



City of Carmel

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
Division of Building and Code Services

January 17, 2017

Dear homeowner,

It has come to our attention that your home located at 1234 Park St., USA has been listed on a popular website for use as an “Airbnb” property used by travelers and tourists for overnight accommodations. It has also come to our attention that your home is being advertised as a place to rent for an overnight stay.

Although we share in the excitement and appreciation of the many new ways in which we can connect with each other globally and do business by using modern technology for travel and entertainment purposes, we must also be sensitive to the impact these new things are having on our community – including your neighbors and our local businesses.

Let me explain. Communities like Carmel have established widely acceptable rules and guidelines to govern what we can and cannot do in a certain area. We commonly refer to this as zoning. Among its many benefits, zoning is designed to preserve the peace and quiet of a neighborhood by separating businesses that attract people, cars, bright lights, noise, etc. from homes. By following these zoning rules, homeowners like you have a reasonable expectation that they can enjoy peace and quiet in their homes; while businesses are held to a high standard of construction requirements such as the type of materials they must use, enhanced safety equipment, the signs they can and cannot have and the parking spaces they must provide to accommodate their customers.

Businesses such as our local hotels must invest a lot of money to meet the requirements of their zoning and be able to legally operate a hotel. Because of that, we don’t believe it is fair to our hotels to allow someone to operate a competing business when they are not held to that same higher standard of construction because of their zoning classification.

Your home is an area that is classified as a Residential Single Family zone, which means you are welcome to use your home as a residence. But you are not able to suddenly turn it into a restaurant, a dry-cleaning business, factory or – as is apparently the case now – a hotel or bed-and-breakfast. Doing so would be unfair to your neighbors and to our local businesses and would be contrary to the community’s zoning laws.

Now, there is a legal process where a homeowner can ask for a zoning variance to allow for a different use. But that process must include reaching out to those who would be most impacted and letting them have input into the final decision. This is a basic right extended to everyone who lives in Carmel, the chance to have their say on a matter that directly impacts their quality of life.

With all that said, this letter is to notify you that you **must cease operation as a commercial user – including removal of your home from any websites advertising such things – within the next 10 days** in order to avoid any further action by our Code Enforcement Inspector, until such time that you have obtained a zoning change or obtained a legal variance. If you choose to apply for a variance or zoning change, please contact Angie Conn from our Planning and Zoning Department by sending an email to aconn@carmel.in.gov or by calling 317-571-2417.

If you feel we have made a mistake in this matter or if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Brent Liggett with the Department of Code Enforcement by calling 317-571-2491.

We thank you for your immediate attention in this urgent matter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Blanchard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jim Blanchard
Building Commissioner