

## ***Short-Term Rental Survey Summary***

Prepared for the Short-Term Rental Subcommittee

January 27, 2018

### **Introduction**

The Planning Board Short-Term Rental (STR) Subcommittee launched a public process in the Fall 2017 to gather information and local perspective regarding Short-Term Rental (STR) activity in Lenox. The subcommittee meets nearly every week, and held two public workshops. The survey provided an online venue for comments and input from Lenox residents, businesses and property owners.

The survey was designed and managed with SurveyMonkey.

The survey is not perfect. The STR Subcommittee received critical feedback regarding the survey—it's design, and the way certain questions are asked. Some have suggested it is a biased survey.

The goal of the survey is as a supplement to the ongoing process. It ran from November 14<sup>th</sup> to January 15<sup>th</sup>. Not everybody feels comfortable speaking in front of a crowd; not everybody can take time from work or family to attend a public workshop. Some property owners or business owners live far away.

A point of clarification: at first, Question 6 in the survey was set up as one question with four statements, and respondents were asked to rank to what extent they agreed, disagreed or felt undecided in response to each of the four statements. A few participants contacted the Land Use Department and stated the question did not work when they tried to fill it in. The Land Use Department changed the format so it would be four separate questions—6, 7, 8, and 9. So, the survey results handed out are split into two time frames:

1. November 14<sup>th</sup> 2017-December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017
2. December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017-January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

In total, ninety-seven (97) individuals responded to the survey. The majority of respondents identified as full-time Lenox residents. The majority of respondents own their single-family residence.

## Overall Summary Results: 11/14/17-1/15/18 (All Respondents)

*Most respondents have no interest in renting their entire dwelling unit as a STR, though almost a quarter who responded (24, 24.74%) have rented out their entire dwelling unit as an STR.*

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ I have no interest in renting my entire house or entire apartment as a Short-Term Rental (30 days or less).	32.99% 32
▼ I would consider renting my entire house or entire apartment as a Short-Term Rental (30 days or less).	28.87% 28
▼ I have rented my entire house or entire apartment as a Short-Term Rental (30 days or less).	24.74% 24
▼ I'm not sure about whether I would ever rent my entire house or entire apartment as a Short-Term Rental (30 days or less).	13.40% 13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>97</b>

*Most respondents would prefer to have the opportunity to make extra money from renting their entire dwelling unit as a Short-Term Rental knowing it means their neighbor can as well.*

*Only thirteen (13) respondents would want to BAN Short-Term Rentals to prevent their neighbor from renting their entire house as Short-Term Rental.*

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ I would prefer to have the opportunity to make extra money from renting my entire home as a Short-Term Rental (30 days or less) knowing that means my neighbors can do the same thing.	50.00% 47
▼ I would accept some limits on my ability to do a Short-Term Rental (30 days or less) in order to impose some regulations on my neighbor's ability to do the same.	36.17% 34
▼ I would want to ban Short-Term Rentals (30 days or less) to prevent my neighbor from renting their entire house on a Short-Term basis.	13.83% 13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>94</b>

*More than half of respondents (54, 56.84%) would prefer to have the opportunity to make extra money from renting their entire ADU as a STOR even if it meant their neighbor could do the same.*

*Only eleven (11) would want to ban the STR of ADUs to prevent their neighbor from doing it.*

