

March 28, 2017

City of Gearhart
PO Box 2510
Gearhart, Oregon 97138

Dear Mayor Brown, City Commissioners, and Administrative Staff,

Please extend to me the favor of reading the following text into the record of testimony for the proposed Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments, file # 16-003ZTA:

It is significant that the neighboring cities of Seaside, Cannon Beach, and Manzanita allow RVs on residential property only to be used for storage. The sole exceptions are Cannon Beach's and Manzanita's specific size and time limitations for an RV placed temporarily on a construction site. Cannon Beach requires specific placement of storage RVs which precludes the front yard.

Allowing persons, possibly accompanied by a family and/or pets to inhabit a recreational vehicle (RV) situated on a residential property would increase the Gearhart zoning density of dwelling units per acre. This violates the Standard for the Residential R-1 Zone; Low Density Residential defined as single family housing with minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet (including numerous exceptions of 5,000 square feet, "grandfathered in"), with specific requirements for setbacks and yard space.

Additionally, increased density on a site could run contrary to the Short Term Vacation Rental Regulations; their maximum occupancy limits, and challenges to the capacity of septic systems. The latter could potentially trigger the attention of the State of Oregon, which could require installation of a sewer system at tremendous cost and inconvenience to the citizenry. The existing Ordinance was violated and not enforced last summer when a trailer parked parallel, outside of the property line fence on the street shoulder at 801 South Marion for several days, while the house was rented. The driveway was filled to capacity with cars.

Placement of an RV for living purposes on a residential property could adversely impact neighbors. Privacy could be imposed upon by unanticipated views. Noise

levels could increase. Parking on our city streets is already a problem on holiday weekends. This too would be impacted by the additional occupants.

On an even more practical level, consider that RVs have (3) types of holding waters; fresh potable, gray water to wash dishes and shower, and black water from the toilet. Gray water can be disposed by using a hose in vegetation. Ideally, both gray and black waters would be emptied at a Dump Station, but there are no guarantees. People do what is expedient. Small rigs may have as little as (10) to (20) gallon capacity, large RVs, greater capacity. Generally, a family of four would reach holding capacity within four days. RVs used primarily for storage, converted for living, may not be easily mobile. Chemical treatments are available for the holding tank of black water to help control odor and break down solids. However, it is a fact that failure to dump in a timely manner will result in unattractive odors, impacting the surrounding area. Holding tanks have been known to burst or leak. These facts constitute environmental impacts of both liquid waste and potential for odor.

Fortunately, the City of Gearhart has several nearby RV parks to cater to RV owners' needs. Full hookups and electrical with water are both available within a short distance. All offer shower facilities and welcome pets.

Bud's RV Park, 1.3 miles (3 minutes) from City Hall, offers laundry facilities and other amenities.

Venice RV Park, 1.7 miles (5 minutes) from City Hall, offers the seventh night free.

Sunset Lake Resort and RV Park, 6.7 miles (9 minutes) from City Hall, offers a lake view and walk to the beach.

Fort Stevens State Park, 12.9 miles from City Hall, features (478) specific RV spaces, of these (174) spaces offer full hook up, (304) electrical and water. Four nights with full hookup costs \$128.00. The Dumping Station is free.

It is cheaper to maintain the current Ordinance prohibiting the use of RVs for living purposes, limited to storage only, than to pay for the cost of law enforcement for an amended Ordinance. Currently, the City of Gearhart does not have a (24) hour police operation, except for "called-in emergencies." There are three full-time officers. This amendment would further dilute their efforts to maintain law and order of vital priorities. To have a "round-the-clock" operation would require

between 5 and 7 officers total. The ensuing loss in property values and therefore tax revenues of the proposed amendment, forecast by realtors, would make it difficult to expand the police force.

Historically, Gearhart property owners purchased their properties with the understanding that dwellings were limited to permanent structures, a positive factor. Two generations of my family have enjoyed this low-density residential area. All of us are firmly opposed to the proposed amendments of Section 6.170, which would considerably alter the character of the city. It would be unfortunate and very disappointing if Gearhart became the city of exception for allowing RVs for living purposes.

Regards,

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