather information, remember to gather it also from the hundreds of people whose lives are enriched in so many ways by the "sharing economy",

Thank you for you attention,
Rachel

Sharon Gin
City of Los Angeles
Office of the City Clerk
213.978.1074
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Etta Armstrong <etta.armstrong@lacity.org>

Fwd:

1 message

Sharon Gin <sharon.gin@lacity.org>

Mon, Aug 18, 2014 at 2:27 PM

To: Etta Armstrong <etta.armstrong@lacity.org>

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From: <jrgposte@aol.com>

Date: Mon, Aug 18, 2014 at 2:25 PM

Subject:

To: councilmember.huizar@lacity.org, councilmember.cedillo@lacity.org, councilmember.englander@lacity.org

Cc: Sharon.Gin@lacity.org

August 18, 2014,

RE: ITEM NO. 14-0593

Honorable Councilmembers Huizar, Cedillo and Englander:

I am writing to express my concern about the Sharing Economy Motion and ask that the Planning and Land Use Committee amend this Motion to request an examination of the impacts, both positive and negative, of the "Sharing Economy" on the quality of life in residential neighborhoods, the housing stock in our City, including rent controlled units and availability of long-term rental properties.

The Motion as currently written and amended by the Economic Development Committee instructs only that the benefits of the "sharing economy" be examined and addressed by the Work Group in their Comprehensive Report and ignores any analysis of the potential adverse economic and social impacts. It would be a disservice to the citizens of Los Angeles if the opportunity to explore, analyze and understand not only the benefits, but the serious economic issues and potential adverse impacts of the "sharing economy" were not included in this analysis. The "Sharing Economy" Motion as currently drafted is vague enough to be considered a request for legalization of currently illegal activities and presupposes only the positive economic benefits of the so-called "sharing economy."

This motion appears to be biased in favor of supporting the current pernicious trend of converting residential properties to short-term/transient rentals. This is depleting the affordable housing stock in Los Angeles popular visitor destination neighborhoods already over-saturated with absentee owner-occupied, illegal short-term rentals as corporate entities buy up and/or rent every available property to turn into short-term vacation rentals.

These are not "home sharing" individuals; the majority of properties listed on online platforms like Airbnb, Homeaway, Vacation Rental by Owner and Flipkey are not owner occupied; many were turned into vacation rentals after eviction of tenants who depended on rent control.

The impact of short-term rentals on affordable housing needs to be examined by the Work Group as does loss of housing stock, including rent controlled units/affordable housing and long-term rental units that are being permanently withdrawn from the housing market and threaten the very existence of rent control and affordable housing. This is of particular concern in popular visitor destination areas of the city already over-saturated with absentee owner-occupied, illegal short-term rentals.

The term "sharing economy" needs to be defined and fully understood; within the context in which it is currently being practiced it is a misnomer. Companies like Airbnb use the language of "sharing" to conceal ambitions that are far more self-serving. This model may collectivize experience – profits, however are privatized!

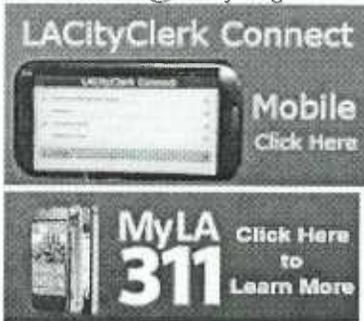
The creation and enforcement of regulatory safety and risk management structures is the appropriate way to support new technologies, innovators and entrepreneurs -- otherwise the potential benefits of a true sharing economy will be lost.

I would further request that this committee amend the motion to ensure that the Economic Development Motion work group is a diverse group made up not only of proponents the sharing economy as it is currently practiced, but to ensure that those who are interested in protecting rent control units, the fabric of residential neighborhoods and labor union representative and affordable housing advocate representatives are included.

Thank you,

Judith Goldman
Stakeholder

Sharon Gin
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Etta Armstrong <etta.armstrong@lacity.org>

Fwd: Agenda Item 14-0593 "The Sharing Economy" PLUM meeting August 19 2014

1 message

Sharon Gin <sharon.gin@lacity.org>
To: Etta Armstrong <etta.armstrong@lacity.org>

Mon, Aug 18, 2014 at 2:43 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Elaine Spierer <espiierer@verizon.net>
Date: Mon, Aug 18, 2014 at 2:28 PM
Subject: Fwd: Agenda Item 14-0593 "The Sharing Economy" PLUM meeting August 19 2014
To: sharon.gin@lacity.org

For your information.e

Begin forwarded message:

From: Elaine Spierer <espiierer@verizon.net>
Subject: Agenda Item 14-0593 "The Sharing Economy" PLUM meeting August 19 2014
Date: August 17, 2014 4:25:18 PM PDT
To: councilmember.huizar@lacity.org, councilmember.cedillo@lacity.org, councilmember.englander@lacity.org
Cc: councilmember.bonin@lacity.org, councilmember.labonge@lacity.org, councilmember.wesson@lacity.org, Tricia Keane <tricia.keane@lacity.org>, chris.robertson@lacity.org, Cecilia Castillo <cecilia.castillo@lacity.org>