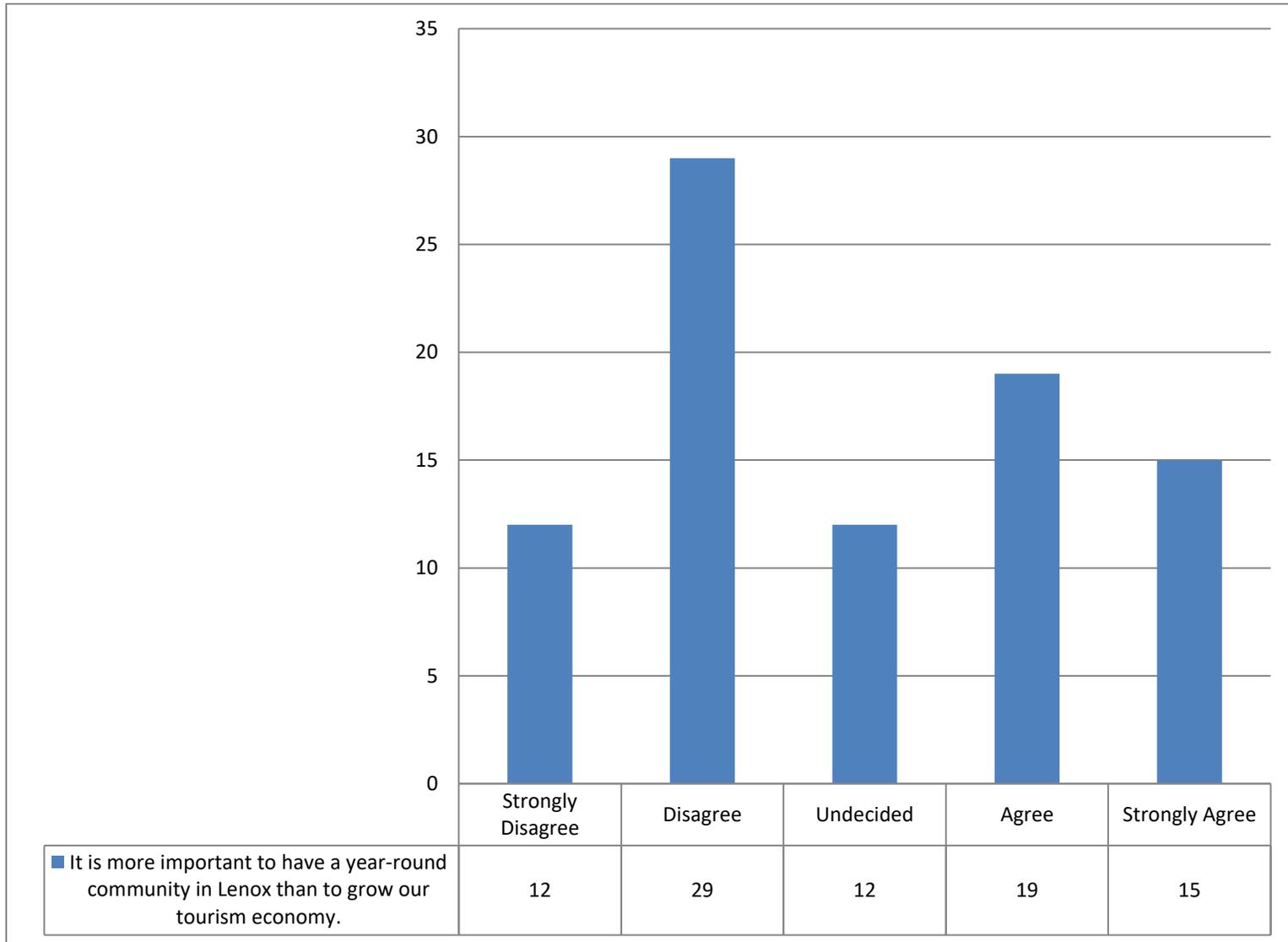
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ I would prefer to have the opportunity to make extra money from renting my entire Accessory Dwelling Unit as a Short-Term Rental (30 days or less) knowing that means my neighbors can do the same thing.	56.84% 54
▼ I would accept some limits on my ability to do a Short-Term Rental (30 days or less) of an entire Accessory Dwelling Unit in order to impose some regulations on my neighbor's ability to do the same.	31.58% 30
▼ I would want to ban Short-Term Rentals of an entire Accessory Dwelling Unit (30 days or less) to prevent my neighbor from renting their entire Accessory Dwelling Unit on a Short-Term basis.	11.58% 11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>95</b>

