



To: Mayor and Council

Agenda Item #: V. E.

From: Jordan Gilgenbach, Communications Coordinator

Action

Date: May 20, 2014

Discussion

Information

Subject: April "Speak Up, Edina" Report

Action Requested:

Receive report on April 2014 "Speak Up, Edina" discussion about beekeeping

Information / Background:

Since June 2012, the City of Edina has used the online engagement website, www.SpeakUpEdina.org, to collect ideas and opinions from residents. One of the City Council's six strategic priorities for 2014-2015 is Communication and Engagement: "To clearly understand community needs, expectations and opinions, the City will consistently seek the input of a broad range of stakeholders in meaningful and interactive communication." A goal of that is to host a monthly discussion on www.SpeakUp.Edina.org. In April 2014, the discussion topic centered on residential bee keeping. In this online discussion, the City posed the following questions:

- Do you support residential bee keeping? Why or why not?
- What types of limitations (number of hives, density, location of hives, etc.), if any, should be placed on those who chose to keep bees?
- Should a permit be required for residential bee keeping? Why or why not?
- How should the City handle complains and address potential health hazards, such as bee-related allergies?

The discussion was open for comments between March 31 and May 2. During that time, 72 comments were made. Additionally, 766 people visited the site 1,075 times, garnering 4,586 page views. Of all the visitors to the site during that period, 43 percent were from Edina (according to their internet provider).

The discussion was promoted through various means, including a press release, *Edition: Edina*, Facebook, Twitter and NextDoor posts and City Extra messages.

Attached are the comments on this topic.

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This Discussion channel is currently closed.

Discussion: [Bee Keeping](#)

The City wants to learn more about what people think about bee keeping. Currently, cities like [Minneapolis](#) allow residential bee keeping with a permit and some restrictions. Bees are a vital part of our food system, pollinating plants and flowers. However, the numbers of bees has declined dramatically due to the overuse of pesticides, diseases and parasites. Residential bee keeping could help re-stabilize bee populations.

4 Topics 72 Answers Closed 2014-05-02

[View Discussion](#)

Topic: [Support?](#)

Do you support residential bee keeping? Why or why not?

33 Responses

33 Responses



[Janey Westin](#) about 1 month ago

I definitely support bee keeping. We have a large veggie garden as well as a couple apple trees. This last season, we had apple blossoms, but only two flowers were pollinated. Two seasons ago, I noticed a number of bees that had died, bodies lying on window ledges and yard stones. Those were the ones

that I saw-- How many more did I not see? The city must do whatever it can to encourage more bees' survival, whether it is to allow bee keeping, stop using all chemicals in the parks and public spaces, and/or discourage residents from using lawn and yard chemicals. We do not use any on our property for the health of the insects, animals, pets, and people. I have noticed that other pollinating insects have somewhat filled the void of missing honeybees, but not completely. We NEED honeybees.

7 Supports

comment...

Reply to Janey Westin



[Elizabeth x](#) about 1 month ago

I want bees in Edina!! My vegetable garden, berries and fruit trees are not nearly as productive as they once were and I think it is because of a dearth of pollinators. I feel sorry for beekeepers in this community though - because so many people hire "lawn services" to stay toxic chemicals into our environment all summer long. Who knows if the bees will survive that - but they should definitely have a chance!!

6 Supports



[Leah Yoemans](#) about 1 month ago

Perhaps with more bees we will not need as many chemicals or we can educate residents to use different kinds of lawn care products to keep the same or better lawn care. They might even save money and time.

3 Supports

comment...

Reply to Leah Yoemans

comment...

Reply to Elizabeth x



[Leah Yoemans](#) about 1 month ago

I want bees in Edina! It will be good for the yeilds of our flowers, annuals, grasses, herbs, fruits/vegetables and, trees. Beyond pollination and a need for less chemicals, beekeeping also produces beeswax, propolis, and royal jelly. Even the pollin they bring back to the hive can be harvested because it's rich in protein and makes an outstanding natural supplement in our food. As a city, we can produce a ton of honey and sell it at the Centennial Lakes Farmer's Market as Edina City Honey, plus we will be part of a bigger picture, which is helping toSAVE THE BEES!!!

3 Supports

comment...