Dear Chairman and members of PLUM,

I want to tell you from a neighborhood perspective what the impact that the Motion known as Agenda item 14-0593 now before you could have on neighborhoods and entire communities. PLUM members need to know why it is critical that it amend the motion to put in place members in its working group who carefully will review the direct and collateral negative impact the new 'sharing economy' is having on neighborhoods right now. This motion promotes the Airbnb 'sharing economy' model and is absent of any reference to the negatives in this business model. It is not a balanced motion and does not even slightly reflect the true realities of the 'sharing economy.' Nowhere in it is there concern for communities or a requirement to have rental housing experts and stakeholders experienced with housing stabilization and rent control laws in Los Angeles play a central role in the working group to investigate the negative features of the 'sharing economy' and what it can do to a community and is doing to communities. Venice rental stock is depleting on a daily basis and rent-controlled residential units are disappearing in monumental numbers directly because of this glowingly described 'sharing economy.'

I want you to know what this 'sharing economy' has already done to Venice's rental housing stock. Venice has already lost more than 2000 low income and moderate income units from its regular

rental housing stock. Units, once available to people who want to live in our historically diverse community, are now off the rental market entirely. So where did they go? Take a moment and look at the Airbnb, VBRO or Flipkey sites for Venice and see for yourselves the thousands of short-term rentals listed available for rent by the day. Remember, short-term rentals are illegal in Los Angeles yet thousands of units are already co-opted into this short-term rental market system by the Airbnb business model. Soon Airbnb will bring their IPO to Wall Street and will rake in millions and millions on the backs of the the old and weak they and others have pushed out and displaced from their long-term rental units only to be replaced by short-term tenants. Ask yourselves, who lived in all those units you see advertised now as daily rentals on Airbnb and VBRO before they were short-term rentals? Those people were our Venice community. They were our core and now they are God only knows where trying to replace their old rent-controlled unit in an impossibly expensive rental market. There is nothing good about what is happening to Venice's housing stock because of this new 'sharing economy.' Ask anyone excited about this 'new business model' if they can even explain what the 'sharing economy' is--ask them what is being shared?--you will not get any answer.

Building after building in Venice is vacant of owners and are solely occupied by transient renters. They are renting units on a day by day basis for reunions, meetings, day rentals and party events. Entire neighborhoods are becoming destabilized. An example which comes to mind are the two blocks of Dudley where more than a dozen properties are now entirely occupied by transient renters. Parties run day and night on Dudley. Maids can be seen pushing their carts up the walk street servicing these rentals just like any hotel room--and make no mistake, these are in fact hotel rooms.

These short-term rentals are not individual homeowners renting out a room in their home to bring in some extra money. They are quasi hotels whose operators have stealthily stolen our housing stock. This short-term rental model even has a major lobby group, Peers, org. Their voice was so loud and intimidating that our local neighborhood council stopped reviewing the short-term rental crisis here in Venice. Peers.org is chartered to get rental housing laws changed in city after city to enable the development of their business model. Right now most community housing laws restrict short-term rentals. Lobbyists are persuading politicians that what they are selling is not 'snake oil' but a 'new economy' and they need to get on board! They make clear that the lobbyist money being spread around now as they 'inform' politicians about their intentions and needs will be available to support politicians and their campaigns who support their business model

The Silicon Valley and Wall Street investors pushing this billion dollar business care nothing about destroying neighborhoods and destabilizing entire communities. Their goal is to get cities to not enforce their rental laws and then change them to allow their business model to prosper. Los Angeles has a clear rental law prohibiting rentals of less than 30 days. It was put in place specifically to maintain the stability of neighborhoods. This law is deliberately not being enforced. Venice's welcoming neighborhoods include many African-Americans and Latinos and people of all income levels. We have a very very wonderful and uniquely diverse community in Venice. It is the envy of other communities. Our critical, essential hard-earned balance and stability is now under siege by Peers.org and the business model of their sponsors. Our diversity is real and the threat to it now is real.

Imagine buying a home in Venice, moving in, and finding out you don't have any neighbors. Your block is filled with unsupervised rentals filled with transients. You are afraid to let your children play outside. You find out you really don't even have a neighborhood. Pretty horrifying, right? This is the reality of what not enforcing our short-term rental law has done to the neighborhoods of historic Venice. Blocks of stable long-term renters, many who lived in rent-controlled units, were pushed out by syndicators who have taken over properties and converted them to short-term rentals. There is so much more money renting short-term that owners are being solicited heavily to turn over their buildings to 'professionals' and give them master leases to manage the properties while they all rake in the cash.

The unbalanced motion before you must be amended to reflect concern for Los Angeles's housing

stability and housing stock and the damage that an unregulated 'sharing economy' will continue to do to Venice's housing availability and Venice's unique neighborhoods. It must be amended to assure the inclusion of members in the working group who are experts in our local housing issues and stakeholders who have strong experience and interest in housing. This 'sharing economy' is not all good and housing is one of the areas which will be permanently damaged by an unregulated 'sharing economy.'

I am grateful that you have taken the time to read this long email about a very urgent issue. I hope you will make the necessary changes to the Motion to assure it insists on a careful review and understanding by the group of the damage an unregulated 'sharing economy' can do and is doing now.

Respectfully,
Elaine Spierer
Venice Resident and Landlord

--
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