



Legislation Text

File #: 17-332, **Version:** 1

TITLE:

Reconsideration and Direction to Town Staff Regarding Town Code Chapter 10 Animal Control Section 10-3 (e) (7)

PURPOSE: The purpose of this agenda item is for the Board of Aldermen to reconsider the allowance of the slaughter of animals within the Town limits.

DEPARTMENT: Town Manager, Planning, and Police

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INFORMATION: On February 28, 2017 the Board of Aldermen approved an ordinance that amended the Town Land Use Ordinance related to setback requirements for certain livestock facilities and approved certain amendments to Chapter 10 Animal Control related to livestock provisions, including the slaughter of animals on residential lots.

On March 21, 2017 the Board of Aldermen voted to reconsider the animal slaughter provisions (see pages 2-3 at <https://carrboro.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=M&ID=525885&GUID=3ED59738-F6DA-4E23-89A2-6AC484F88AD2>). Additional research was requested from staff to facilitate the reconsideration of animal slaughter including hygiene and health concerns, how other jurisdictions are regulating animal slaughter in residential areas, the availability of commercial butchering and rendering facilities for animal processing, and how the state government regulates slaughter. Information responding to this request is provided in the following paragraphs and as attachments or linked materials

Hygiene and Health Concerns

Under the Town Code and Land Use Ordinance, and under the Orange County Unified Animal Control Ordinance, the keeping of all animals requires the maintenance of conditions that recognize the welfare of these animals. In addition, Cruel Treatment is defined as “Every act, omission, or neglect whereby unjustifiable physical pain, suffering, or death is caused or permitted. Such acts or omissions shall include, but not be limited to, kicking, beating, hanging, submerging under water, suffocating, poisoning, setting on fire, and depriving of food, water, exercise and medical treatment, or otherwise subjecting the animal to conditions detrimental to its health or general welfare.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control: “Despite the many benefits of interacting with farm animals, people should be aware that farm animals can carry germs that make people sick.” The CDC cites the following:

Disease	Pathogen	Transmission
Anthrax	Bacteria	Inhaling or swallowing spores; contact with bodily fluids
Brucellosis	Bacteria	Contact with birthing tissues; drinking unpasteurized milk
Campylobacteriosis	Bacteria	Contaminated food, water, or direct contact with contaminated stool
Contagious ecthyma	Virus	Contact with sores or contaminated equipment
Cryptosporidiosis	Parasite	Contaminated food, water, or direct contact with contaminated stool
Escherichia coli	Bacteria	Food and environment
Influenza	Virus	Direct contact
Leptospirosis	Bacteria	Contaminated water and urine or other body fluids
Listeriosis	Bacteria	Contaminated food, soil, or water
MRSA	Bacteria	Direct contact
Q fever	Bacteria	Drinking contaminated milk; inhaling contaminated dust; contact with urine, feces, or birthing tissues
Rabies	Virus	Contact with saliva
Ringworm	Fungus	Direct contact
Salmonellosis	Bacteria	Contaminated eggs, meat, or water or direct contact with stool
Tuberculosis	Bacteria	Unpasteurized dairy products, undercooked meat, inhalation, open wounds
Vesicular stomatitis	Virus	Direct contact; insects

For more information, see *Attachment A* and <https://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/pets/farm-animals.html>. The CDC places emphasis on the risks of backyard poultry and salmonella incidents. As of October 19, 2017, this year saw the largest number of illnesses linked to contact with backyard poultry ever recorded by CDC: a total of 1,120 cases, in 48 states, with 249 hospitalizations, and one death. (<https://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/live-poultry-06-17/index.html>). Practices that can reduce the likelihood of disease transmission are identified and encouraged. (<https://www.cdc.gov/features/salmonellapoultry/index.html>).

How Other Jurisdictions Regulate Slaughter

At the Board’s February 28 meeting, the question came up as to whether or not animal slaughter was already permissible under existing Town Code. Planning staff understood that since the code was silent on the word “slaughter” that animal slaughter was already permissible. At that meeting, the language for the ordinance was changed to specifically allow it in the Animal Control Ordinance. That distinction was not clear to Police Department staff.

Conversations with the Carrboro Police Department subsequent to the February 28, 2017 Board meeting indicated that the Carrboro Police Department had historically operated under the understanding that animal

slaughter was illegal. Their understanding was based on then-existing Section 10-25, of the Carrboro Town Code which stated that no person may intentionally or maliciously subject any animal to cruel treatment, including but not limited to the following: overdrive, overload, wound, injure, torture, cruelly beat, needlessly mutilate or kill or deprive any animal of adequate food, water, shelter or veterinary care, or cause or procure the same. This language continues to be in effect in the Orange County Unified Animal Control Ordinance today.

Staff inquired through a North Carolina City and County Managers Listserve how other jurisdictions regulated animal slaughter. One jurisdiction, Troutman (population 2,674), reported allowing animal slaughter within the town limits. Many other local codes are silent on the issue. Several prohibit animal slaughter within town limits, including Harnett County, which specifies that “It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt or kill any animal within the territorial limits of the Towns” Angier (population 5,096), Coats (population 2,432), and Lillington, (population 3,581).

An article “Regulating backyard slaughter: Strategies and gaps in municipal livestock ordinances” (*Attachment B*) examines how 22 local governments throughout the U.S. approach this matter.

Local Slaughter and Processing Facilities

A directory of state-inspected North Carolina facilities that slaughter and process meat for farmers, by county, is provided at this link: <http://www.ncagr.gov/MeatPoultry/farmers.htm>. Thirty-one of the state’s 100 counties are listed. Facilities in the general vicinity of Carrboro are found in Orange, Alamance, and Chatham counties.

State Regulations

Inspection requirements for meat and poultry businesses are noted in *Attachment C*.

FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT: Dependent upon follow-up action requested.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Board of Aldermen review the information that has been provided and direct staff by a formal motion to either take no further action related to this policy issue or to prepare a draft ordinance that prohibits the slaughter of animals within the Town limits for consideration at a future meeting.