Reply to Leah Yoemans



[Dianne Latham](#) about 1 month ago

Edina residents should be allowed to keep honey bees. All cities on Edina's borders allow beekeeping. This includes, Hopkins, St. Louis Park, Eden Prairie, Bloomington and Minneapolis. Bees are important, not just to Edina, but to the entire planet. As bees decline, so will the productivity of many of the crops whose produce we enjoy today, one-third of which are pollinated by honey bees. The public can help the precarious position that honey bees and all pollinators are in today. Keeping honeybees raises public awareness of how to landscape to attract pollinators, as well as how to use integrated pest management to reduce their use of pesticides, which harm not only honeybees, but native pollinators as well. By creating an environment with minimal herbicides and pesticides, which is safe for honey bees, we are creating an environment that is safe for all residents, all pollinators and wildlife.

6 Supports

Reply to Dianne Latham



[Jim Schedin](#) about 1 month ago

I support residential beekeeping for the numerous environmental and health benefits that they provide, as well as educational opportunities that they could provide to our young learners.

3 Supports

Reply to Jim Schedin



[Joel Stegner](#) about 1 month ago

Yes. Bees are essential for pollinating flowers, vegetables and fruit trees, and their numbers are down locally and throughout the country. They also make honey and beeswax, both very useful projects, and can be an income source for those on fixed income. They also honor Edina's heritage of agriculture without having the need for large plots of land.

2 Supports

Reply to Joel Stegner



[Victoria Kent](#) about 1 month ago

Yes, I support residential bee keeping - have you noticed the absence of bees the past few years??

3 Supports

comment...

Reply to Victoria Kent



[Laurie Ford](#) about 1 month ago

Absolutely this should be allowed. Honeybees are vital to a healthy ecosystem. The bees (wild ones) are here anyway - there is no real danger in a well-kept bee yard.

3 Supports

comment...

Reply to Laurie Ford



[Fran Shea](#) about 1 month ago

Edina would be well served to allow beekeeping. Honeybees provide useful pollination of many plants and honey products are a healthy addition to our diet. However, it would be most helpful to communicate to Edina residents that if we introduce more bees to our gardens, we should reduce the lethal pesticides that kill bees and other pollinators. We all could use an education on the harm we are introducing to our environment by applying chemical pesticides to our lawns and plantings. The use of organic/biologically based pesticides would reduce the risks to humans and pollinators.

4 Supports

comment...

Reply to Fran Shea



[Arlene Forrest](#) about 1 month ago

I absolutely support beekeeping in Edina! Others here have mentioned the benefits to the environment and our food supply. It is extremely shortsighted for Edina to prohibit this activity and then proclaim to be a "green" community.

3 Supports

comment...

Reply to Arlene Forrest



[Wayne Yarmoska](#) about 1 month ago

As City residents for 25 years and beekeepers for over 15 years, my wife and I are strong supporters of keeping bees in Edina!

3 Supports

comment...

Reply to Wayne Yarmoska



[Lynnae Gudmundson](#) about 1 month ago

I 100% support beekeeping in Edina and would love to have an apiary in my yard. It would also be a welcome sight to see one in a neighbor's yard! Furthermore since bees have a 3 mile flying radius it only makes sense to allow beekeeping as the bees of Minneapolis and Eden Prairie are already flying here.

3 Supports

comment...

Reply to Lynnae Gudmundson



[Louann Waddick](#) about 1 month ago

I DO support allowing this very important insect to be housed/kept in Edina!

2 Supports

comment...

Reply to Louann Waddick



[Caitlin Williams](#) 30 days ago

I support beekeeping in Edina. Bees are an important and threatened part of our ecosystem, support food production, and are a fascinating teaching tool. We have great support and resources at the U of MN and the Arboretum, and bees can be kept safely in cities.

2 Supports

comment...

Reply to Caitlin Williams



[Mary Alden](#) 28 days ago

I definitely support beekeeping in Edina. Bees are critical for ecosystem. Because bees are having health issues with colony collapse and other problems, urban beekeeping is an excellent way to help bees. The University has well known experts who are more than happy to help urban beekeepers

2 Supports

comment...

Reply to Mary Alden



Chris Bremer 28 days ago

Yes, I support beekeeping in Edina. We need more bees to support our environment and the overall bee population.

2 Supports

comment...

