



## 100 Years of Peninsula Park: The Movie

A 1921 photo shows the original pool at Peninsula Park in north Portland. Portland Parks and Recreation presents a free outdoor screening of the youth-produced Peninsula Park documentary, *Through the Years, Through Our Eyes: A Teen View of Peninsula Park*. The movie will be shown on Friday, Sept. 26 at 7 p.m. Family fun activities begin at 5 p.m. The event was rained out in June and if it rains again will be moved inside the Peninsula Park Community Center.

## Housing Bureau Reaches Out

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of affordable housing at a series of public forums. Several community leaders and representatives of different organizations, including The Portland Observer, The Scanner, The Latino Network, and the International Fellowship Family, have

accepted invitations to attend the sessions in support of the community involvement.

Three upcoming sessions are scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 27 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Matt Dishman Community Center; Thursday, Oct. 9 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Gresham City Hall; and

Saturday, Oct. 11 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at New Song Community Church.

If you have questions or would like to comment rather than attend a forum in person, you can email Housing Bureau staff at [nstrategy@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:nstrategy@portlandoregon.gov) or call them at 503-823-1190.

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## A Nice Place to Visit

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als, and a faster, cheaper process for obtaining a permit. The permit to rent one or two rooms costs about \$180, and takes 1-2 weeks to process. In addition, there are more requirements of homeowner landlords in an attempt to address a number of neighborhood complaints about the issue.

During public testimony on July 23, the City Council heard from residents upset about the negative effects that have come from properties where an entire house is rented out, and the homeowner lives elsewhere. This has led to noise problems, trash piling up, and a general negative impact on the neighborhood character.

To address these issues, the new permit applies only to one- and two-bedroom rentals. Renting out anything larger still requires a conditional use permit, which costs \$4,130 and takes 8-10 weeks to process. In addition, homeowners of all short-term rentals are now required to reside at the property for at least 270 days per year, preventing a complete absentee-landlord situation.

A wider issue surrounding vacation rentals is the impact on Portland's affordable housing market.

"As owners turn the diminishing stock of affordable units into short term rentals, the housing market becomes smaller and more homogeneous, and the diversity that most people enjoy about living or working in the inner city diminishes as well," said Jordan Davis, homeownership specialist at Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives, and housing advocate with the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods.

"Once a certain demographic of people with the privilege to travel start frequenting a specific neighborhood it attracts the attention of outside investment, which sounds like an ideal situation. However, most of the incoming services or residents are not intended for those already living there but for those who have money to spend in boutiques or trendy restaurants. The result is the neighborhood gentrifies and begins displacing long term residents," Davis said.

While the zoning code amendments passed unanimously, several city commissioners expressed concerns about its negative effects.

"It will diminish the supply of affordable housing," said Dan Saltzman, current housing commissioner, who has already referred to Portland's "crisis of affordable rental housing."

Indeed, in the King Neighborhood, which is located in the heart of Portland's black community, short-term housing units are renting for upwards of \$125 per night,

which has the potential to be far more profitable for a landlord than traditional long-term renting. And as the supply of long-term rentals decreases, rental rates are expected to rise.

City Commissioner Steve Novick described the issue as "somewhat nervous-making," but decided to "cautiously" vote to approve the practice with the added amendments.

The regulations require short-term rental operators to pay the city's 11.5 percent transient lodging tax, as other hotels and motels are required to pay.

Several organizations, including Street Roots, the Portland African American Leadership Forum, and Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives, wanted the city to dedicate proceeds from the tax to improving housing affordability.

"Doing so will set an important precedent by establishing a dedicated, ongoing source of city generated funding for affordable housing," the organizations wrote in a letter.

But a proposal to transfer a portion of the tax proceeds into the Housing Investment Fund, which supports affordable housing initiatives, failed to pass the City Council. While much of the opposition focused on the bureaucratic problems with "attaching strings" to every bit of tax revenue, Novick brought up an alternative reason for opposing.

"If there is a study that shows this practice is significantly reducing housing affordability, then I think we might want to revisit it and say, 'no, we are going to re-ban these short-term rentals, and assign resources to enforcement,'" he said. "And I don't want our hands to be tied by the fact that we think we've already dealt with this by dedicating the source of funding."

Housing advocates outside of City Hall, however, have suggested that there is already plenty of evidence for the detrimental effects of short-term rentals, and it can be found nationwide.

"In San Francisco, for example, there are lawsuits being brought against landlords who have evicted tenants in order to turn their units into short term rentals. San Francisco's housing market is shifting drastically to a market that only the uber-rich can afford in areas that were historically low income, pushing people further from the inner city much like what is happening in Portland," said Davis, pointing to a similar situation in New Orleans as well.

The Bureau of Planning and Sustainability will study the impact of short-term rentals on Portland's supply of affordable housing over the next two years, and will report its findings in September 2016.