

From: [Joe Keehner](#)
To: [Kayla Holbrook](#)
Cc: [Planning Commission](#); [Council](#)
Subject: Re: Planning Commission 9-14-16 Agenda
Date: Monday, September 19, 2016 11:25:42 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
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As you know, I will not be back from out of town in time for the workshop discussion about backyard chickens. Therefore I want to at least weigh in on the issues.

More and more people are beginning to appreciate the value of local food and connections to nature, so one could argue that implementing code that allows for backyard chickens is actually a progressive initiative.

Of course there are pros and cons about raising chickens. One can find this information on the Internet. However there are pros and cons in most human endeavors, that is why you ideally have government regulations. The proposed code prohibits raising chickens for commercial purposes; since people will only be raising chickens for personal use, I would speculate that anyone thinking of raising backyard chickens will not be cavalier about this and will weigh the pros and cons before investing money in the infrastructure etc. At the same time, the city regulations can further inform such deliberations by mandating standards that reflect best practices, such as the need for a minimum of 1.5 to 2 square feet of chicken coop space per bird along with 8 to 10 square feet of yard space per chicken and the need for predator proof structures to house chickens at night. Also since chickens are not loners, the proposed code allows for 2 or 3 chickens. In addition the proposed codes seems to have covered the most important issues in order to insure clean and healthy conditions, along with prohibiting roosters for noise abatement. Finally, the code addresses public anxiety by not allowing any variances.

The only thing that I might question in the proposed code is the clause prohibiting butchering but will assume that it means butchering for market versus butchering for personal use. Most chickens only produce eggs for 2 or 3 years, so after that if the chicken hasn't become a family pet, the family might want to eat the chicken for Sunday supper. This might be spelled out better in the code.

The nay saying letters from the public, that I have read, seem to be concerned about rampant diseases. I don't wish to belittle this concern. At the same time I would assume that people raising chickens for food will want to insure the healthiest animals and environment possible and will be aware of sanitary practices like washing your hands after handling animals etc. It is also my guess that the real danger of unhealthy chickens and resultant disease issues for humans is more an issue related to the factory farming of chickens versus backyards. In the typical agribusiness set up, chickens are raised in concentration camp like conditions where they can barely move around. This close confinement of chickens requires an over reliance on antibiotics etc to minimize disease, which means you are going to ingest all of those chemicals and be vulnerable to any pathogens not killed by the chemicals, which is why folks will probably be thinking about raising chickens on their own in their backyards in the first place and be wanting the city to allow it...

My final thought is that the code allowing backyard chickens needs to be passed, because it is a civil rights issue related to equality under the law. We cannot outlaw billboards and cell towers in the city, although we can regulate the details of placement and other standards. This has become a de facto right of legal people (i.e.. Corporate entities), and in the case of cell towers, it is illegal to even bring up the possible health threats related to this technology.

Shouldn't natural people (i.e. flesh and blood citizens) be given the same consideration.
Respectfully submitted with warm greetings from Joe Keehner Jr.
PS: Kayla please feel free to pass my thoughts on to any interested member of the community... Thanks.

Sent from my iPad

On Sep 9, 2016, at 12:52 PM, Kayla Holbrook <Kayla.Holbrook@gahanna.gov> wrote:

Happy Friday!

Attached is the Planning Commission agenda for next Wednesday (9/14). I have also attached the agenda for the Workshop on 9/21, which has the most recent version of the Chicken Code for your review over the next couple weeks.

Enjoy the weekend. ☺ See you all around 6:30 on Wednesday.

Kayla Holbrook

Deputy Clerk of Council


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