

Official: Subdivisions could prevent short-term rentals

BY NORM CANNADA
THE JOURNAL

SENECA — If Seneca City Council approves a controversial amendment to its zoning ordinance allowing and regulating short-term

rental properties inside the city limits, communities could still ban short-term rentals, according to a city official.

In an email response to *The Journal* Monday, city planning and development director Ed

Halbig said the city's proposed ordinance would not override a written policy of a subdivision prohibiting short-term rentals.

"As with all land-use regulations in the city, the more restrictive

regulation applies," Halbig wrote in the email. "Therefore, if the city were to permit an activity, and a subdivision were to restrict the same activity, the city's regulation would not supersede."

Seneca City Council delayed a vote on second and final reading on the ordinance last week after 14 of 16 speakers during a public comment period expressed opposition to

SEE RENTALS, PAGE A5

THE JOURNAL **A5**

RENTALS: Board looking at options

FROM PAGE A1

the plan. Most of those who spoke are residents of the Normandy Shores subdivision.

About 80 residents from Normandy Shores were at that council meeting, as well as a Seneca Planning Commission meeting last month, voicing opposition to the proposed ordinance. The commission voted 4-0 not to recommend approval to city council.

At that April meeting, Halbig told commissioners the proposed ordinance "is in response to a legal challenge to the zoning ordinance." That legal challenge came in from a lawsuit brought by Leonard and Julie Chace, who own a

home in Normandy Shores and had used the property for short-term rentals until they were stopped by city action.

Julie Chace told the planning commission one of the reasons she and her husband chose the home was that Normandy Shores did not have a policy prohibiting short-term rentals.

Normandy Shores Association president Flora Riley said Monday she and other members of the association's board are aware that a stricter associational ordinance would supersede the city's ordinance, if passed by city council. She said board members also believe a short-term rental is a business, something already forbidden by a

Normandy Shores Association ordinance.

"The Normandy Shores board is actually looking at all of our options," Riley said.

She said those options include the board possibly amending its ordinance to specifically state that short-term rentals are not allowed in the subdivision or staying with the current ordinance that board members believe already disallows short-term rentals because of its ban on using a home in the community for a business.

"If this goes through and the Chaces have to get a business license, then they're a business, and that's not allowed in our ordinance," she said.