

BEFORE THE HEARING EXAMINER
FOR THE CITY OF SEATTLE

In the Matter of the Appeals of:

621 APARTMENTS LLC, ROY STREET
COMMONS LLC, ERIC AND AMY
FRIEDLAND, RAISSA RENEE LYLES,
SEATTLE SHORT TERM RENTAL
ALLIANCE, SEA TO SKY RENTALS, AND
MICHELLE ACQUAVELLA

of the adequacy of the Determination of Non-
Significance (DNS) for Land Use Code and
Licensing Code text amendments relating to short
term rentals issued by the Director, Seattle
Department of Construction & Inspections.

Hearing Examiner Files:

W-17-002
W-17-003

DECLARATION OF CHARLES
CUNIFF

I, Charles Cuniff, declare as follows:

1. I am competent to testify and make this declaration based on my personal
knowledge. I am a member of the Seattle Short Term Rental Alliance.

2. My wife Sarah Dallas Parkinson and I both moved to Seattle in 1979. We have
lived almost all those years in the neighborhoods north of the Ship Canal. In 2001, we bought a
duplex house in the Fremont neighborhood. We thought that we would live there forever, as we
loved the house and the neighborhood. However, our three grand-children live in Columbia City

1 and it had become more and more difficult to get down there to see them and help care for them,
2 given the worsening of Seattle traffic.

3 3. In 2013, when our third grand-child was born, there was more and more help
4 needed with the kids. We found a very small house to buy in Columbia City. We moved there
5 and rented out the Fremont house on airbnb and VRBO and other platforms.
6

7 4. The reason that we decided to rent out in this manner, rather than on a long-term
8 lease was chiefly to give us flexible use of the house, while giving us good income to help with
9 our retirement. We have retired to help care for the kids and the income has allowed us to do
10 that. The twins are nine and want to attend the UW. We do not want to sell the house, as we
11 would like it to be available for them when they attend UW.
12

13 5. Both my wife and I have large families who live out-of-state who come to visit
14 frequently. We do not have room for them in our small Columbia City home, so having the
15 Fremont home available for guests is a great benefit. We also have many friends in the northend
16 from our over 30 years of living there. We stay at our Fremont house when we visit them and
17 we offer the house to friends for their families when they visit. We would not be able to use the
18 house in this manner if we had it as a long-term rental.
19

20 6. I want to make it clear that our Fremont home is not our primary residence. Also,
21 the Fremont home consists of two dwelling units, so we would not be allowed to rent both on a
22 short term basis under the currently proposed short term rental restrictions. This would be
23 damaging for us and for the house.
24

25 7. The house is rented to a wide variety of short term tenants, but most of them are
26 family members visiting other family members. They come for weddings, graduations, family
27 reunions and to visit new grandchildren. We have also had people that are getting corporate
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1 training and need a place for two to three weeks. We also have had short term traveling nurses
2 that stay for 90 days. While a 90-day stay is not technically “short term” under the proposed
3 regulation, it would not be possible to rent only to traveling nurses (there are not enough of them
4 to occupy the house consistently), or to rent to them if the house were rented to a long-term
5 tenant.
6

7 8. There is a paucity of hotel rooms available north or south of downtown and we
8 are providing needed short term housing. Last year, we had a young couple as tenants who had
9 just returned from their honeymoon. The repairs on their house did not get completed and they
10 needed a place to stay for three nights while the work is being finished. Their house is in
11 Fremont, they needed to be close by to supervise the work and there are no hotel rooms available
12 nearby. They were very grateful that our place was available.
13

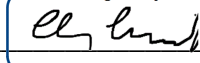
14 9. Our Fremont home is a residence. Short term renters use the property in the same
15 way long term renters do – they sleep, cook and conduct -daily living activities there. Limiting
16 short term rental in Seattle impacts us directly because it prevents us from using our residence as
17 we wish. It also harms the Seattle families, institutions and businesses that rely on the
18 availability of short term rentals to house their family members and employees.
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20 10. Without short term rental income, we could not maintain our home to the same
21 level as we do now. Property maintenance and appearance would necessarily decline, despite
22 our best efforts. The house is maintained to extremely high standards. It has to be because
23 people expect it to be and we get bad reviews if it is not clean, neat and in good repair. We have
24 house cleaners in there three to eight times per month and we employ a gardener to keep the
25 outside looking nice for guests and neighbors. These are important points. We have owned
26 many rental properties over the years. We well know that yearly lease tenants do not always
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1 keep the interior or the exterior of homes clean to the highest standards. We pass by the house
2 frequently and this aesthetic decline would impact us.

3 11. If we could not use our home for short term rental, all our short term tenants
4 would need to find alternate housing. Since the proposed legislation dramatically restricts short
5 term rental, particularly in neighborhoods outside the city center, most likely our tenants would
6 need to either stay in hotels downtown or stay in another city adjacent to Seattle that does allow
7 short term rental. Then, all of these people would be driving to their destination in the Fremont
8 area. This would increase traffic congestion, which is already bad enough. We drive in this area
9 often and the increased congestion would impact us.
10

11 I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on
12 7/14/2017
13 _____, at Seattle, Washington.

14
15 DocuSigned by:
16 
17 Charles Cuniff
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