



ZONING COMMISSION

MINUTES

for February 10, 2025

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IBERIA PARISH COUNCIL CHAMBERS
300 IBERIA STREET, 4th FLOOR
NEW IBERIA, LA 5:30 P.M.

I. CALL TO ORDER - CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

Jane Braud called the meeting to order at 5:39 p.m.

II. PRAYER & PLEDGE

Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance were said

III. ROLL CALL

Name	PRESENT	ABSENT
Matt Landry	X	
Ian Alpha		X
Jane Braud	X	
Lauren Brown		X
Glenn Crappell		X
Richard Broussard	X	
Hubert Landry Jr.		X
Nathaniel Mitchel Sr.		X
Lane Romero	X	
Chad Segura	X	
Gerrit Landry	X	

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Being None

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. February 10, 2025

Motion: A motion to approve the agenda was made by Gerrit Landry

Second: A second motion was made by Richard Broussard

Name	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Jane Braud	X			
Lauren Brown				X
Glenn Crappell				X
Richard Broussard	X			
Hubert Landry Jr.				X
Nathaniel Mitchel Sr.				X
Lane Romero	X			
Chad Segura	X			
Gerrit Landry	X			
VOTE TOTALS	5	0	0	4

THE MOTION CARRIES



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VI. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. January 13, 2025

Motion: A motion to adopt the minutes was made by Lane Romero

Second: A second motion was made by Chad Segura

Name	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Jane Braud	X			
Lauren Brown				X
Glenn Crappell				X
Richard Broussard	X			
Hubert Landry Jr.	X			X
Nathaniel Mitchel Sr.				X
Lane Romero	X			
Chad Segura	X			
Gerrit Landry	X			
VOTE TOTALS	5	0	0	4

THE MOTION CARRIES

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Case No.: ZC2025-002
Requested Action: Abandonment
Location: 312 Interlude
Proposed Land Use:
Size:
Owner/Applicant: Brent Delahoussaye

Comments: Brent Delahoussaye of 312 Interlude was present in favor of the abandonment and to address questions/concerns of the commission. Mr. Delahoussaye is seeking to acquire property after abandonment.

Roxanne Watkins of 1710 Short Weeks Street, New Iberia was present to oppose the abandonment. Mrs. Watkins, the adjacent landowner, indicated that she was not informed of the abandonment and became aware only after seeing the rezoning sign while passing by property. Mrs. Watkins is opposed to the abandonment because it would restrict the development of her adjacent property.

Jane Braud suggested the commission table the agenda item to seek legal counsel on path forward.



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Motion: A motion to table the agenda item was made by Richard Broussard

Second: A second motion was made by Gerrit Landry

Name	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Jane Braud	X			
Lauren Brown				X
Glenn Crappell				X
Richard Broussard	X			
Hubert Landry Jr.				X
Nathaniel Mitchel Sr.				X
Lane Romero	X			
Chad Segura	X			
Gerrit Landry	X			
VOTE TOTALS	5	0	0	4

THE MOTION CARRIES

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

Discuss and consider creating a committee to develop an Ordinance establishing rules and regulations for Air BnBs in Iberia Parish

Comments: Suzette Charpentier of 4816 Laffite St., New Iberia, LA was present to express opposition of Short-Term Rentals in R-1 Zoning.

Steven Mayer of 4906 Laffite St., New Iberia, LA was present in support of Short-Term Rentals in Iberia Parish.

Anita Clement and David Clement of 4911 Laffite St., New Iberia, LA were present in support of Short-Term Rentals. The Clement's are owners of a Short-Term Rental located on Laffite St. and provided a letter to commission expressing opposition to restrictions and/or over regulations towards Short-Term Rentals in Iberia Parish.

Michael Charpentier of 4816 Laffite St., New Iberia, LA was present to express opposition of Short-Term Rentals in R-1 Zoning

Patti Reed of 5902 Lee Station Road, New Iberia, LA was present in support of Short-Term Rentals. Mrs. Reed is the owner of a Short-Term Rental located on Lee Station Road and provided a letter via email to Mrs Jane Braud in opposition to overregulation.

Michael Bellott of 126 Plantation Dr, New Iberia, LA was present in support of Short-Term Rentals. Mr. Bellott is the owner of a Short-Term Rental in Iberia Parish



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Curtis Flash of 2315 Terre Ruelle, New Iberia, LA was present in support of Short-Term Rentals in Iberia Parish.

