



Godfrey going to the birds? One man attempting to legalize chickens in the village

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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GODFREY - Hank Adams of Godfrey has petitioned the Village of Godfrey to allow chickens in areas zoned for residential use.

Currently, Godfrey's ordinances restrict chicken ownership to areas in the village zoned for agricultural use. Property owners must also manage at least five acres for chickens to be allowed. Adams currently has 2.5 acres, but said he lives in a heavily-wooded areas. He said friends and family members in Alton, Tower Grove, Missouri and Seattle are all allowed to cultivate chickens. He said he would like to see Godfrey operate with the same freedoms.

Godfrey Mayor Mike McCormick said he was aware of Adams's request Wednesday afternoon. While he was clear he did not want to influence the votes of any of the village trustees should the matter come to a vote, McCormick said he was not personally against Adams's request of the village.

"I have no personal problem with someone raising chickens with a large lot like that, especially if it doesn't bother the neighbors," he said. "It's not a concern about the chickens. It's the neighbors. In my personal opinion, I don't think it would be that bad."



Adams said the matter has come to the trustees' attention as recently as last year. He said it was previously denied because of three factors: yards are not deemed large enough, housing and cleanup issues and the board's former belief chickens should be in agricultural zones only. He does not agree with that ruling.

"I think it's a bit absurd that they haven't been legalized in Godfrey yet," Adams said over Facebook Messenger. "But even our friends in Tower Grove have them, and those houses are stacked right on top of one another! I think they should be legal as long as there are no roosters (to prevent noise) and the law states coops must be well-maintained. Chickens make great pets, fresh eggs and are awesome. They help with pests, and the whole experience can be very educational for children and even adults."

McCormick said that ordinance may be challenged and possibly put to a vote at the upcoming Nov. 7, 2017 meeting of the Godfrey Village Trustees. Previous to that meeting, Adams said he would like to collaborate with other local people in favor of chickens in the village to show how prevalent support for the issue is to the village. He is considering creating a public Facebook group, and encourages people who support his stance on the issue to email annaadams713@gmail.com.

"I think more and more people want locally-sourced food," he said. "And they want to know where it is coming from, and know their farmer."