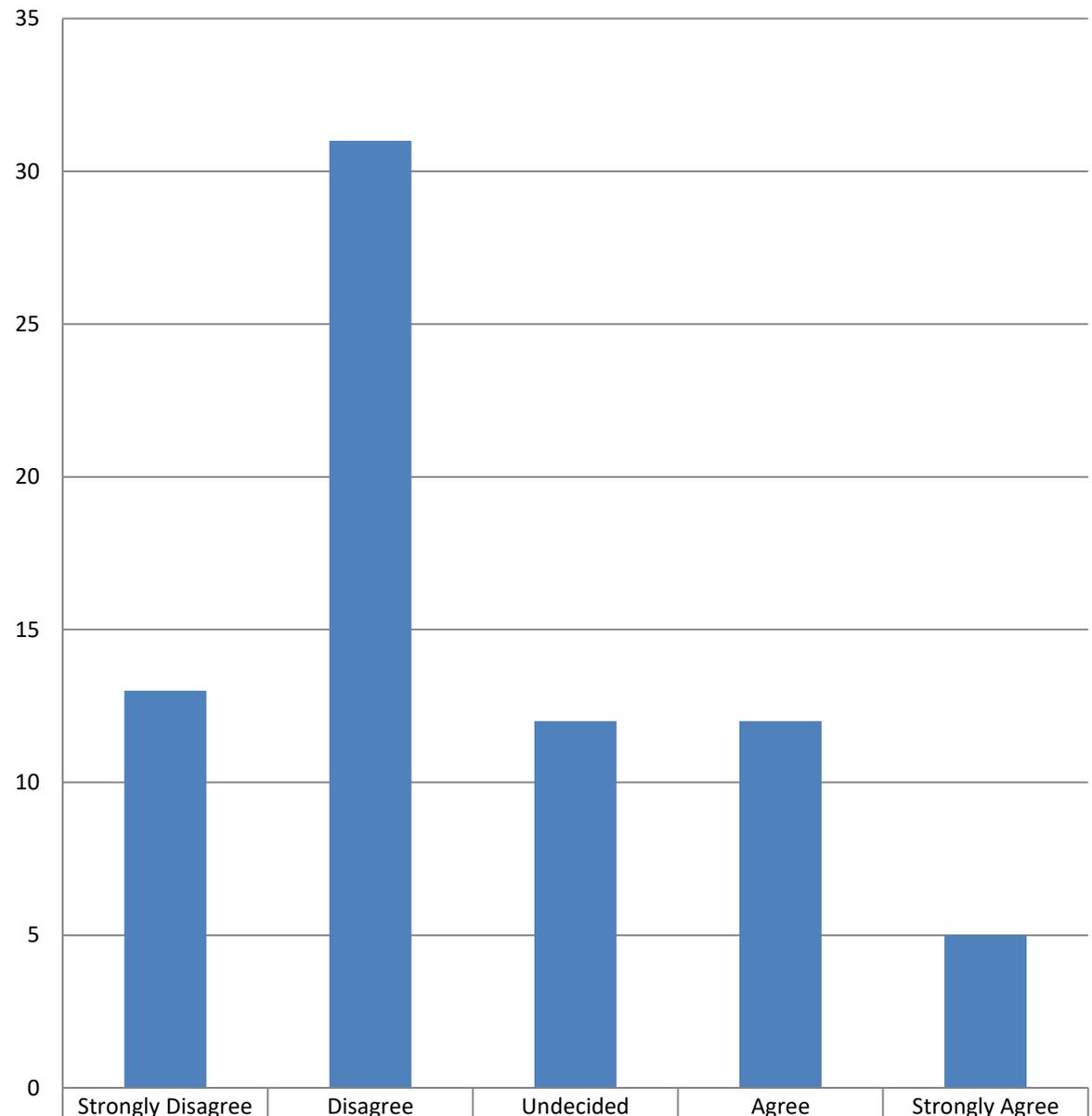
*The most important factors to respondents when determining whether Lenox should regulate Short-Term Rentals were:*

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Giving home owners the ability to earn extra income	58.76% 57
▼ Discouraging outside investors from buying homes for purpose of using as Short-Term Rentals only.	54.64% 53
▼ Bringing more tourists to Lenox area	39.18% 38
▼ Preserving the residential-only character of my neighborhood.	35.05% 34
▼ Protecting the safety of my neighborhood.	34.02% 33
▼ Other (please specify) <a href="#">Responses</a>	21.65% 21
▼ Ensuring the safety of renters.	20.62% 20
<b>Total Respondents: 97</b>	

In terms of Policy Goal Statements, the following results were identified:

