

# Henkeeping Information



## **HENKEEPING PROPOSAL**

Over the next several months, the Geneva Planning Board and Geneva City Council will be taking up consideration of an ordinance change that would permit the keeping of hens under regulated circumstances on properties throughout the City.

This change will require a review and recommendation by the Planning Board, and two readings of an ordinance by the City Council. City Council has asked that the ordinance be scheduled for first reading at the May, 2017 City Council meeting.

### *Current Regulations*

The keeping of animals is regulated in two sections of the City Code. Chapter 77, which regulates the keeping of animals generally, prohibits the keeping of chickens except in the Agricultural Residential (AR) and Mixed-Use Industrial (F) zoning districts of the City. It goes on to require a distance of 200 feet from the nearest building “customarily occupied by humans,” except the owner’s home.

The use goes on to be governed by the rules and regulations contained in the zoning law pertaining to each district; including setbacks, screening, etc.

### *Proposed Regulations*

The proposed regulations would amend Chapter 77 and the associated zoning text to provide for the keeping of chickens, ducks, geese or other domesticated fowl, as follows:

### Districts Permitting Residential Use

- Number permitted: In districts permitting, by right, residential use, the number of animals permitted to be kept shall be limited to 1 per 1,000 s.f. of lot area.
- Coops and cages: A coop or cage must be provided, which gives the animal ability to freely move, protect the animal from predators, and be easily accessed for cleaning.
- Enclosures: An uncovered fence or enclosure must be provided to allow for at least 10 s.f. of roaming area for each animal, and protect animals from dogs and other predators.
- Setbacks: Coops or cages must be at least 10 feet from each side yard lot line and 18 inches from a rear yard lot line.
- Cleanliness: Owners must keep the area housing animals clean and sanitary, and free from vermin, and obnoxious smells and substances.
- Prohibitions: In districts permitting, by right, residential use, no roosters, geese, turkeys, or predatory birds may be kept.

### Districts Not Permitting Residential Use

- Number permitted: In districts not permitting, by right, residential use, the number of animals permitted to be kept shall be limited to 1 per 400 s.f. of lot area.
- Coops and cages: A coop or cage must be provided, which gives the animal ability to freely move, protect the animal from predators, and be easily accessed for cleaning. Coops or cages shall not exceed five square feet per animal, and singly or in combination shall not exceed ten feet in height.
- Enclosures: An uncovered fence or enclosure must be provided to allow for at least 10 s.f. of roaming area for each animal, and protect animals from dogs and other predators.
- Setbacks: Coops or cages must be at least 10 feet from each side yard lot line and 18 inches from a rear yard lot line.
- Cleanliness: Owners must keep the area housing animals clean and sanitary, and free from vermin, and obnoxious smells and substances.
- Prohibitions: In districts not permitting, by right, residential use, no predatory birds may be kept.

### Licensing and Permits

Every two years, owners would be required to obtain and update a license to keep animals on their property. The application for such license will include information on the proposed project, including the number and type of animals to be kept, a scaled drawing of any coop, enclosure, etc., clearly delineating distances from property lines and adjacent buildings, photos, and other information deemed necessary by the Building Official. The owner will execute a signed statement indicating a review and understanding of the associated rules and regulations.

Building permits would be required for any structure qualifying under the building code.

The section would be enforced by the City's Building Official.

### Next Steps

The proposal will be advanced to the Planning Board at its next regular meeting. Once Planning Board comments are received, the regulations will be considered by the City Council at their May meeting.

If you would like to comment on the proposal, you can contact your [City Councilor](#), or to distribute

comments to the entire Council, you can contact the City Clerk at [dmyers@Geneva.ny.us](mailto:dmyers@Geneva.ny.us). Comments for the Planning Board can be sent to the City's Building Official Neal Braman at [NLB@Geneva.ny.us](mailto:NLB@Geneva.ny.us).