

# RENTALS: 'This is a good step forward'

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bedroom, and local management at all times.

The first ordinance was proposed in April 2018, when council approved first reading and sent it to the planning commission. The commission voted against recommending the plan after hearing opposition from residents of the Normandy Shores community, which had about 80 people at the meeting.

Normandy Shores residents also showed up for council's May 2018 meeting, and council delayed a final vote. It was later voted down at city administrator Scott Moulder's request. Moulder presented a revision, which was approved by the planning commission, but council never voted on it.

The ordinances have been in response to a legal challenge to the current zoning ordinance. Leonard and Julie Chace filed a suit against the city in the fall of 2017. The Chaces have used their home in Normandy Shores as a short-term rental property.

Moulder said the ordinance was modeled after regulations for bed and breakfast businesses already in place in Seneca.

At Tuesday's meeting, Normandy Shores homeowner Bob Atwater asked for the minimum lot area for a short-term rental to be raised to 40,000 square feet, which he said is "consistent with the additional requirement for a bed and breakfast as a conditional use under the present ordinance."

The Normandy Shores Association amended its covenants last year to prevent short-term rentals, something city officials have said would override a city ordinance.

Association president Flora Riley said city officials had told Normandy Shores residents they could keep short-term rentals out of their community by amending the covenants and asked council to protect them.

"There appears to be nowhere in there about asking the applicant about whether their covenants allow short-term rentals," she said. "You've got to ask that question of the applicant and nip it in the bud right there."

Her husband, former city councilman Ernest Riley, asked council to add a statement in the ordinance saying, "This ordinance does not limit or override any provisions of covenants in any neighborhoods where covenants forbid or exclude short-term rentals."

"You need to make that very clear and very enforceable," he said.

Moulder told council changes were likely before second reading, including a way to ensure short-term rentals are not approved in communities where covenants forbid them.

"We're certainly discussing all of their comments ... and we'll see if we can factor those in to help resolve those issues," Moulder said.

Flora Riley said after the meeting she was pleased "that they're going to amend it and add some things from our suggestions."

"I think this is a good step forward," she said. "We look forward to seeing the final product."

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## BUDGETS: Millage could increase next year

# Short-term rentals get OK on first reading

BY NORM CANNADA  
THE JOURNAL

SENECA — After more than a year of discussion, a third proposed ordinance to allow short-term rentals in Seneca is one step closer to becoming law.

Council approved first reading of the newest version of the ordinance allowing and governing short-term rentals during its meeting Tuesday night. Second and final reading on the ordinance could

come at the council's next scheduled meeting July 9. The ordinance has already been recommended for approval by the city's planning commission.

The proposed ordinance would limit the number of people staying in a short-term rental to two people per bedroom, up to a maximum of 12 people. It would also require one paved parking space onsite — not on the street — for each

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