



City of CHARLOTTE

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Lewis and City Council Members

FROM: Gregg Guetschow, City Manager

SUBJECT: Amendment to Ordinance Regarding Keeping of Chickens

DATE: March 24, 2016

City Council adopted an ordinance in 2012 in response to citizen requests to keep chickens on residential lots in the City. This ordinance, which is found at section 10-4 of the Code of Ordinances, established standards based on the experiences of other communities that had authorized the practice. The ordinance contains limitations intended to minimize offsite impacts resulting from keeping chickens. In addition, Council limited the number of permits that could be granted to ten and established a sunset date in 2016.

We are now approaching the sunset date. You will find in the agenda packet a proposed ordinance amendment drafted by the City Attorney that extends the sunset date to 2020. Council may, if it wishes, make other changes to the ordinance at this time as well.

Bryan Myrkle, who administers a portion of the permitting process, has suggested two changes to the current ordinance language. The first is to eliminate the permit renewal process if there has not been a complaint received during the permitting period. This would make the process less burdensome for permit holders by doing away with the requirement. If Council retains language limiting the number of current permits to ten, however, it would be difficult to know whether a permit holder has stopped keeping chickens. An alternative would be to keep the permit renewal process but eliminate the requirement that neighbor signatures be obtained.

His second suggestion is to lengthen the permit term from one to two years.

Our records indicate that permits were issued for five locations in the City with three of those permits currently valid. We have not received complaints concerning any of these locations.

I am recommending that you set a public hearing on this ordinance amendment for your next Council meeting. Once Council has set the date for a public hearing, I will be sending letters to permit holders and their neighbors advising them of the opportunity to offer comments. I expect you will receive comments

from some permit holders asking that the some of the standards be eliminated or made less stringent.