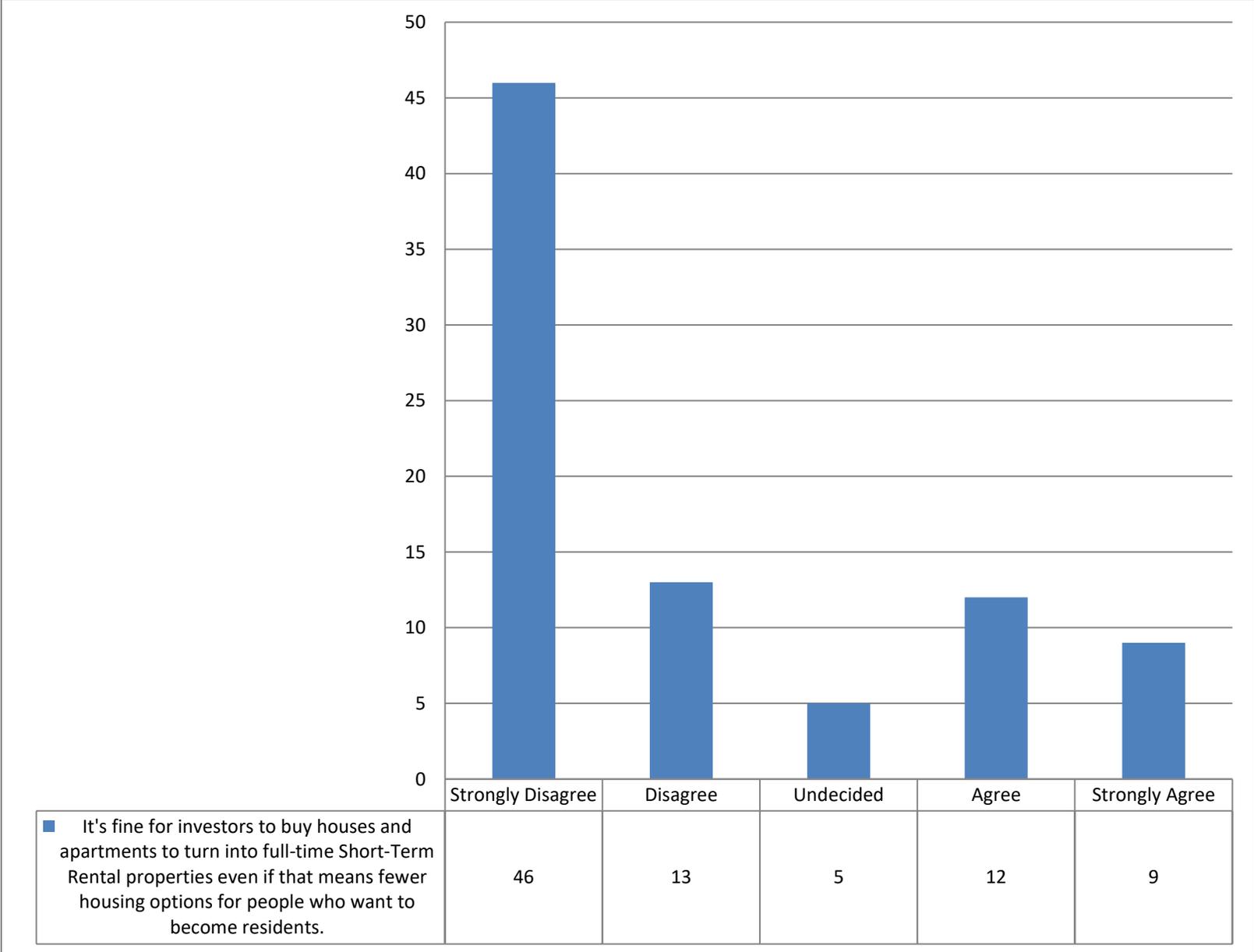
(These totals were developed by taking responses from Question 6 as of December 4 and responses from Questions 6, 7, 8 and 9 from December 5<sup>th</sup>- January 15, 2018.

