

Proposed Amendment to Beech Grove City Ordinance 90.60(A), 90.64(C) and 90.64(F) on hen ownership

A proposal to the Beech Grove Common Council to amend Beech Grove City Ordinance 90.60(A), 90.64(C) and 90.64(F) to remove arbitrary limits on hen ownership and align space requirements with public health expert recommendations.

Summary of Proposed Amendment

- Keeps current coop and attached run space requirements in place for residents with six hens or less.
- Allows residents to keep more than six hens, provided their coop has at least three square feet of space per hen and their attached run has at least eight square feet of space per hen.
- Removes arbitrary size limitations on coops/attached runs.

Reasoning for Proposed Amendment

- Minimizes effect on current chicken owners unless they purchase more chickens.
- Tying limits on chicken ownership to available lot space for coops and attached runs means actual change for most residents will be minimal.
- Removes arbitrary limits on hen ownership as long as residents comply with space and public health requirements.
 - Restrictions on personal freedom and personal property usage should have a reason: the only limits on hen ownership that serve a direct purpose are space requirements to comply with public health recommendations.
- Hens, at their loudest, are the same decibel level as a human conversation (60-70 decibels) and quieter than dogs.
 - As such, a slight increase in the number of chickens able to be kept in one backyard is unlikely to cause a public nuisance.
- Greater egg production will make chicken ownership more financially sustainable for households and combat the influence of inflation on grocery budgets.
- Aligns space requirements per chicken with public health expert recommendations

Current Ordinance

§ 90.60 KEEPING OF CHICKENS.

- (A) Each single family dwelling holding a permit may keep no more than six chickens (hens) at any time.
- (B) No roosters are permitted in the city.
- (C) Tenants not owning the residence must receive permission from the owner of the property prior to the construction of a coop and/or keeping of chickens.
- (D) Chickens must not be permitted to run-at-large, and must be in a habitable coop with an attached run.
- (E) Multiple family dwellings including double residences shall not keep chickens.

(Ord. 7, 2017, passed 8- 7-17) Penalty, see § 90.99

§ 90.64 CONSTRUCTION OF COOPS AND RUNS.

- (A) Coops and runs shall be well maintained.
- (B) Coops shall be enclosed on all sides and have a roof and doors. All access doors must be able to be shut and locked at night. Coop must have at least one solid door and window that can be opened for ventilation. Windows and vents must be covered with predatory proof and bird-proof wire containing less than one inch openings.
- (C) Coop must not exceed 30 square feet in size and be no more than five feet in height. Coop must have at least three square feet of space per chicken.
- (D) Coop shall be constructed, repaired, and maintained in a manner to prevent rodents from being harbored underneath or within the walls of the enclosures.
- (E) Coop shall be built of solid weatherproof materials such as wood, metal, or plastic. Wood shall be treated wood and not particle board. Coop floors shall be made of wood or cement and set a minimum of one foot above ground level with a slight slope towards the door or other opening to prevent puddling.
- (F) Coop must have an attached run area with at least three square feet of space per chicken, but not more than 30 square feet of total run area. The run must be constructed using predator-proof and bird-proof wire containing less than one inch openings and maintained in a manner that prevents predators from knocking over, tunneling under, or otherwise accessing the run.

Redlined Copy of Amended Ordinance

§ 90.60 KEEPING OF CHICKENS.

(A) Each single family dwelling holding a permit may keep ~~no more than~~ six chickens (hens) at any time ~~without being subject to increased space requirements.~~

(B) No roosters are permitted in the city.

(C) Tenants not owning the residence must receive permission from the owner of the property prior to the construction of a coop and/or keeping of chickens.

(D) Chickens must not be permitted to run-at-large, and must be in a habitable coop with an attached run.

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(C) ~~Coop must not exceed 30 square feet in size and be no more than five feet in height.~~ Coop must have at least three square feet of space per chicken.

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(F) Coop must have an attached run area with at least three square feet of space per chicken, ~~but not more than 30 square feet of total run area.~~ If more than six chickens are present, coop must have an attached run area with at least eight square feet of space per chicken. The run must be constructed using predator-proof and bird-proof wire containing less than one inch openings and maintained in a manner that prevents predators from knocking over, tunneling under, or otherwise accessing the run.

Merged Copy of Amended Ordinance

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