

Ladies and Gentleman considering House Bill 175

A few years back I began to think about having a way to provide my own clean food. No antibiotics, hormones etc. My thoughts went to small animals such as chickens or rabbits. Having served on my City's Planning Commission I feel I am well versed on the City Zoning code. Just for safety, I spent many hours trying to find any part of the code that would prohibit the keeping of small animals. Even went so far as to do a computer search to check. Still found nothing prohibiting the keeping of Chickens.

So after many an hour of study trying to make myself knowledgeable, I started with ten chicks. All was going well. Got to the point that I had eggs to spare. So being the type a person I am, I started sharing my eggs with the City Manager, City employees, family members or anyone that may wish to have fresh eggs.

Then the hammer came down. The city attorney, who thinks chickens should not be in the city, found a line in our zoning that states as follows. "Uses which are omitted from this Zoning Code which are not specifically permitted shall be considered prohibited until deemed otherwise by the Planning Commission or until, by amendment." This statement is being used to threaten me with a large fine and or jail time if I do not get rid of my chicken. He is correct in that the zoning does not specifically permit the keeping of chickens in a residential zone. But in fact the R-1 District only states that a single family dwelling and out building for use of the main structure are permitted.

I have been in a yearlong battle trying to persuade the council to use common sense in this matter. I have quoted the content house bill 175 as a perfect compromise to no avail.

My observation of the changing times is that others like myself are trying to get back the self-sustaining life style. We want to get away from food with growth hormones, antibiotics, GMO and the other chemicals we are finding in our food. With the passing of House Bill 175 we would be heading in the right direction.

Some how I feel there should be some protection of my rights to property use as long as I am doing nothing to harm my neighbor.

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