

TREATS: Gingerbread came with first English colonists

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ailments.

According to Rhonda Massingham Hart's "Making Gingerbread Houses," the first known recipe for gingerbread came from Greece in 2400 BC. Chinese recipes were developed during the 10th century and by the late Middle Ages, Europeans had their own version of gingerbread. The hard cookies, sometimes gilded with gold leaf and shaped like animals, kings and queens, were a staple at medieval fairs in England, France, Holland and Germany.

Gingerbread arrived in America with the English colonists. The cookies were sometimes used to sway Virginia voters to favor one candidate over another. The first American cookbook, "American Cookery" by Amelia Simmons, has recipes for three types of gingerbread, including the soft variety baked in loaves.

This softer version of gingerbread was more common in America. George Washington's mother, Mary Ball Washington, served her recipe for gingerbread to the Marquis de Lafayette when he visited her Fredericksburg, Virginia home. Since then it has been known as Gingerbread Lafayette. The confection was passed down through generations of Washingtons.

RENTALS: Councilors vary in outlook on properties

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automatically triggered a second reading of the ordinance and another vote. There will not be another public hearing at the November 28 meeting.

Councilors each had their own reasons for their vote. Councilor Richard Esterman voted no because he is against STRs in residential zones of the city, stating they are businesses and negatively impact neighborhoods. Esterman had told *The Nugget* earlier that input from residents had changed his mind on the issue. He also thinks allowing more STRs impacts the affordable housing market, which could use more long-term rentals.

Councilor Andrea Blum expressed mixed feelings, wanting to protect the livability of Sisters while at the same time protecting the private property rights of owners to do as they wish with their property. Blum voted yes for the ordinance to guarantee some regulation.

Council President Nancy Connolly reminded her fellow councilors that the subject of STRs has been on the City radar for three-and-a-half years, ever since she joined the Council.

Connolly thinks that with 10 workshops and public hearings held on the subject by both the Planning

Commission and City Council, there has been ample opportunity for public input. She thinks the proposed ordinance is a good compromise, allowing property owners to do some of what they want with their properties while protecting the livability of Sisters. Connolly voted in favor of the ordinance.

Councilor David Asson, whose term is up at the end of the year, believes strongly there should be no regulation of STRs. Asson voted against the ordinance.

Mayor Chuck Ryan, who voted in favor of the ordinance, believes there would be lawsuits against the City if the Council tried to totally outlaw STRs, an idea some citizens have given voice to when raising concerns about the impact of STRs on neighborhoods.

Ryan pointed out that Council and the Planning Commission have been lobbied by both sides – current owners of STRs and local Realtors who favor more STRs and no regulation, and residents who object to the presence and number of STRs in their neighborhoods.

The proposed new ordinance would completely replace the existing text on vacation rentals in SDC Section 2.15.2700, including the following modifications:

1. Change of terminology from Vacation Rentals to Short-Term Rentals;
2. Adding a requirement to obtain an STR operator license;
3. Adding a requirement to obtain an STR permit for each unit;
4. Clarifying STR regulations apply to all residential units including when located in a commercial district;
5. Removing noticing of neighbors requirements and ability to appeal to the Planning Commission (appeals possible to the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals); and
6. Establishing concentration limits, prohibiting new STRs from locating within 250 feet of an existing STR (condominiums exempt from the concentration limits).

In addition there are new regulations regarding STR permit transferability, STR land-use permits and STR operator licenses on new STRs, established on or after

the effective date of the proposed ordinance, are specific to the owner of a property and are not transferable when properties are sold.

New owners of an existing vacation rental, established prior to the effective date of the proposed ordinance, must submit a complete application for an STR operator license within 60 days of property transfer in order to maintain the existing use. If an existing owner does not apply within 60 days of the expiration of their initial license, the use will be abandoned. Current permitted vacation rental owners will have until June 30, 2019 to obtain their first STR operator's license.

There would also be new regulations and requirements in the Sisters Municipal Code Chapter 5.50 in conjunction with adoption of Ordinance No. 489, regarding STR operating licenses, concentration limits, and STR permit transferability.

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