

Urban Chickens

Committee of the Whole Policy Discussion

January 25, 2021

Previous Policy Discussions

- April 27, 2009
 - Committee of the Whole review of GHS Student Government Program mock City Council meeting regarding urban chickens
 - Mock City Council voted 7-3 against allowing chickens in the City
- July 30, 2012
 - Key Issue Identified by City Council
 - Council was split 5-5 with the Mayor breaking tie and further action on the issue halted
 - Concerns with time and resource allocation

Benefits of Chickens

- Pest Control
 - The diets of chickens mainly consist of grain. However, chickens also control the amount of pests in gardens and backyard by consuming worms and small bugs, such as ticks, Japanese beetles.
- Compost Alternative
 - Leftover table scraps, such as fruits and vegetables, can easily be consumed by chickens providing an alternative to traditional disposal or compost.
- Nutritional Value of Eggs
 - Free-range eggs have been shown to have better nutritional value than standard factory farm eggs.

Common Misconceptions

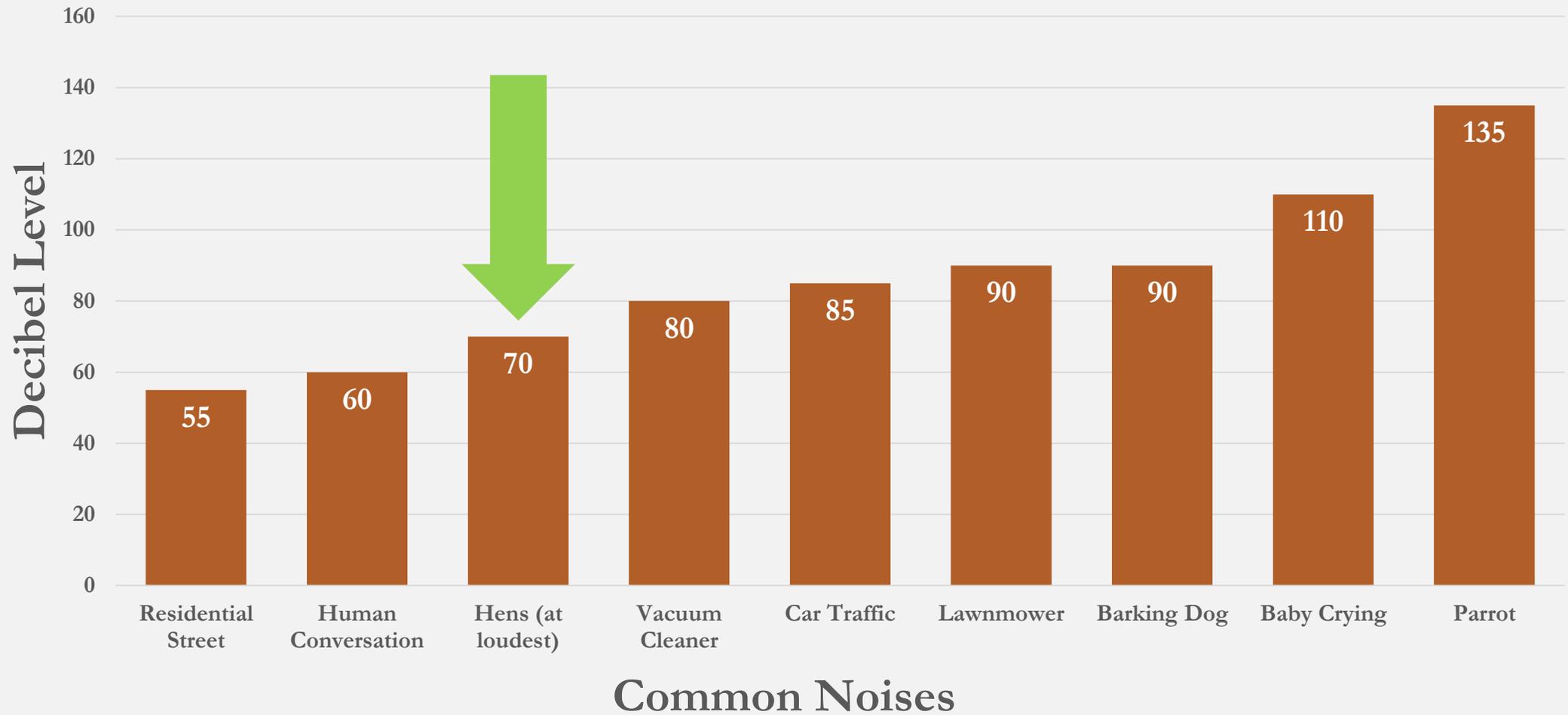
- *Attraction of Predators*
 - In some locations, the presence of chickens can attract predators such as Coyotes, Foxes, and Raccoons. However, proactive coop maintenance and security can protect chickens, thus deterring predators.
- *Attraction of Rodents*
 - Rodents are mainly attracted to chicken coops due to the environment they create. They are attracted to the chicken feed, water, and even eggs. Coop cleaning, timely egg collection, and nightly removal of chicken feed and water can help prevent possible infestations.

Potential Concerns with Chickens

- Odor
- Appearance
- Noise
- Slaughter on Premises
- Health and Safety



How Loud Are Chickens?



Health and Safety

- The greatest human disease risk from poultry are the bacteria Salmonella and Campylobacter.
- In 2012, eight Salmonella outbreaks in the U.S. affecting over 450 people were due to direct contact with live poultry obtained from mail-order hatcheries for non-commercial use.
- Proper coop management is essential not only for poultry health but also to minimize public health concerns including flies, vermin (rats and mice) and odor.

