

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**May 22, 2023**

Contact: Linda Nelson, 217-7364  
Stonington Economic & Community Development Cmte (SEDC)  
Town of Stonington  
[www.stoningtonmaine.org](http://www.stoningtonmaine.org)

**TOWN OF STONINGTON EXTENDS EARLY REGISTRATION DEADLINE  
FOR SHORT-TERM RENTALS IN PREVIOUS OPERATION**

*Deadline and benefits for pre-existing rentals extended to June 30*

STONINGTON, May 22, 2023–The Town of Stonington has extended to **June 30** its early, May 1 deadline for the registration of short-term rentals in operation for a minimum of a full season prior to December 31, 2022. These properties must still be registered and comply with Life Safety Codes, but if property owners can supply the necessary documentation of previous operation and register them by the extended deadline, then they do not need to seek Planning Board approval to operate or comply with two key provisions of the ordinance moving forward.

“We’re proud and grateful to our compliant property owners to have approximately 76% of all identified rentals registered already,” said Town Manager Kathleen Billings.

Billings went on to note that in this first year of short-term rental registration, the goal is to assist property owners to comply with the registration and new requirements, so the extension of the first deadline, which allows pre-existing short-term rentals to benefit from “grandfathered” status, seemed like the fair thing to do.

“We’re aware that those property owners who don’t live on the island may not be following the news as closely as needed to have picked up our three weeks of public notices and all the news stories on this issue,” said Linda Nelson, Economic and Community Development Director. “We didn’t want to jump right into enforcement since our goal is to improve the situation for everyone.”

Nelson noted that most short-term rental sites, including AirBNB, have a [special page](#) for hosts directing them to stay aware of local regulations, including business licensing and building and housing standards, and she said Stonington residents were lucky to have so many in compliance.

“The big disjunction here is that what started out as someone renting a room in their own home, while they are present, has become a full-fledged business opportunity,” said Renee Sewall, Chair of Stonington’s Planning Board. “And part of the Town’s job is to protect business owners, residents and customers with the enforcement of life safety and other standards that serve the whole community.”

On Monday, March 6 Stonington voters approved an array of tools for the Town to assert more local control and provide better services and housing opportunities for its year round residents, including, by a 2:1 margin, the Town's first Short-Term Rental Registration Ordinance.

Because this is a new process and requirement, the Town ordinance provides everyone else, including the Planning Board, until **September 1** to complete the approval and registration processes this year. Moving forward, rental registrations must be renewed annually by **January 1** of each coming year.

The Town has created a **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)** sheet, available at [www.stoningtonmaine.org](http://www.stoningtonmaine.org), to answer the majority of questions property owners might have about this ordinance. In line with similar ordinances around the state and nation, the ordinance categorizes and treats owner occupied and non-owner occupied properties separately. The Registration form, which can be completed and submitted online, is also available at [www.stoningtonmaine.org](http://www.stoningtonmaine.org).

The Town of Stonington encourages questions and comments via email to [econdev@stoningtonmaine.org](mailto:econdev@stoningtonmaine.org) or by calling the Town offices at 207-367-2351.

\*\*\*\*\*