Reply to Chris Bremer



Katherine Aby 27 days ago

I took a class at the U of M last fall learning how to become a beekeeper. How very disappointed I was to be referred to Edina's live animal staff person who told me I could not legally keep bees. Fooy, I have a typical Edina lot and grow 25 different fruit trees for fruit and for beauty. I know that my fruit yield would increase were I able to keep bees. I know that the children in Morningside would love to learn about beekeeping. Bees are here now and beekeeping can only improve our lives from the standpoint of pollination, leisure activity, learning and beauty.

2 Supports

comment...

Reply to Katherine Aby



Tom Laforce 24 days ago

My plum trees could use more pollinators. I'm touchy about stings, but it has always been wasps and hornets that have gotten me. Bring on the bees.

2 Supports

comment...

Reply to Tom Laforce



Jennifer Livingston 22 days ago

Bee Keeping should absolutely be allowed and encouraged in Edina. We depend on bees for much of our food - we need to provide healthy homes for these important workers! I would also encourage residents to plant bee friendly plants which are neonicotinoid-free, a pesticide currently thought to be causing the loss of bee populations. Read more here: <http://www.mprnews.org/story/2014/04/17/bee-safe-plants>. Thanks for this great discussion.

3 Supports

comment...

Reply to Jennifer Livingston



[Pontus de Verdier](#) 21 days ago

I support allowing bee keeping. I want my future grandkids to eat honey and I want my apple trees to be pollinated. I can not see any reason why it would not be allowed.

2 Supports

comment...

Reply to Pontus de Verdier



[Louise Segreto](#) 21 days ago

I am very much in support of allowing bee keeping in Edina. Just completed a course on Beekeeping in Northern Climates-U of M's Marla Spivak and anxious to be involved with the set-up of some initial hives in our City once this change in ordinance passes.

2 Supports

comment...

Reply to Louise Segreto



[Jeff Hill](#) 21 days ago

Yes, I support beekeeping in Edina.

2 Supports

comment...

Reply to Jeff Hill



[Dave Hruby](#) 21 days ago

More bees please.

2 Supports

comment...

Reply to Dave Hruby



[Matt Glatzel](#) 20 days ago

Yes, absolutely. I 100% support beekeeping in Edina.

2 Supports

comment...

Reply to Matt Glatzel



[Katherine Stelberg Bass](#) 20 days ago

Yes, definitely. I don't have the time or expertise to keep them myself, but we have a community full of smart people with the time and interest to do so and that will benefit the rest of us.

2 Supports

comment...

Reply to Katherine Stelberg Bass



[Mary Rogers](#) 20 days ago

Yes. I am concerned about the declining population of bees and think it would be great if the City of Edina encouraged beekeeping and also looked at any weed or pest control measures that might be detrimental to bees.

3 Supports

comment...

Reply to Mary Rogers



[Ralph Zickert](#) 19 days ago

Yes, as a 20+ year resident of Edina I fully support beekeeping in Edina. Beekeeping is a hobby that gives back to the Keeper and the Community.

2 Supports

comment...

Reply to Ralph Zickert



[Elizabeth Genovese](#) 19 days ago

Yes to bee keeping in Edina. Yes to educating residents on the effect the use of pesticides, herbicides and esp . neonicotinoids have on the pollinators: honey bees, bumble bees, mason bees, leaf cutter bees etc.

1 Support

comment...

Reply to Elizabeth Genovese



[Vicki Brunsvold](#) at April 30, 2014 at 5:58pm CDT

Yes to beekeeping in Edina!

0 Supports

comment...

Reply to Vicki Brunsvold



[Don Henrich](#) at May 01, 2014 at 9:11am CDT

I support residential beekeeping in Edina.

0 Supports

comment...

Reply to Don Henrich



[Mark Moore](#) at May 01, 2014 at 9:30am CDT

I support bee keeping.

1 Support

comment...

Reply to Mark Moore



[Leslie Nordgren](#) at May 01, 2014 at 4:23pm CDT

I support beekeeping!!!!

0 Supports

comment...

Reply to Leslie Nordgren

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Discussion: Bee Keeping

The City wants to learn more about what people think about bee keeping. Currently, cities like [Minneapolis allow residential bee keeping](#) with a permit and some restrictions. Bees are a vital part of our food system, pollinating plants and flowers. However, the numbers of bees has declined dramatically due to the overuse of pesticides, diseases and parasites. Residential bee keeping could help re-stabilize bee populations.

