

5.05: Public Hearing: Consider Ordinance #15-12 Amending City Code Chapter 10 (Animals) and Section 117-111 (R-1 Residential District) Amending Approval Process for Certain Animals.

Public Hearing

Chairperson Levine called the public hearing to order at 7:32 p.m.

Presentation

Community Development Director Gladhill presented the staff report stating the purpose of this case is to hold a Public Hearing and provide a recommendation to the City Council for Ordinance #15-12. The intent of this Ordinance was to revise the approval process for the following requests:

1. Four (4) of more dogs
2. Horses on 1.5 to 2.99 acres
3. Beekeeping
4. Non-Traditional Domestic or Exotic Animals
5. Wild Animals

Community Development Director Gladhill commented each of these types of requests currently requires the issuance of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). Based on a number of recent reviews with the Planning Commission and feedback from potential applicants, the following Ordinance was developed to consider reducing the timeframe and costs to processing the requests above. With the exception of the wild animal category, the Ordinance would either streamline or eliminate the process for approval. Please note that the draft Ordinance would remove the Planning Commission from the review process for the above requests, with the exception of wild animals. Staff discussed the proposed Ordinance in further detail and suggested the Commission recommend approval.

Citizen Input

Julie Chutes, 7652 158th Avenue NW, requested the Commission consider the proposed Ordinance to eliminate the Conditional Use Permit process for residents requesting horses on 1.5 to 2.99 acres.

Julia Randall, 7960 171st Lane NW, explained that the conditional use permitting process was quite expensive. She stated that her family could not continue to pay \$400 a month to board her horses. She discussed the numerous health benefits that horses have offered her. She encouraged the Commission to allow homeowners to have two horses on 1.5 to 2.99 acre lots.

Anna _____, 158th Avenue NW, commented that the \$1,000 conditional use permit fee would be much better spent going towards hay and feed for horses. She discussed the benefits of being able to tend to her horse on her own land, versus the expense of boarding. She expressed frustration that some homeowners in Ramsey already had horses on lots less than 2 acres.

Ms. Chutes explained that horses were very important to both of these girls. She indicated she had the support of her neighbors and requested the Commission allow horses on her land.

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner Brauer, to close the public hearing.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Levine, Commissioners Andrusko, Bauer, Brauer, Maul, Nosan, and VanScoy. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

Chairperson Levine closed the public hearing closed at 7:47 p.m.

Commission Business

Commissioner Bauer supported the comments made by the girls.

Commissioner Brauer understood the girls' frustration and it did appear that the rules were being applied unfairly with regard to horses.

Commissioner Bauer questioned how wild animals was defined within City Code.

Community Development Director Gladhill discussed how City Code defined wild and domestic animals.

Commissioner Brauer asked if spider and fish families should be written into City Code as wild animals.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated this determination would have to be made by the Commission.

Commissioner VanScoy inquired if land acreage was based on a gross or net calculation.

Community Development Director Gladhill commented that this would be a gross calculation.

Commissioner VanScoy supported staff's recommendation and the proposed Ordinance amendments. He questioned how staff would license non-traditional wild animals and asked if conditions could be placed on these permits.

Community Development Director Gladhill indicated a license was similar to a conditional use permit. He reported that an annual renewal would not be required by the City Council.

Commissioner VanScoy understood that the City would allow a residential lot to have up to six hives. He asked if the City would be setting any requirements on the lot sizes to support these six hives.

City Planner Anderson stated property size does not come into play for bee keeping. He noted that staff has worked closely with the Minnesota Bee Keeping Association and the requirements within City Code were recommendations from this association.

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to recommend that City Council approval of Ordinance #15-12 Amending City Code Chapter 10 (Animals) and Section 117-111 (R-1 Residential District) Amending Approval Process for Certain Animals with the following revisions:

1. The definition of wild animal is revised to replace “a mammal, large or poisonous reptile and bird” with “a large or dangerous species”.
2. Any animal meeting the definition of horse in Article II shall be deleted from the text in Article I.
3. Correct a typographical error in Section 10-1 (f).

Further discussion

Commissioner Andrusko asked if the license would be tied to the land or the property owner.

Community Development Director Gladhill explained that the current Ordinance structure would run with the property owner and would not expire on a yearly basis.

Commissioner Nosan requested staff provide further information on the approval process for this Ordinance.

Community Development Director Gladhill discussed the approval timeline and noted when the Ordinance would be published. He anticipated that the Ordinance would be effective on August 17th.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Levine, Commissioners Bauer, VanScoy, Andrusko, Brauer, Maul, and Nosan. Voting No: None. Absent: None.