

Dear City Council members,

Councilmember James Tate, held two “Animal Husbandry” meetings; one virtual Thursday February 8th (which drastically limited residents’) attendance/participation and one in-person in Southwest Detroit 48217 in January.

At the January meeting residents were very vocal and had many questions. Not only that the majority of residents overwhelming expressed opposition to the ordinance. During the meeting residents asked where was the other council members? Residents expressed concern over many other issues that are impacting their quality of life.

Questions residents ask:

With the ordinance being citywide, proposed zoning amendments and Detroit’s population being over 600,000 had mailers/information been sent to citizens regarding the ordinance – if not why not? So as many residents can weigh in on this issue.

To allow animal husbandry and beekeeping as an accessory use in R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, B6, M1, M2, M3, M4, M5, PC, PCA, TM, PR, SD1, SD2, MKT and SD4 zoning districts

How will the zoning amendments impact multi-family units, apartments and condos dwellers – will residents in multiple family complexes etc?

Will businesses be able to participate in Animal Husbandry?

Are the other council members holding meetings to inform their constituents of the proposed ordinance?

A “biggie question was asked, but not answered: Do the other council members support or oppose the ordinance if so who are they?

Residents are requesting that this be put on the ballot for voters to decide.

A nurse educator was in attendance at the January meeting and she gave health data and the dangers of housing chickens and other animals in residential areas. She provided statistics on the dangers of avian flu which many didn’t that there was an avian flu outbreak during Covid in 2022 which devastated the chicken and turkey population resulting in poultry shortages that caused a huge spike in poultry prices.

Concerns:

Resident expressed that spacing was a huge issue – that 30-feet was not enough separating for residents’ and the husbandry activity - the proponents supporting the ordinance at both meetings had space (three lots up to ten lots) for such husbandry enterprises.

Residents complained that the current burning of chicken fecal matter/waste stinks and many new residents are doing wood-burning which is a violation of the air quality ordinance.

Residents expressed concern that animal keeping will impact their property values. Also, neighborhoods throughout the city are dealing with infestations of rats, garter snakes, possums, raccoons and ground hogs. They have reported it to the city and were told that they don’t handle rats or snakes and that the ground hogs were a Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Residents were told that they would have to set their own traps, but the city could put out rat poison for rats. Chickens have been seen roaming the community and the rats are attracted to the chicken feces. In addition, loose dogs and raccoons got into the neighbor’s gated yard attacking the resident’s chickens killing all, but one. Also, dogs have been attacking residents and their pets.

Residents have witnessed a foxes and coyotes roaming the neighborhoods in Southwest Detroit 48217. A resident on Corbin streets has chickens, turkeys and pheasants which roam freely. Many residents have found possums, rats and raccoons in their trash cans.

Rabbits have taken over the yards and alleyway in the community. The rat problem is so bad that kids have attacked the rats with sticks. **See attached video and pictures of the chickens and rats.**

Moreover, Residents that attended expressed many concerns of proper enforcement when Detroit has serious problems with current enforcement now that is not being done. The enforcement officer (first name Mark) said that there are only seven enforcement officers – one for each district, so the shortage of officers is a great concern for residents. Residents have called the Neighborhood Police Officers and the Department of Neighborhood managers Eva Torres and Antonia Mills assigned to the area reporting these violations.

Residents complained that enforcement is not being done as folks park cars on front lawns, build fencing 6-feet high to the sidewalk blocking cross-street views and bar-b-que on the front lawns and porches.

Nearby Dearborn acknowledge the rat infestation in the city and have taken actions to alleviate the problem.

More challenges that the residents face is the streets flood constantly. Residents said that our city should work to take of the aforementioned problems, before introducing ordinances the will compound the problems they are faced with now.

One resident mentioned that Property law states: Those that are in violation of a city ordinance will prevent a budding neighbors' right to quiet enjoyment/entitlement of their property without interference. We are humbly asking that the city council respond to the questions and concerns of the residents. Thank you.

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