4 Topics 72 Answers Closed 2014-05-02

[View Discussion](#)

Topic: [Limitations](#)

What types of limitations (numbers of hives, density, location of hives, etc.), if any, should be placed on those who chose to keep bees?

11 Responses

11 Responses



[Janey Westin](#) about 1 month ago

I do not know enough of the science about beekeeping to state what would be reasonable limits on the number of hives in accordance to the size of a homeowner's lot. However, I think it is logical to require they be placed a minimum distance away from property lines, in consideration of neighbors, and

also based on good science. Allowed placement should be done on a case by case basis.

1 Support

Reply to Janey Westin



[Elizabeth x](#) about 1 month ago

Probably no more than 8 hives on a "normal" sized Edina yard. You'd be surprised how small of a footprint a simple 2 X 4 arrangement of hives can be. Obviously, there is an expectation that bees will not be pressed up against property lines. But even 20' away, most people would not even notice bee hives in the area as bees fly UP out of hives not across.

0 Supports

Reply to Elizabeth x



[Leah Yoemans](#) about 1 month ago

Commercial hives have problems with Varroa Mites, which some think is causing 50% decline in bee population a year. However, backyard beekeepers usually don't have this problem if stick to holistic beekeeping practices. I am not sure how to set limits on how many hives in a backyard apiary. But you should start with 2 or more in case the queen doesn't do well or the weather isn't right. The pallets only need to be a foot apart and you can put 4 hives on a pallet. Bees fly 2-3 miles (8,000-12,000 acres) to gather nectar, so they will help more than just your own garden/yard. You can put hives on roofs of apartments or businesses, or in yards, big or small. I would say 2-12 hive boxes depending on lot size???

0 Supports

Reply to Leah Yoemans



[Dianne Latham](#) about 1 month ago

The Local Food Task Force (LFTF) of the Energy and Environment Commission (EEC) is making a report at the April 10 EEC meeting (7:00 pm) in the Community Room at City Hall at which time the LFTF is proposing amendments to the current city ordinances to allow beekeeping and the keeping of chickens (maximum of 4 hens). To review the proposed ordinance, see the April 10 EEC packet pp 18 – 46, a copy of which can be obtained from Rebecca Foster at RFoster@EdinaMN.gov. The beekeeping ordinance limitations are based upon those recommended of the Minnesota Hobby Beekeeper Association (www.MNBeeKeepers.com), the University of Minnesota Bee Lab (<http://beelab.umn.edu>) and the Eden Prairie Beekeeping ordinance, which was approved in January 2014. This includes hive density based on the size of the property, hive setback of 10 ft from property lines, and flyway barriers for hives positioned 10 – 25 ft from property lines. The proposed ordinance also includes various additional limitations on those who keep bees such as the requirement to provide them with water, etc.

4 Supports



[Katherine Stelberg Bass](#) 20 days ago

Yay chickens!!

1 Support

comment...

Reply to Katherine Stelberg Bass



[Wayne Yarmoska](#) about 1 month ago

As past members of the MN Hobby Beekeepers Association, we have full faith in their recommendations. Eden Prairie's ordinance seems reasonable, and compliance should not be difficult for beekeepers to follow. Akin to pet owners, beekeepers want what is best for the health of their hives and their neighbors.

3 Supports

comment...

Reply to Wayne Yarmoska

comment...

Reply to Dianne Latham



[Jim Schedin](#) about 1 month ago

Limitations should be based upon lot size, starting with two hives for the smallest lots and increasing in number up to a maximum limit for those properties that are adjacent to neighboring undeveloped lands. Because honeybees can travel several miles, placing them farther away from a property line makes little difference, so the hives should meet the same setback requirements as any other accessory structure.

3 Supports

comment...

Reply to Jim Schedin



[Joel Stegner](#) about 1 month ago

The advice above is sound. Of course, the U.S. is having trouble with more aggressive varieties of bees that have migrated north. It would be a problem if those bees were established here and we able to withstand our climate.

0 Supports

comment...

