

Residential Farming

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family zones.

The new rules would allow such gardens by right in residential zones on plots up to 5,000 square feet.

"We're getting some push back that that's too small," Gisler said.

A major issue is whether growers should be allowed to sell the produce on-site in residential neighborhoods. Commission member Karen Fischer-Gray echoed those concerns.

"I'm not sure how I'd feel if someone was proposing to sell food across from my house," she said.

Community gardens allow vegetable growers to rent garden plots. Many are operated by the Portland Bureau of Parks and Recreation, but there are independent ventures such as the Urban League's Urban Harvest Garden.

"Different types of gardens are cropping up," planner Steven Cohen said.

Commission member Howard Shapiro said marketing produce from local garden plots have "a real con-

nection to 20 minute neighborhoods," an ideal whereby people can reach most basic needs and services with a 20 minute walk from home. "This is less about food and more about the social experience" of interacting with other gardeners, he said.

There are currently no code regulations that specifically address the selling of produce from community gardens. Also not addressed directly, are farmers markets. Currently institutions such as churches or schools must undergo a land use process to host a farmers market.

Gisler and other staff questioned whether the size of a market should be a factor in the regulations, and whether there should be a limit on what is sold. Currently, Gisler said, "Markets do a good job of policing themselves" to ensure that only the grower, or his or her agent can sell at the market.

Commission member Michelle Rudd asked, to what extent should food products such as bread or jam be sold, or whether the selling of crafts should be allowed. Commis-



PHOTOS BY LEE PERLMAN/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A backyard chicken coop is a growing source of food for more and more area residents.

sion chair Andre Baugh asked about curbside food stands.

Food buying clubs buy produce or other food products in bulk, then distribute them to members, resulting in cost savings and, often, better quality. The act of distributing the food has sometimes generated complaints from neighbors. In some cases, buying clubs have been forced out of existence. Once again, this activity is not directly addressed in city regulations.

Currently any combination of three pigmy goats, chickens, ducks or rabbits are allowed by right in residential zones. Any number of

livestock beyond three requires a conditional use permit, as does any number of horses, cows, turkeys, geese, burros or sheep.

To have a bee hive on a residential property, an owner must obtain written permission from every neighbor within 150 feet of the property. Advocates of urban agriculture have argued that these limits, especially the one on bees, are too restrictive. City officials say some growers are frustrated that one neighbor could have a veto power over what others think is a good idea. But on the other hand, if you're allergic to bee

stings, you may want some control over what happens next door to you.

Commission member Gary Oxman commented, "Over and over I heard, 'There are no regulations for this.' Is that bad? Are there problems? As a career bureaucrat I get nervous about locking in on the regulatory path."

Planner Jessica Richman replied that some of these farming activities have the potential to increase auto traffic in residential areas, often a source of complaints. "We want to, for once, get ahead of that load of complaints," she said.

Cully to Celebrate Fresh and Healthy Foods

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thing that I think community members are facing in the Cully neighborhood."

The event will give Slow Food an opportunity to work with community members and organizations to meet some of those challenges, said Peden.

Slow Food is in many ways the opposite of what we have more access to now in terms of fast food, she said, including highly-processed foods, food with a lot of additives, fat, and sodium, and food that doesn't resemble what it was like when it came out of the ground.

She said everything wrapped up in the processed food world often seems to be much more a part of our reality than fresh whole foods.

"Food is really important to our lives, and food should be respected for how it is grown and the people who grow should it be respected," she said. "The work and promotion of Slow Foods is a way to say, let's take a step back from where our food system is headed and envision a food system that does provide healthy food for people and support for workers and farmers on the ground."

According to Peden, Portland's Slow Food chapter has been an ac-

tive volunteer-run organization that is one of the oldest in the country. "The chapter has been really active for a long time," she said. "But the event in the Cully neighborhood is a really exciting move for us, because we want to become involved directly with communities in Portland."

Whether it's building more gardens, helping the ones that already exist, fundraising support or organizing around policy and institutional changes, we want to be directed by the neighborhood with their ideas for change, said Peden. "People who live in the neighborhood have a much better idea of

what needs to be changed, ideas for change and how it should be addressed."

Peden said their chapter has been working with a number of individuals and organizations, including Trinity Lutheran Church, elementary schools and markets within the Cully community in an attempt to hold an event truly catered towards what the neighborhood wants. "We have been trying to involve the community in planning," she said.

Children's activities and day care will also be part of the potluck on Saturday, and food will be provided. Peden said, however,

individuals are encouraged to bring food to share, and no contribution is too small.

"Slow Food is an organization with a mission and vision for a world where everyone has access to food that is good for them," said Peden. "We really wanted the potluck to be a way to connect with organizations and the neighborhood, and we thought the Cully Neighborhood would be a great place to start."

Everyone is invited to the free family potluck event, which will be held from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Trinity Lutheran Church, located at 5520 N.E. Killingsworth St.



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