

To: Walworth County Zoning Agency

From: The Whitewater-Rice Lakes Management District Board of Commissioners

Date: April 15th, 2010

Re: Our Response to the Walworth County Zoning Agency's Memorandum Dated February 25, 2010, Concerning "Short Term Rental of Residential Properties".

The Whitewater-Rice Lakes Management District conducted an informal poll of a number of its constituents in order to find out how a zoning change allowing short term rental of residential properties would be received by the property owners of Whitewater-Rice Lake and the surrounding area.

All responses expressed opposition to the proposed zoning change for the following reasons:

- The introduction of short-term rental use in a residential district introduces a commercial use that may appear to be minor but can have a significant negative impact on the two lake area.
- Short term renters may lack the sense of responsibility and concern for the general welfare of the lake that the area residents have developed.
- The renters may feel the need to “get the most for their buck” and “vacation hard,” meaning that they might bring as many friends and family as can fit and spend as much time as possible in the yard or on the water fishing or motor-boating which could overtax our natural resources.
- The cumulative impact of this more intense use could challenge both the human and the ecological community.
- There is no commercial garbage pickup - only once a week residential.
- The current zoning code has been interpreted as prohibiting rentals of less than 30 days. However, this restriction has been difficult to enforce and is routinely ignored by some individual homeowners causing concern that new zoning changes and regulations would not be enforced as well.
- Boating safety is of utmost concern. The Walworth County Sheriff’s Office and the Lake Management District do not have the resources to patrol the lake on a daily basis. Short-term renters would likely use the home owners’ boats and jet-skis as a part of their rental package. Therefore, unregistered users could be driving them in ways which are both imprudent and unsafe especially if they know that there is no patrol boat on the lake on any given day.
- Since properties would apparently not be required to meet any minimum health and safety standards, the guests of these rentals could be exposed to unnecessary risks.
- Finally and probably most importantly, there will be difficulty in regulating maximum occupancy and as a result stress the well and septic system putting the ecology of the lake at great risk.

In conclusion, at our meeting on April 8, 2010 the Whitewater-Rice Lakes Management District Board of Commissioners unanimously approved a resolution stating that since the lake areas are not favorably predisposed to becoming a commercial environment, and because we do not have city water and sewer services, our precious ecological resources would be put at risk and, therefore, we urge the county **not to approve** a short-term rental ordinance.