Reply to Joel Stegner



Laurie Ford about 1 month ago

I've had bees at our farm (not in Edina) for many years, and they only become defensive if you invade their hive space. Setbacks are more important than worrying about the specific number of bees. (They can tolerate a certain amount of density.) A 20' setback from property lines would be more than enough to prevent problems.

0 Supports

comment...

Reply to Laurie Ford



Fran Shea about 1 month ago

I would defer to recommendations by the U of M Bee Lab and Hobby Beekeepers Asso.

3 Supports

comment...

Reply to Fran Shea



Louise Segreto 21 days ago

I support the proposed ordinance amendment with respect to bee keeping that LFTC and EEC has drafted. However, I do not have a strong opinion about hen keeping. Would hate to lose the change in ordinance in favor of bee keeping, by bogging down with hen keeping issues by coupling the 2 together.

0 Supports

comment...

Reply to Louise Segreto

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Discussion: [Bee Keeping](#)

The City wants to learn more about what people think about bee keeping. Currently, cities like [Minneapolis allow residential bee keeping](#) with a permit and some restrictions. Bees are a vital part of our food system, pollinating plants and flowers. However, the numbers of bees has declined dramatically due to the overuse of pesticides, diseases and parasites. Residential bee keeping could help re-stabilize bee populations.

4 Topics 72 Answers Closed 2014-05-02

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Topic: [Permitting](#)

Should a permit be required for residential bee keeping? Why or why not?

13 Responses

13 Responses



[Janey Westfin](#) about 1 month ago

Yes. Dog owners are required to have licenses. Beekeepers should too, with annual renewal and inspection, since property and neighborhood circumstances can change.

0 Supports

comment...

Reply to Janey Westin



[Elizabeth x](#) about 1 month ago

I would expect bees to be exactly like dogs and cats. The city should know if there is a beekeeper in the area, I guess. The question is how much money is the city planning on making off of beekeepers? Since they are actually doing the community a service, I would hope the "permit" fees would be negligible.

0 Supports

comment...

Reply to Elizabeth x



[Leah Yoemans](#) about 1 month ago

I would expect to have license for beekeeping. It would be responsible and good for the city. Besides the city, there are some wonderful local businesses that local keepers could make connections with to buy supplies, attend classes, find gardening help, and sell their honey through if needed.

1 Support

comment...

Reply to Leah Yoemans



[Dianne Latham](#) about 1 month ago

Hopkins and St. Louis Park have no registration, licensing or permitting requirements. A simple application like Eden Prairie requires is all that should be necessary given that Edina is completely surrounded by cities allowing honey beekeeping. Honey bees forage in an area of approximately two square miles such that Edina already has honeybees in the city. An application renewal should not be necessary so as to reduce the staff time required. An application should only be subsequently revoked if a hive becomes a nuisance due to improper maintenance, etc. A resident who would like to keep bees should not need a permit or license requiring a neighbor's signature, which could be denied by the neighbor for no more reason other than for spite. After receiving the application, the City should notify all neighbors within 200' ft of the applicant's lot. The City then should wait a minimum of two weeks before approving/denying the application. During that time, neighbors are free to comment or voice concerns. After the application is approved, anyone in the city should have the right to file a written appeal (within 30 days of the approval) to the City Manager or designee, who must then conduct a hearing with the applicant and the person appealing. After hearing both sides, the City Manager, or designee renders a decision, which cannot be challenged. The Local Food Task Force (LFTF) of the Energy and Environment Commission (EEC) is making a report at the April 10 EEC meeting (7:00 pm) in the Community Room at City Hall at which time the LFTF is proposing amendments to the current city ordinances to allow beekeeping with an application requirement as described above. To review the proposed ordinance and its recommended application process, see the April 10 EEC packet pp 18 – 46, a copy of which can be obtained from Rebecca Foster at RFoster@EdinaMN.gov. The application process is based upon that of the Eden Prairie Beekeeping ordinance, which was approved in January 2014.

4 Supports

comment...

Reply to Dianne Latham



[Jim Schedin](#) about 1 month ago

Nationwide, most cities that allow beekeeping are beginning to loosen their beekeeping requirements after encountering very few (if any) problems. Permitting makes little sense - a simple (and no cost) registration will suffice. The registration would serve to simply make the City aware of where the beekeeping activities are being conducted. This is necessary so that if Police Officers are responding to a call, they will know to be careful when walking through the backyard of a beekeeper (they wouldn't want to bump a hive or stand in front of the fly zone!).