Edward Duhe of 6008 Old Jeanerette Road, New Iberia, LA was present in support of Short-Term Rentals. Mr. Duhe is the owner of a Short-Term Rental in Iberia Parish

Brock Pellerin of 5203 E Admiral Doyle Dr, New Iberia, LA and Council Member for District 10 was present to discuss the intentions of the proposed ordinance for Short-Term Rentals

Rusty Wilson was present in support of Short-Term Rentals and provided a letter to commission expressing opposition to restrictive regulations towards Short-Term Rentals in Iberia Parish.

Email was received by Mrs. Jane Braud on Sunday, February 09, 2025 @ 3:01:11PM from Mrs. Linda V. Dautreuil with Varrelman Properties, LLC in regard to Short-Term Rentals

Four Members of the Zoning Commission - Lane Romero, Gerrit Landry, Jane Braud, & Richard Broussard will meet to further discuss development of ordinance for Short-Term Rentals. Once a draft Ordinance is developed, constituents who attended tonight meeting will be sent copies.

Motion: A motion to approve the agenda was made by Lane Romero

Second: A second motion was made by Chad Segura

Name	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Jane Braud	X			
Lauren Brown				X
Glenn Crappell				X
Richard Broussard	X			
Hubert Landry Jr.				X
Nathaniel Mitchel Sr.				X
Lane Romero	X			
Chad Segura	X			
Gerrit Landry	X			
VOTE TOTALS	5	0	0	4

THE MOTION CARRIES



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IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: A motion to adjoin the agenda was made by Lane Romero

Second: A second motion was made by Richard Broussard

Name	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Jane Braud	X			
Lauren Brown				X
Glenn Crappell				X
Richard Broussard	X			
Hubert Landry Jr.				X
Nathaniel Mitchel Sr.				X
Lane Romero	X			
Chad Segura	X			
Gerrit Landry	X			
VOTE TOTALS	5	0	0	4

THE MOTION CARRIES

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 6:54 p.m.

Submitted by:

Matthew Landry

Berard, Habetz & Associates, Inc

Short Term Rentals (STRs) are Positive for Iberia Parish Zoning meeting 2/10/2025

David Clement, Jr. and Anita Clement (partners and siblings)

We have owned and operated a short-term rental (STR) property on Airbnb along Bayou Jack for almost two years. This property has been in our family for 18 years.

Iberia Parish is Pro Business and Pro Tourism.

- STRs are consistent and foster both

We believe it is a mistake to restrict or over regulate STRs in our parish.

Short term rentals are a big positive for our local economy and tourism. Studies show that 77% of tourists say “wanting to live like a local” matters in their decision to choose to stay in a STR/Airbnb.

STRs open up new and exciting ways for visitors to stay in our parish and experience our culture. Our camp is drawing tourists to Iberia Parish. Many of our guests have told us that they chose to stay in Iberia Parish based on seeing our camp online.

We have had people from all over the world choosing to stay at our property to explore our culture and community. In under 2 years:

- 134 guests/completed stays
- 34 states
- 7 countries
- They choose to stay at our property because it showcases our unique landscapes
 - located along a bayou across from a sugar cane field
 - surrounded by large oak trees with Spanish Moss
 - alligators make appearances from time to time
- It is exotic to people that are not from here and an authentic Cajun experience for them
- Near US Hwy 90 and not far from downtown New Iberia
- Side trip from New Orleans
- Holidays, etc.

This is external money from outside the parish being injected into our local economy. Our guests ask, “what is there to do here?” and “where should we eat?” We have a long list of recommendations and point our guests to local businesses and tourist attractions.

Local business benefit:

Guest book's "places you visited":

- Restaurants: Boiling Point, Janes Seafood, Duffy's Bon Creole, etc.
- Tours: Avery Island, Jefferson Island, Konriko Rice, Shadows, etc.
- Downtown New Iberia, New Iberia Museum, Cane River Pie Bar, etc.
- Sugarcane Festival, Gumbo Cookoff, parades, Books Along the Teche Literary Festival, farmer's market, etc.
- Lydia Food Store, Dagos, Hebert's, etc.
- Fishing guides

Sales taxes generated

We pay 8% occupancy tax directly to Iberia Parish Government

- In 2024 we paid \$6,000 for one property
- This is in addition to our
 - Property Taxes
 - Income Taxes

Iberia Parish vs. Lafayette Parish and the struggle of our shrinking population

- STRs give Iberia Parish a competitive advantage over Lafayette when it comes to interesting places to stay during a trip
 - Would the guests who choose to stay in one of these unique STRs here have stayed in Iberia Parish otherwise?
- If board members were visiting New Iberia would they prefer to stay in one of our hotels on Hwy 90 or in a unique property along a bayou?
 - Which leaves a more lasting impression and results in return visits?
 - We can provide our guests' reviews to illustrate