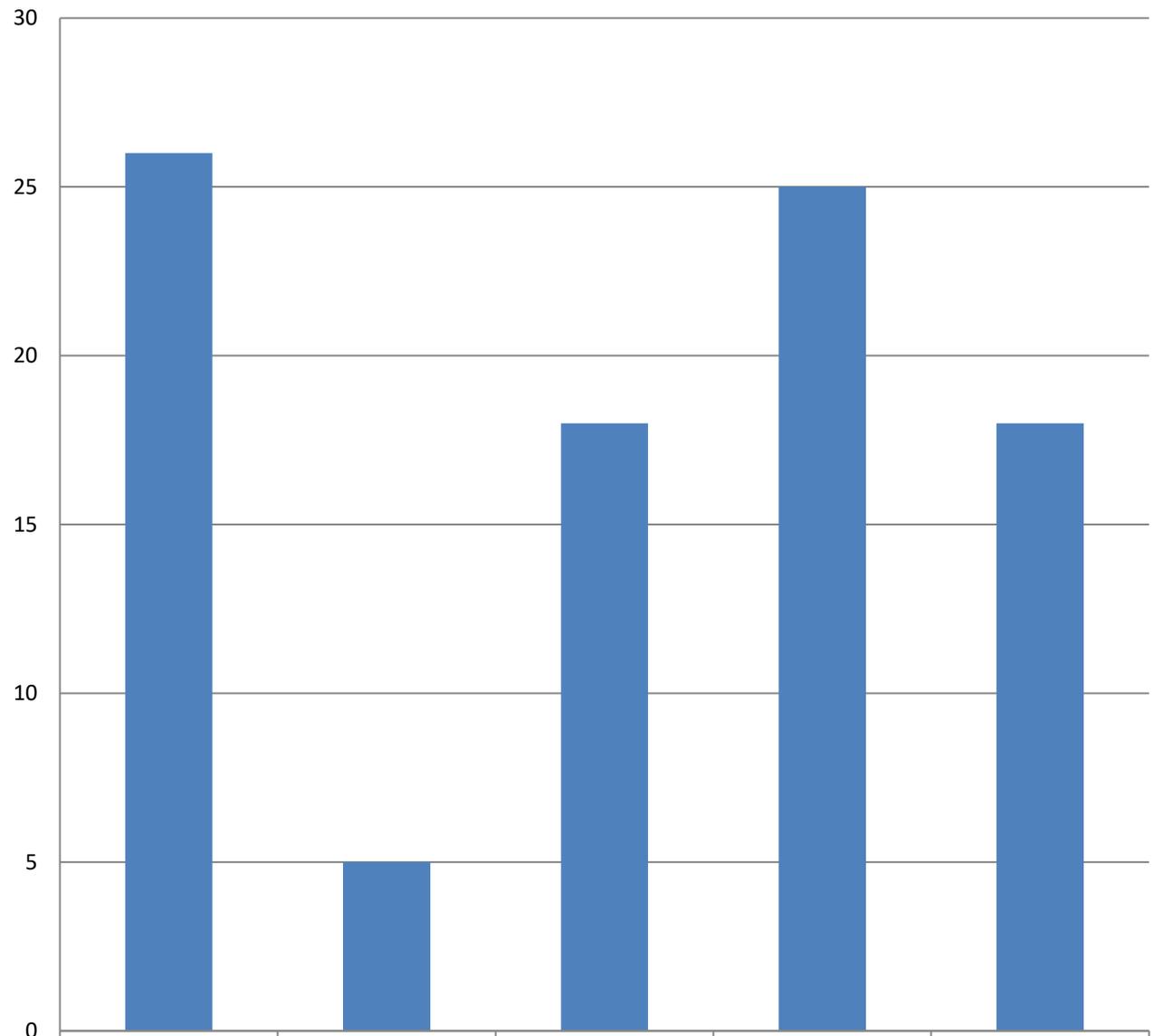




■ It is more important to grow our ability to house tourists than to preserve the residential character of our neighborhoods.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
13	31	12	12	5





■ I would be willing to limit the number of potential buyers for property in Lenox by banning investor-owned Short-Term Rentals even if that means my own property value is lowered.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
26	5	18	25	18

## Summary by Resident Type

### Full Time Residents (81)

Majority (28) had no interest in renting their entire dwelling unit as an STR; sixteen (16) actually had rented out their entire dwelling unit as an STR. The majority (38) had neighbors who rented their entire dwelling unit as an STR and indicated no concerns with this happening in their neighborhood. The majority (36) would prefer the opportunity to make extra money from renting their entire dwelling unit as an STR knowing their neighbor could do the same thing. Thirty-two (32) said they would accept limitations on their ability in order to impose regulations on their neighbors STR activity. Only eleven (11) would want to ban STRs in order to prevent their neighbor from renting out their entire dwelling as an STR.