4 Supports

comment...

Reply to Jim Schedin



[Joel Stegner](#) about 1 month ago

This should be cost neutral to the city. The City should certainly know where bees are kept and if the bee keeper does not notify the city or is negligent, they should pay a fine to cover city costs.

2 Supports



[Wayne Yarmoska](#) about 1 month ago

We agree with Joel. All should be kept cost neutral.

0 Supports

comment...

Reply to Wayne Yarmoska

comment...

Reply to Joel Stegner



[Arlene Forrest](#) about 1 month ago

I agree that registration is appropriate so the city is informed of the location of hives, with the requirement to renew the registration every one or two years. A minimal initial fee may help offset administrative costs, but there should not be a significant or recurring license or registration fee. "License" infers not only informing the governing body of an activity, but also the demonstration of expertise; the city has no way of evaluating beekeeping practice.

2 Supports

comment...

Reply to Arlene Forrest



[Wayne Yarmoska](#) about 1 month ago

Perhaps a map could be created and posted on the City's website for hive locations. Additionally, beekeepers should know where the City is using pesticides. Beekeepers can't do much about neighbor's use of pesticides, but knowledge of City use is important to the health of hives. Starting out, hive boxes are around \$500 and a nuc of bees is about \$100, not an easy investment. Hopefully any licensing fees will not overly burden a beekeepers start up costs.

2 Supports

comment...

Reply to Wayne Yarmoska



[Mary Alden](#) 28 days ago

I support beekeeping in Edina and believe that a license that could be easily renewed would be the best way to keep track of beekeeping in Edina

0 Supports

comment...

Reply to Mary Alden



[katherine aby](#) 27 days ago

I wonder what the benefit would be for the city to know where bees are being kept? How would that information be used? Right now I know of two families that are beekeeping without going through any rigmarole. Not to sound too libertarian, but why does our local government need to get involved with this? What problems have other cities had with beekeeping? Requiring a homeowner to have taken certain courses seems a bit too tightfisted. What about people who are self-taught learners? I have taken a class and learned a lot, but that is not everyone's learning style to be sure.

1 Support

comment...

Reply to katherine aby



[Louise Segreto](#) 21 days ago

I support the least restrictive approach to allowing bee keeping. The filing of an application to keep bees along with notice and procedural safeguards as is being proposed by the LFTC and EEC seems to make a lot of sense. Requiring neighbor signatures is over the top chilling and not warranted.

2 Supports

comment...

Reply to Louise Segreto



Ralph Zickert 19 days ago

I support an annual registration of beekeeping but without a fee and as a 'notice only' during an initial 5 year period to determine if continued registration or future fees are warranted. From the City's website and previous council minutes, it appears that Edina ordinances requiring the registration and associated fees for dogs is based on a) the desire to ensure the dog has a current rabies vaccination and b) to pay for the boarding of unclaimed stray dogs that have been impounded. Neither of these risks / costs are involved with allowing beekeeping. Cats are not currently required to be registered. Therefore I would hope that there would be no fee associated with keeping bees.

0 Supports

comment...

Reply to Ralph Zickert

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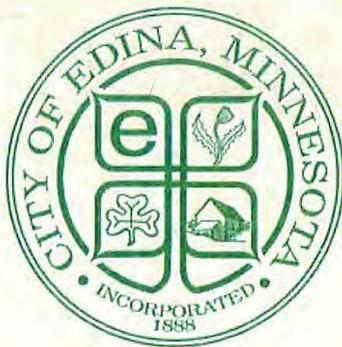
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4 Topics 72 Answers Closed 2014-05-02

[View Discussion](#)

Topic: [Hazards](#)

How should the City handle complains and address potential health hazards, such as bee-related allergies?

15 Responses

15 Responses



[Janey Westin](#) about 1 month ago

Before being granted an annual beekeeping permit, keepers should be required to inform, in writing, all neighboring property owners that they want to have bees. All neighbors would then need to be okay with it before getting a permit. (Pun intended.) Complaints could be handled by Officer Hunter, our animal

control officer. He has done a great job with coyote informational talks. He can learn all about honeybees and do the same type of free informational talks at city hall.

