



(SCREENSHOT)

A 3D rendering from the June 8 Minnetonka City Council meeting shows the exterior of Cooper's Hawk Winery & Restaurants. The establishment would be located in the Ridgedale area if approved.

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violations, neighborhood impacts, and additional ownership regulations for local "snowbirds," better known as seasonal travelers.

A homestead classification is issued to any property owner who is a Minnesota resident and occupies a property as their primary residence. To be eligible, a resident must own and occupy a property as their primary residence between Jan. 2 and Dec. 1 of the current year for taxes paid the following year, according to minnetonkamn.gov.

Requiring a proper status and registration may help limit the amount of local STR properties, it could also have an impact on current STR owners that don't meet the criteria for the homestead status. Councilmember Kimberly Wilburn (At Large, Seat B), worried how the ordinance might impact current owners that don't fit into one specific status.

"I'm just concerned about the nine people that are non-homestead, but not a private equity, that would not be able to continue to have

short-term rentals," Wilburn said. "And I realize there may be other options, but we don't know people's situations. There may be a reason why they prefer short-term rentals as opposed to trying to have longer rentals in their properties and we would be taking that option away from, it might be someone who lives in Minnetonka 180 days out of the year, and that's not enough to be homesteaded, but they're Minnetonka residents."

Wilburn also shared concerns about STR owners who do not occupy the property while guests are present, therefore being unable to manage issues, such as noise, traffic, and safety. To combat these concerns, she loosely suggested educating STR owners and guests of city ordinances and laws that must be followed.

When asked if a future ordinance could be adopted to protect Minnetonka snowbirds and other residents that don't reside in their primary residence year-round from the STR limitations given to Limited Liability Companies (LLCs) and private equity

owners, Community Development Director Julie Wischnack said that further research would be needed to make that determination.

Councilmember Deb Calvert (At Large, Seat A) noted the great value and convenience that STRs provide for guests, in certain times of need.

"I know of people that were remodeling their homes and they just needed to get out of their house and be somewhere, where it wasn't dust and construction 24/7," At-Large Councilmember Deb Calvert said. "People that do have medical situations, or the birth of a grandchild, or some family event or situation that need a place to stay. So, I think those are all really legitimate."

Ultimately, the council agreed that while there were many issues to be wary of, the ordinance brought new potential to STR operations in Minnetonka and the motion to adopt the ordinance was granted.

On April 27, the city council amended and introduced the ordinance requiring homestead status and registration for short-term rentals. On

May 13, a meeting was held with existing STR owners and other interested parties, followed by a public hearing later in May by the Minnetonka Planning Commission, which gathered public feedback.

Current STR owners will receive an outline of the new city requirements with accompanying compliance dates September 2026. STR registration and compliance must be completed Jan. 1, 2027.

COOPER'S HAWK WINERY & RESTAURANTS

The council reviewed a concept plan for a Cooper's Hawk Winery & Restaurants location at an undetermined site in the Ridgedale area. The business would include a full-service restaurant, tasting room, and a wine retail store, which would require an on-sale intoxicating liquor license and an off-sale intoxicating liquor license.

In Minnetonka, an on-sale liquor license may only be issued to hotels, restaurants, and clubs; while an off-sale

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