More than half of the residents (42) would prefer to have the opportunity to make extra money from renting an entire ADU as an STR knowing their neighbor could do the same. Only nine (9) would want to ban such activity.

The following were the most important factors for consideration as Lenox determines whether or not to regulate STRs:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Discouraging outside investors from buying homes for purpose of using as Short-Term Rentals only.	58.02%	47
▼ Giving home owners the ability to earn extra income	56.79%	46
▼ Bringing more tourists to Lenox area	37.04%	30
▼ Protecting the safety of my neighborhood.	35.80%	29
▼ Preserving the residential-only character of my neighborhood.	34.57%	28
▼ Ensuring the safety of renters.	22.22%	18
▼ Other (please specify)	<a href="#">Responses</a>	19.75% 16
Total Respondents: 81		

**Part-Time Residents (12)**

Half (6) had rented their entire dwelling unit as an STR. Four (4) had no interest in it; two (2) were interested. Seven (7) indicated they have neighbors who rent their entire dwelling unit as an STR and had no concerns about it. Eight (8) part-time residents would prefer to have the opportunity to make extra income from renting their entire dwelling as a STR knowing their neighbors can do the same. Only two (2) would want to ban STRs of entire dwelling units in order to prevent their neighbor from participating in the same activity, and only one (1) would accept some limits on their own ability in order to impose limits on their neighbor’s STR activity. Nine (9) would prefer to have the opportunity to make extra income from renting an entire ADU as an STR knowing this means their neighbor could do so as well. Only two (2) respondents would want to ban such activity.

The following were the most important factors for consideration as Lenox determines whether or not to regulate STRs:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Giving home owners the ability to earn extra income	66.67%	8
▼ Bringing more tourists to Lenox area	50.00%	6
▼ Discouraging outside investors from buying homes for purpose of using as Short-Term Rentals only.	50.00%	6
▼ Preserving the residential-only character of my neighborhood.	33.33%	4
▼ Other (please specify)	<a href="#">Responses</a> 33.33%	4
▼ Protecting the safety of my neighborhood.	25.00%	3
▼ Ensuring the safety of renters.	8.33%	1
Total Respondents: 12		

### **Commonalities and Differences**

A greater proportion of Part-Time residents had rented their entire home or apartment as an STR

In both instances, the greater majority of respondents had neighbors who rented their entire dwelling as an STR and had no concerns about this.

In both instances, the greater majority of respondents preferred to be able to make extra money renting their entire dwelling as an STR knowing this meant their neighbors could do the same.

In both instances, few respondents would want to ban the renting of entire dwelling units as STRs.

In both instances, a greater number of respondents preferred the ability to rent their entire ADU as an STR even if it means their neighbor can do the same.

In both instances, few respondents would want to ban the renting of an entire ADU as an STR.

The three (3) factors which garnered the greatest number of votes in determining whether or not to regulate STRs were the same for both groups, though in slightly different order: Giving home owners the ability to earn extra income; bringing more tourists to the Lenox area, and discouraging outside investors from buying homes for the purpose of using as STRs only.

Ensuring the safety of renters was identified by the fewest residents in each group as important to consider.

Protecting the safety of the neighborhood received few votes in the PT group, and received more votes in the FT group (in terms of magnitude). Same with protecting residential character—this seemed a more important consideration in the FT group than in the PT group.

airbnb allowed area believe buy community destination  
encourage etc exist family help home homeowner hotel  
house important income investors lenox live local  
neighborhood neighbors owner people positive property  
questions regulations rent rentals renters residential  
residents room season short short-term single street  
summer tanglewood tax term tourism town value work  
year

*Common words from general comments provided at the end of each survey response.*