Some of the complaints about STRs are based on fear and hypothetical situations that are unrealistic. Personally, we have been harassed, threatened and slandered by two of our neighbors since September. We as owners, and our guests have never given them any valid reasons to complain and have not disrupted the quiet enjoyment of their home. We have exterior cameras around our property to prove that nothing inappropriate is taking place. One of them has made it publicly known that he has nothing better to do (unemployed) than to shut us down because "they hate people like us that only care about money". This is our family camp and an investment for our future retirement. We take pride in our property and work 24 hours a day/7 days a week to keep it in pristine shape. This is what hard working, upstanding citizens of America do. We invest in our futures. This is about property rights. Our neighbors should not be able to determine how we lease our properties. It would be unjust and absurd.

Airbnb has an extensive screening process

- Summarized in back of your packets

I understand there are some property owners who are not responsible short-term landlords and not good neighbors. The enforcement of existing laws and zoning regulations/building code can be used as the basis to put a stop to any unlawful behavior.

- Not acceptable
- Don't let a few bad apples ruin it for the good ones
- We have earned a 5-star rating/super host status
- Each of our three adjacent neighbors, some here tonight, have no problem with our choice to lease our property short-term
- Property/yard maintenance and interior cleaning multiple times a week
- We have instituted our own proprietary rules, regulations, and a fine schedule that guests must agree to before they can book our property
 - Protects our neighborhood, neighbors, and our property
 - Summarized in back of your packets
- 2-night minimum requires at least \$570 for each stay (including taxes, fees, cleaning, etc.)
 - Attracts guests with higher disposable income

We respectfully caution the council against restriction or over regulation of short-term rentals

- The City of New Iberia does not have restrictions
 - Zoning and restrictions are typically stricter within city limits for good reason. This is backwards and unfair. Rural areas are not as densely populated and should not be more strictly regulated.
- It is a slippery slope, where does regulation of how people are allowed to lease their properties end?
- STRs are not commercial businesses. As with Long-Term Rentals, STRs are landlord/tenant agreements in which use of the land and improvements are exchanged for a fee.
- STRs are not comparable to hotels. Like long term rentals, STRs are comprised of a single tenant/booking party occupying the property at a time (a new tenant or group of people occupies the property after the old tenant or group of people vacates the property).
- Restrictions or over regulation can lead to Iberia Parish losing the competitive advantage for tourism it now has over Lafayette. If the choice is to follow the City of Lafayette and New Orleans, Iberia Parish is moving in a backwards direction.

We would like to personally invite each of the board members to come visit our property and see them for yourselves.

Please contact us directly with any questions or concerns you may have.

Thank you,

David Clement, Jr.
337-579-0199
dclem21@yahoo.com

Anita Clement
337-224-7728
anitalab3@gmail.com

Airbnb screening of all users (guests and hosts)

User's legal identifying information is checked against various data bases:

- background check
- compares government ID with information provided by the user
- criminal records
- sex offender registries
- violent crime
- OFAC lists (terrorist designations)
- human trafficking
- sex workers
- commercial pornography

Our additional rules, regulations, fines:

- No illegal activities or drugs.
- 8 guest maximum on the premises
- Quiet hours start at 8:00 p.m. on weekdays and 10:00 p.m. on weekends.
- Disruptive gatherings are prohibited, regardless of size.
- **WHAT WE DON'T ALLOW:**
- Disruptive gatherings
- Open-invite gatherings
- Disturbances to the surrounding community such as:
- Excessive Noise
- Gun shooting
- Excessive visitors
- Parking nuisances
- Trespassing
- Vandalism
- **\$500 fine for breaking any of the agreed upon rules or any noise complaints**
- 24-hour exterior camera system/surveillance

Link to our Airbnb entitled: "Explore Cajun Country! On the Bayou, Close to Town"

<https://www.airbnb.com/slink/EeFXoOe4>

Dear Jane,

I have owned a Short Term Rental on Lee Station Road for almost 7 years. I have had 100's of guests over that period of time and have never had an issue with a guest. I understand there is talk of Iberia Parish developing regulations and a permit process to cover these rentals. This is another example of government over reach in my opinion.

Air BnB has a vetting system that works. If it did not, you would hear all the horror stories on main stream media. Are there exceptions like everything else in this world, absolutely. But do we punish the masses for a few complaints? How about the meth addicts down Lee Station Road or the 3 cars that have missed the curve going extremely fast and end up in the cabin yard in one year. Thank God my innocent guests were not in the yard. So, do we ban Lee Station Road? These locals are a bigger risk to my neighbors than any Air BnB guest.