CDC Recommendations

- Wash your hands with soap and running water after touching backyard poultry or anything in the area where they live and roam.
- Keep a clean coop. Cleaning the coop, floor, nests, and perches regularly will help to keep eggs clean.
- Collect eggs often. Eggs that sit in the nest can become dirty or break.
- Throw away cracked eggs. Bacteria on the shell can more easily enter the egg through a cracked shell.
- Don't let children younger than 5 years of age handle or touch chicks, ducklings, or other poultry. Young children are more likely to get sick from germs like Salmonella.

Current Chicken Regulations

- 6-1-8: Prohibited Animals, Acts and Conditions:
 - A. Animals Prohibited in City: It is unlawful to keep any pigs, swine, sheep, cattle, horses, goats, fowl or similar animals, or any naturally wild animals other than birds and fish within the city unless: a) allowed by the zoning ordinance of the city; or b) properly and safely confined in zoological parks, performing animal exhibitions, education institutions, veterinary hospitals, or animal shelters licensed under the animal welfare act of the state.
- Fowl: Any Pigeons, poultry or waterfowl.

Kane County

Appendix B – Zoning

Allowed in: F District – Farming; F1 District – Rural Residential; and E1 District – Estate (As Part of Farm)

Poultry may be housed; stabled, kenneled or yarded closer than one hundred feet (100') from any residence other than that of the owner or user of the property. Roosters, Pea-fowl and Guinea Fowl may not be kept on properties less than five (5) acres in size.

State Statutes

(510 ILCS 55/) Illinois Domestic Animals Running At Large Act.

Sec. 1. No person or owner of livestock shall allow livestock to run at large in the State of Illinois.

Sec. 1.1. Definitions. As used in this Act, unless the context otherwise requires:

"Livestock", for the purposes of this Act only, means bison, cattle, swine, sheep, goats, equidae, camelids, ratites, or fowl.

- No other clear guidance or regulations from state statute.

Illinois Department of Agriculture

- Regulates the production of eggs intended to be sold through Farmers Markets or commercial retail – Egg License required.
- Kane County Health Department and the Illinois Department of Agriculture inspect producers that intend to sell through Farmers Markets or commercial retail.
- Producers selling eggs from a residence or farm where the eggs were produced are not required to obtain an Egg License and may sell to direct consumers.

Chickens in Other Communities

- Comparable Communities

- Batavia
- St. Charles
- Warrenville
- Naperville
- Downers Grove

- Common Code

- Number of Hens
- Enclosure Requirements
- Setback Requirements
- Minimum Lot Size
- Yard Locations
- Building Permits Required
- Limits on Slaughter
- Location of Code

Overall Peer City Review

Number of Hens	Enclosure Requirements	Setback Requirements	Minimum Lot Size	Yard Location	Building Permit	Slaughter
4-10	Some form of enclosure and fenced area is required.	Required from primary residence and/or neighboring property line or residence.	Only certain types of lots are permitted.	Most commonly designated for the rear yard.	Required by most municipalities	Not explicit, but mostly prohibited.

Model Ordinance Suggestions

- 4-6 hens
- Roosters prohibited
- Chickens not allowed in a residence, porch or attached garaged
- Minimum 1 sq. ft. per bird, run should be no longer than 8' X 8'
- 5'-10' setback, 10'-20' from neighboring residence
- Sale of eggs prohibited
- Require a permit

Code Enforcement



- Batavia

- Number of Coops
22 Registered
- Complaints in 2020
2 Complaints
- Nature of Complaints
Loose Chickens,
No Permits

- St. Charles

- Number of Coops
8 Non-Registered
- Complaints in 2020
2 Complaints
- Nature of Complaints
Loose Chickens,
Inadequate Screening

Code Enforcement



- Naperville
 - Number of Coops
30-40 Non-Registered
 - Complaints in 2020
6 Complaints
 - Nature of Complaints
Loose Chickens, Odor,
No Permits
- Downers Grove
 - Number of Coops
25 Registered
 - Complaints in 2020
2 Complaints (Since 2014)
 - Nature of Complaints
Loose Chickens,
Prohibited Rooster

Discussion Topics

- Does the Committee wish to amend the code to permit urban chickens?
- If so, what **broad** elements do we think need to be included in a potential ordinance revision?
 - Amount of Chickens
 - Location Requirements
 - Activities on Premise
 - Permitting and Licenses
- Staff will take broad suggestions to refine into greater detail and return with a possible ordinance revision for review.

City	Number of Hens	Enclosure Requirements	Setback Requirements	Minimum Lot Size	Yard Location	Building Permit	Slaughter	Location in Code
Batavia	8	Covered enclosure connected to a fenced area not less than 32 square feet.	30 feet from any nearby residence	N/A	Rear Yard Only	Required	Prohibited	Fire & Police
St. Charles	6	Must be kept in an enclosure and/or fenced area.	At least 5 feet from a property line.	Any sized single-family lot.	Rear Yard Only	Not Required (Being Revisited)	N/A	Animals
Warrenville	10	Must be kept in a coop and fenced area.	At least 8 feet from a property line.	10,000 square foot minimum	Rear Yard Only	Not Required	N/A	Zoning
Naperville	8	Enclosure sufficient in size and strength to confine animals to the property.	30 feet from any nearby residence.	N/A	N/A	Required, \$88	N/A	Police
Downers Grove	4	Confined to a pen, coop, or run at all times.	50 feet, but can be reduced with neighbor's consent.	At least 50 feet by 50 feet.	N/A	Required, \$102	Prohibited	Animals