



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
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To: Comprehensive Planning Committee
From: Scott Tempel
Date: June 10, 2013
Subject: Fish and Fowl Zoning Study

Background

In response to increased interest in local food, the City of Saint Paul recently initiated the Urban Agriculture Zoning Study. This study has addressed agriculture, farmer's markets, and community gardens in the community. However, during this discussion it has come to light that the City of Saint Paul Zoning Code does not adequately address the issue of the slaughter and processing of locally grown small animals such as fish and fowl. Several factors have led to the need to initiate a zoning study to more specifically address slaughter and processing of small animals for food, including:

- In 2009, the City Council passed a resolution requesting "necessary changes to City policy (including possible zoning, licensing, /permitting, HRA/easement polices)" in order to "facilitate a network of resources to support the production, distribution and consumption of healthy and locally grown food."
- The Urban Agriculture Zoning Study recommends zoning text amendments that would permit the growing of fish as an agricultural use but does not address the slaughter or processing of those fish.
- The Saint Paul-Ramsey County Food and Nutrition Commission released the [2012 Report: Food System Recommendations](#) which calls for policy and zoning changes to support urban agriculture. www.co.ramsey.mn.us/ph/pc/food_and_nutrition_commission.htm
- Urban Organics, Inc. is seeking to locate an urban fish and vegetable farm within the City of Saint Paul to provide fresh, locally raised and grown products to the local community. This farm would utilize the process of aquaponics, the combination of aquaculture (raising fish in tanks) and hydroponics (growing plants with water). Where and how the fish are harvested needs to be addressed.

- Garden Fresh Farms submitted a STAR Grant application to create a sustainable hydroponic/aquaponic operation in a warehouse in the Midway area. Where and how the fish are harvested needs to be addressed.
- HmongTown Marketplace has proposed to create a chicken processing facility at 249 Como Ave. to provide fresh chicken to marketplace clients. There is no clear zoning category for such a use and DSI declined to issue a Statement of Clarification to address this administratively. A Determination of Similar Use would raise many questions about the definitions and thresholds involved in animal slaughter and processing that could more thoroughly be addressed through a zoning study.

For these reasons, it is important to review the zoning code to ensure the slaughter and processing of fish and fowl are adequately represented and regulated, and that they are differentiated from other types of animals with clear thresholds and rationale.

Scope and Timeline

Staff proposes to draft a report and zoning text amendments addressing the following topics for Comprehensive Planning Committee review in about two months:

- Animal slaughter
- Aquaculture
- Animal processing
- Backyard slaughter

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Comprehensive Planning Committee forward the attached resolution initiating the zoning study to the Planning Commission for adoption.