Not only does Air BnB vet these people but we as owners can read other owner's comments and decide whether we want a person or not. Air Bnb,, VRBO, Booking.com do not rent by the hour so that comment does not hold weight. There are alot more checks and balances than homeowners do to rent their property long term. Then as a neighbor you are stuck with these people until they are evicted.

These guests contribute to the tax base of Iberia Parish and also eat at our restaurants and tour our businesses like Tabasco, Rip Van Winkle Gardens, Konrico to name a few. I have heard some ridiculous numbers as to how much Air BnB contributes to the parish. First off, my property does 50/50 between Air BnB and VRBO with a small percentage with Booking.com. My taxes are filed through a 3rd party company that remits my taxes. My numbers, as well as many others are not in that Air BnB number. They can come in under the property name, a third party, or an individual, etc. So that single number from Air BnB is just a small percentage of what is actually collected.

I will be at the meeting Monday because I know a lot of owners and we just simply do not have the kind of issues that I have heard about. This has to be a very small minority or group of people who are complaining. My neighbors would more than vouch for me that these people are a joy to have around. They are usually business people, families or people attending a wedding. It is not like you are coming to Iberia Parish to party. We are not a beach community or major party city. I just ask that the council really consider how far they want to overstep their authority and if the problem is so severe that it requires regulations. Maybe there are issues I am not aware of. If there are severe problems then I feel like our current police department and ordinances that are in place should be sufficient to handle them. I am open to heard about them. My number is 337-257-2715.

Sincerely,

Patti Reed
5902 Lee Station Road

2/10/2025

Zoning Commission & Parish Council Members,

As a resident of Iberia Parish, a real estate professional, and an owner/investor in single-family residential real estate, I would like to voice my opposition to any restrictive regulation of short term rentals (i.e. AirBnb, VRBO, etc.) in Iberia Parish.

Common sense measures (e.g. no renting by the hour, no simultaneous/multiple bookings under the same roof of a single family home, etc.) may make sense. However, any effort to restrict, over regulate, institute an onerous permitting process, or ban short term rentals in any capacity would be a short-sighted mistake that I urge you to avoid.

I understand that there has been a newsworthy/bad actor in violation of zoning and criminal laws, who happened to utilize a short-term rental platform, in addition to other means, to operate their rental property. I hated to hear about the motel/brothel/flop house being run out of a single family home on Louisiana Drive off of Center St. If that were my neighborhood, I would have been incensed. However, I think that issue has been conflated. It is not a short term rental/"Airbnb" issue. It is a zoning enforcement issue and a law enforcement issue.

There are two aspects of the Hwy 14 property being in **violation of zoning compliance**:

1) The Structure Itself (i.e. a single family residence vs. a motel)

The owner constructed interior partitions to convert the structure into a building that can house multiple residential users. Once this occurred, the structure is not a single-family residence any longer. This is not a short term rental issue. It is a structural/code/unlawful alteration/public safety issue.

2) The Use (a single booking vs. multiple bookings within the structure)

The property was being used to book multiple short term rentals under the same roof at the same time. This is a violation of use. It was being utilized as a de facto motel within a single family residential zone.

The parish already has regulations in place to correct the above issues and shut it down. However, it sounds like there are limited enforcement options right now. That should be rectified.

Additionally, this was a law enforcement issue as there was allegedly prostitution and other illegal acts occurring on the property. It sounds like law enforcement has acted and the place has been shut down twice now.

Overly restricting or banning short term rentals and/or policing Airbnb and other similar platforms won't stop the "motel/brothel within a single-family residence" problem. This was not a short term rental/AirBnb issue. Short term rental regulations would not have stopped the above property from operating. Reportedly the owner was utilizing word of mouth, social media apps, and texting to collect funds and operate the property in addition to advertising on AirBnb.

This bad operator is one out of how many short term rentals in Iberia Parish? I believe we are approaching one hundred. That is a high percentage of good properties. It is actions and bad market participants like the above example that paint short term rentals in a negative light and could end up getting many good apples thrown out with one bad one.

Short-term rental owners pay occupancy taxes and keep their properties in very good condition due to the higher turnover rate and need to earn and keep high ratings. I would argue that short term rental properties have a positive influence on the value of their neighborhoods and nearby homes.

Short term rentals of single family residential structures are not a commercial business any more than traditional long term residential leases. They are both landlord/tenant agreements in which the use of the land and improvements are exchanged for a fee.

