

Resident supports Seneca's reset of

BY NORM CANNADA
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SENECA — The homeowners association president of the community that spoke the loudest against a short-term rental policy Seneca City Council rejected this week said she supports the council's decision to scrap the policy and start the process over.

Flora Riley, president of the Normandy Shores Association, was traveling when council voted down second reading on the controversial short-term rental proposal Tuesday. But she and a few other residents of the community had an opportunity to be heard recently in a private meeting with city administrator Scott Moulder.

"We met with him and just shared some of our concerns and suggestions and thoughts," Riley said. "We know that some kind of short-term rental policy is going to be implemented, and Scott mainly just wanted to hear what we had

to say and what our thoughts were and what our issues were. It was a great meeting."

Council rejected final reading of the ordinance at Moulder's request Tuesday, and he and city attorney Bo Bowman are drafting a new ordinance. Moulder said he would be recommending "several changes" in the new proposal, which



Moulder

rental proposal

would go to the city planning commission before it comes back for two council readings.

Riley said the issue of short-term rentals has become a hot topic in many communities.

"Everybody in the country is dealing with this," she said.

"In fact, we were in Ireland and

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PROPOSAL: 'If you don't enforce it, you might as well not have a policy,' Riley said

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in (Wednesday's) paper in Ireland they were talking about the same issue, about little communities and short-term rentals being an issue where you totally lose your community identity. So it's all over the world."

Riley said she is pleased Moulder has talked about improving the enforcement language in the policy he brings to the commission and council.

"That was one of our main concerns was the whole enforcement issue — that there had to be some kind of specific structure in place, an enforcement plan on how the city was going to truly enforce it," she said. "If you don't enforce it, you might as

well not have a policy. That was our big thing — making the enforcement and the rules a little bit tighter than maybe what that original policy was. We felt like it was way too gracious to the short-term rental folks. The proof in the pudding is enforcement. That's the whole crux of what we were wanting."

At separate meetings with the planning commission and council in April and May, about 80 Normandy Shores residents showed up in opposition to the ordinance. Officials said the ordinance was a response to a lawsuit brought against the city by a couple who purchased property in Normandy Shores to use for short-term rentals. During those two meetings, residents talked about problems they had in

their neighborhood as a result of short-term rental properties.

Riley said she believes the response of the community played a role in the city's decision.

"If no one cared and no one attended and there were no checks and balances there, I think they might have gone right on and voted it, and that would have been that," she said. "We were impacted so dramatically, not only now, but we were impacted 10 years ago with the same issue. We had a double whammy going in that we had all experienced this scene, and so many other communities in the city have not really seen that."

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