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# WILL VOTERS STAND UP TO THE STR INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX?

## Voter's Guide to Article 90 limiting Investor Short-Term Rentals [STRs], including an amended motion to exempt year-round residents from maximum rental days and minimum rental period.

It's time to act. Look at what we've lost in the last ten years. The quality of life on Nantucket is being challenged by the lack of year-round housing, overdevelopment, traffic, parking, an environment in danger, and the loss of the quiet enjoyment of our year-round and seasonal neighborhoods. Investor short-term rentals are at the heart of this growing problem. Article 90 is a reasonable way to balance the needs of the community with those of Island visitors.

**Why Nantucket needs Article 90.**

The goal is to slow the transfer of property ownership to off-island STR businesses so that year-round residents have a chance to own or rent a decent home, Nantucket neighborhoods are protected from further disruption, and the environment and our community are preserved. Article 90 gives year-round residents an advantage by protecting those who short-term rent all or part of their primary residence. It also offers opportunities for traditional vacation rentals by second homeowners to offset costs (6 weeks of STR + unlimited monthly rentals or longer).

**The opposition is the STR Industrial Complex.**

This isn't the first important Town Meeting issue opposed by those profiting at the expense of the community. Follow the money and you will see who is behind this STR Industrial Complex: off-island STR investors, off-island platforms like VRBO and Airbnb, the Nantucket real estate industry, the Finance Committee (made up of individuals who derive income from STR businesses), and even the I&M, which is reliant on real estate advertising.

**The impact on our housing crisis.**

The opposition says "STRs do not take away from year-round housing" or impact housing costs. Yet many communities have regulations more stringent than Article 90 on the basis of protecting the housing stock and the quality of life for residents. Over the last ten years, off-island owners bought at least 175 properties for less than \$1 million to turn them into STR businesses. The loss of housing will continue unless something is done. As the Town's Strategic Plan says in a 2021 update, problems include "Nantucket lacks year-round affordable housing," "families aren't staying," and "the economy is not sustainable because of short-term rentals."

**Not traditional summer rentals.**

The opposition has implied absentee investor STRs are "traditional" to Nantucket. This isn't true. This isn't mom and pop renting out the cottage for a few weeks to pay for the mortgage. There are now over 2,250 STRs, including over 330 with multi-unit owners, and non-residents own 80% of them. Investor STRs are a recent phenomenon driven by multi-billion-dollar companies (Airbnb, Expedia), significant tax benefits, and low interest rates. It has now gotten to the point where off-island money is chasing STR businesses and turning neighborhoods into rental parks – look at Finback Lane off Bartlett Road and Beach Plum Village.

**Businesses in residential neighborhoods.**

The opposition claims STR businesses are homes, not businesses. It also claims owners will be forced to sell their homes if Article 90 passes. Investor STRs are businesses in violation of residential zoning bylaws. Most STR owners report them as businesses to the IRS to take advantage of substantial tax savings. If you are renting your home over the internet to different strangers for 175 nights a year, it's not your home. It's a business.

**The majority of the money goes off-island.**

The opposition says that "if Article 90 passes, the economy will collapse." This is self-serving and designed to scare people. It's more likely that the economy will suffer as ownership of houses moves off-island, and we lose more year-round community members. The STR industry paid for a study on the economic impacts produced by the same professor who writes pieces supporting the gambling industry in Massachusetts, and it's pure hogwash.

The opposition says STRs are good for the economy. They are good for the owners who make a lot of money – 80% of whom are non-residents. They do not bring good jobs to Nantucket, but they make Nantucket unaffordable for those who have good jobs. STRs do bring overdevelopment, crowds, cars, lines at the Stop and Shop, stress on our infrastructure, police, fire, landfill, noise, and bad behavior in otherwise quiet neighborhoods. Most importantly, they turn homes into businesses and commercialize the very character of our community.

**Protect Nantucket with reasonable controls.**

Article 90 regulations of STRs are reasonable. Some communities have even outlawed STRs and continue to flourish. If voters don't act now, they may never be able to go up against this rapidly growing STR industry and the entrenched interests that serve them.

**Vote Yes on Article 90.**

This debate brings to mind the old fable about the ax who convinced the trees he was one of them. Does it remind you of opponents of Article 90, like Nantucket Together and the Alliance to Protect Nantucket's Economy? "The forest was shrinking, but the trees kept voting for the ax. For the ax was clever and convinced them that since his handle was wood, he was one of them." You have the power to make meaningful change on Nantucket.

**P.S. Voting this year is electronic.** So you need not fear the sort of retaliation that has occurred in the past. Please stand up for Nantucket and its unique community and its amazing natural environment. Come to Town Meeting and cast an anonymous vote to protect what you love.

IT'S TIME TO LIMIT INVESTOR SHORT-TERM RENTALS.

Vote Yes For The Island

ARTICLE 90 VOTE YES



Paid for by ACK•Now Treasurer, Linda Holland, 28B Easy Street, Nantucket 02554  
Read the positive amended motion for ATM at [acknow.org/90amendment/](https://acknow.org/90amendment/)

**PROTECT WHAT YOU LOVE**



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