Similar to long term rentals, short term rentals are a single tenant or group of people occupying the property at a time. The only difference between short-term rentals and long-term rentals is:

- Frequency of Turnover (multiple times in a month vs. month-to-month or longer with a long term rental)
- Intensive Management (every turnover at well-run/highly rated short term rental involves interior cleaning, washing linens, lawn care, responsiveness to messages/questions, managing the property on the platform, very quick repairs, etc.)
- Extra Expenses (utilities, stocking essentials & extras, fully furnished, extra items for use, occupancy taxes, permits, fees, extra liability insurance, etc.)

AirBnbs have been restricted in large cities with dense populations and a limited supply of housing. New York City and San Francisco are prime examples where some restriction makes sense. Both needed to get a handle on the issue because they are tourist meccas, "water locked" (restricts new housing supply), and also contain some of the most expensive real estate in the world. Short term rental investors began to eat up the supply of housing and cause hyperinflation of the residential real estate. An entire city or "hot" neighborhoods within a city made up of mostly short term rental users (tourists or short-term business trips) does not make for a stable community long term. I am sure the hotel lobby played a large part in getting the restrictions put in place as short term rental platforms are a seismic disruptor to the hospitality industry.

Iberia Parish has none of those problems. The previous two census reports (2010 and 2020) show that our parish has a shrinking population. This is not good for outside investment in our community or for its future. Our struggle to compete with suburbs of Lafayette is well documented even though they lack the history, soul, and personality that we have in Iberia Parish. We have plenty to offer.

I would hate to see Iberia Parish restrict or over-regulate short term rentals and lose an asset to our economy. Tourists prefer AirBnbs to generic hotels rooms, which is all we have in Iberia Parish. Short term rentals are unique and generate interest in visiting our parish. When my extended family had a reunion in 2023, we had people travel here from all over the country (CA, WA, TX, CO, VA, etc.). Every single one of them chose to stay in AirBnbs in Iberia Parish (Main Street, Bayou Teche, and Bayou Jack). Tourists who stay in our parish, spend their money here and we all benefit.

Going forward any restrictive short term rental regulations on top of what is already in place for single family residences is not the answer. Enforcement of restrictive short term rental regulations would be a nightmare for our building/permitting/zoning professionals. Enforce the existing regulations that are in place. Let the free market regulate the AirBnbs. Successful ones will thrive and continue to operate and those that are not good candidates will cease. We have a competitive advantage over any place in Acadiana that restricts short term rentals (e.g. the City of Lafayette). Let's keep it.

Thank you for your attention to this issue.

Rusty Wilson



**APPRAISER ASSOCIATES
OF LOUISIANA, LLC.**

o: 337-364-9078 x103

c: 337-344-3483

rusty.wilson@gmail.com

From: Varrelman <bayousidebungalow@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 9, 2025 3:01:11 PM
To: Jane Braud <jbraud@cityofnewiberia.com>
Subject: Regarding Short Term Rental Properties in Iberia Parish

[You don't often get email from bayousidebungalow@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

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Ms. Jane Braud, Director
Planning & Zoning Department
New Iberia, LA 70560

Re: Proposed rules and regulations for STRs

Good afternoon,

It has been brought to my attention that the Zoning Commission members will be speaking at the Iberia Parish Council meeting tomorrow, February 10th to present concerns it has with current Short Term Rentals in Iberia Parish.

I, Linda Varrelman Dautreuil, am in a partnership with my sister, Sallie Varrelman Chatfield, that was formed upon the death and succession of our parents' estate. Varrelman Properties, LLC owns and operates Bayouside Bungalow, an AirBnB affiliated property in Iberia Parish. We began accepting guests last April.

Bayouside Bungalow is situated on ten acres between my home and my daughter, Jennifer Desormeaux Graycheck and her family. The Graychecks own and operate Petite Anse Farm that began growing sunflowers during the COVID-19 lockdown.

We have welcomed families from across the United States and Europe, as they enthusiastically discover all that this area has to offer. We have guests that enjoy staying especially during the flower blooming season. By operating the family home as a short term rental, we have been able to keep the property within our family, without having to sell it. Thus, the three properties are still a family "compound" totaling nearly 25 acres.

I am not aware of the issues that have led to the Commission's need to propose more regulations. However, I do plan on attending tomorrow's meeting in person, so that I may speak, if necessary, as a property owner that could be affected negatively by any proposed changes.

Sincerely,
Linda V. Dautreuil
Varrelman Properties, LLC
Bayouside Bungalow