

Dane County Beekeeper's Association

Jeanne Hansen, President

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Email to: jeanniealabeannie@yahoo.com

December 13, 2011

Dear Mr. Tucker:

Please accept on my behalf the Dane County Beekeepers Association's (DCBA) recommendations for changes to the Beekeeping Ordinance as drafted by the City of Madison. We appreciate the opportunity to have input into the regulatory specifics of this ordinance. We believe our recommendations will help with the following shared objectives (*not* in any particular order of importance):

1. Formally legalize beekeeping to support Madison's commitment to being a community that is supportive of urban agriculture.
2. Have that ordinance contain regulatory language intended to:
 - a. Support urban agriculture with sound and responsible beekeeping practices.
 - b. Ensure beekeeping is conducted as safely as reasonably feasible,
 - c. Minimizes beekeeping from becoming a nuisance or health hazard to neighbors or pedestrians using nearby public walkways or 'principal' buildings on abutting properties.
 - d. Does not place limitations on beekeeping practices unless those limitations are necessary to assure the objectives cited in b. and c. above are met.
 - e. Provides the city a regulatory foundation that is reasonably easy to understand and enforce while remaining sufficiently effective to manage complaints/disagreements that legitimately address issues of safety, nuisance and responsible beekeeping practices.
3. Does not put the city in a position of having to broker agreements between neighbors or that puts neighbors in the uncomfortable position of feeling coerced into an agreement.

As part of our submission and with the desire to assure the effectiveness of the ordinance in the best interests of the common objectives, we also recommend the following be accomplished if and when the ordinance is approved:

- A. That the City of Madison centrally maintain records regarding complaints and issues with urban beekeeping intended to address specifics in the following areas:
 1. The nature and basis for the concerns and complaints submitted regarding urban beekeeping in Madison,
 2. The findings of any investigation into the complaints/issues, and
 3. The proposed resolution the outcome of that resolution.

The DCBA would also like to offer our assistance to the city in the preparation of any educational materials that would assist prospective licensed beekeepers to be safe and responsible in their practice.

Finally, we also learned during our work on this ordinance that many honeybee nuisance issues in Madison (e.g., honeybee swarms and honeybees taking up residence in undesirable places) are sometimes referred to Dane County Animal Control. Among our members are many experts in dealing with such nuisance situations and we offer our services to assist the City of Madison and Dane County Animal Control when these happen. Currently we routinely respond to such requests when submitted directly to DCBA.

If you have any questions/issues regarding our recommendations, please contact the DCBA Beekeeping Ordinance Workgroup chairperson, Mike Gourlie. I believe you already have his contact information.

Again, our sincerest appreciation is extended for the opportunity to be part of this process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeanne Hansen". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the word "Sincerely,".

Jeanne Hansen, President
Dane County Beekeepers Association