

Zoning Amendment Proposal: Beekeeping

Planning Board Hearing – October 3rd, 2017



Urban Agriculture

→ The practice of **cultivating food** in and around the city



Benefits of Urban Agriculture

- Health
- Social
- Economic
- Ecological

Benefits of Urban Agriculture

- **Health:**

- Access to healthy food
- Raise nutritional awareness
- Moderate physical activity
- Culturally important foods

Benefits of Urban Agriculture

- **Social:**

- Education
- Youth development
- Community life

Benefits of Urban Agriculture

- **Economic:**
 - Savings on food costs
 - Supplemental income

Benefits of Urban Agriculture

- **Ecological:**
 - Pollination contributes to ecological health
 - Environmental awareness

Urban Agriculture Task Force

- Composed of:
 - Cambridge Public Health Department staff
 - Community Development Department staff
 - Conservation Commission
 - CitySprouts
 - Community members
- Involved the cooperation of ISD, DPW, Animal Control

Urban Agriculture Task Force

Goals:

- Allow select agricultural activities in Cambridge within established guidelines
- Establish a clear permitting and enforcement process
- Support best practices and safe operations
- Being good neighbors

Outreach & Partners

Stakeholder Engagement

- Focus Groups with local experts (beekeepers, chicken keepers, gardeners, farmers, entrepreneurs, academics, epidemiologists, veterinarians, clinicians)
- Nonprofits and Community Organizations, e.g. Cambridge Community Center, City Sprouts, Shady Hill School
- Residents
- Neighborhood organizations, Tenants Association
- State agencies (MDAR, MDPH)
- Local municipal experts (Boston, Somerville, Arlington)

Focus Areas

- **Beekeeping**
- **Henkeeping**
- **Commercial farming**
- **Sales**

Policy Approach

Public Health Regulations

- Establish a permitting program and a set of standards to maintain safe and sanitary operations

Zoning

- Establish allowed districts, criteria and/or review processes for principal agricultural uses

Guidance Documents

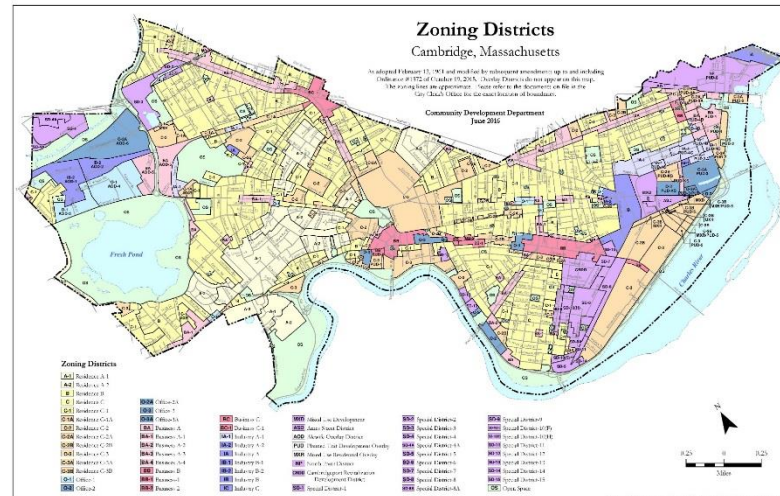
- Best management practices
- Easy guide for community members to navigate permit process

Zoning for Beekeeping

Where does beekeeping fit within our ...

- ... land use framework? (Article 4)
- ... development standards? (Article 5)

What other standards are needed in zoning?



Zoning for Beekeeping

Land Use Framework (Article 4)

- Accessory use
- Allowed with residences, hotels, institutions (religious centers, schools), offices, stores, light industry



Zoning for Beekeeping

Development Standards (Article 5)

- If beehives are less than 6 feet tall and meet other standards, they don't count against yard or open space requirements

Zoning for Beekeeping

Urban Agriculture Standards (New Article 23)

- Requires compliance with Cambridge Public Health Regulations, other laws & codes
- Beekeeping requires a permit from Cambridge Public Health Department
- *Can include standards for other urban agriculture uses as they are developed*

Zoning for Beekeeping

Beekeeping Standards (23.40)

- No more than 2 beehives on a lot (may be increased temporarily)
- Beehives no more than 20 cubic feet in volume
- Beehives no more than 6 feet tall
- Apiaries at-grade or elevated (roof, deck)
- Apiaries set back 5 feet from property lines unless a solid fence is provided
- Apiaries set back 6 feet from roof parapet

Zoning for Beekeeping

Beekeeping Standards (23.40)

- Flyway Barriers – to control direction of bees exiting hive

RECOMMEND MOVING TO PUBLIC HEALTH REGULATIONS

- Warning signage – to notify sensitive abutters and passersby



Other Regulations

Local public health jurisdiction:

- Inspectional Services Department:
 - Enforces MA Food Code
- Cambridge Public Health Department
 - Local health department with statutory authority under M.G.L. c.111 §31 to promulgate health regulations
 - Statutory authority under M.G.L. c.111 §122 to regulate public health nuisances and prevent disease conditions

Thank You!