0 Supports



[Jim Schedin](#) about 1 month ago

Janey - you offer a valid comment about the neighboring property owners giving their consent, however, I believe that in Edina (because of the type of city that we govern under), we cannot by law require the signature of neighbors. I believe that a larger city such as Minneapolis could do this, but if the City of Edina chooses to have their attorney look into this further, I believe that is what they will find.

1 Support

comment...

Reply to Jim Schedin

comment...

Reply to Janey Westin



[Elizabeth x](#) about 1 month ago

Let's see: how does the city handle dog and cat related allergies? Do people who let their cats "roam" have to inform their neighbors and get their informed consent in case someone in their family has an allergy to cats? Bees are a natural, normal life form that live in the same environment we share with them. What if people began keeping chickadees? Would there be an expectation that everyone would need to agree to have song birds in their neighborhood? What if someone was allergic to feathers? Could they stop it - even though there are naturally occurring birds in their environment all the time? This question speaks to the ignorance and fear of "Scary Killer Bees." There is someone in Edina who is allergic to everything. How far is the city expected to create a protective cocoon for each particular citizen? There is a potential health hazard for everything: Walking to school, crossing the parking lot of Byerlys, swimming at the pool, dogs playing at a park, using the swings on a playground. Would all of those things be off limit since there is a danger of someone somewhere getting hurt? Sorry. I'm done. I believe I have more than made my point.....

6 Supports

comment...

Reply to Elizabeth x



[Leah Yoemans](#) about 1 month ago

Most people that are allergic to bee stings are allergic to yellowjacket stings and not honey bees! Most people that know they have allergies to bees carry epi pens or see an allergist about venom immunotherapy already. Honey bees do not attack people, even when covered in apple juice near where they gather nectar (you know this if you've ever visited an apple orchard). They might come near you, but if you slowly walk away, the bee moves on.

2 Supports



[Laurie Ford](#) about 1 month ago

Sadly, most people can't tell the difference between a honeybee and a wasp. Honeybees will sting if you disturb their hive, which is why setbacks make sense. Signage might also make sense ("Bees ahead" on the yard fence, for example). But there will always be people who insist it was a bee, because they don't know any better.

2 Supports

Reply to Laurie Ford

Reply to Leah Yoemans



[Dianne Latham](#) about 1 month ago

Honeybees are bred for their gentle nature and rarely sting. If a resident has been stung by a bee it is more likely a Yellow Jacket. If a resident appeals the approval of a beekeeping application, however, a note from an emergency room physician stating that you or a family member have suffered past anaphylaxis, should be sufficient to disapprove the application. Simply stating "I'm allergic to bee stings" should not be persuasive enough to cause a denial. Beekeepers routinely keep epi pens in case someone should suffer anaphylaxis. Any complaints should be handled by the Police Department's designee, which typically would be the Animal Control Officer (ACO). The Local Food Task Force (LFTF) of the Energy and Environment Commission (EEC) is making a report at the April 10 EEC meeting (7:00 pm) in the Community Room at City Hall at which time the LFTF is proposing amendments to the current city ordinances to allow beekeeping including that process described above. To review the proposed ordinance and its accompanying application process, see the April 10 EEC packet pp 18 – 46, a copy of which can be obtained from Rebecca Foster at RFoster@EdinaMN.gov. The Proposed Edina application process is based upon that of the Eden Prairie Beekeeping ordinance, which was approved in January 2014.

3 Supports



[Lisa Nelson](#) about 1 month ago

If the fact is that honeybees (vs. wasps and hornets) are generally not a stinging risk (beyond the everyday risks we all take per Elizabeth x above), it doesn't make sense to allow a neighbor to veto the beekeeping application even with a note from a doctor.

1 Support

Reply to Lisa Nelson

Reply to Dianne Latham



[Jim Schedin](#) about 1 month ago

There are very few hazards associated with honey beekeeping, and the majority of the people who fear honeybees do so out of ignorance. My son has life-threatening allergies for which he must carry an EpiPen wherever he goes, but I would have no problem with my neighbor raising honeybees, simply because I have chosen to EDUCATE myself about honeybees and know that my previous prejudices against honeybees turned out to be unfounded. Honeybees are a different type of stinging insect than wasps or hornets. They are flower feeders with no interest in human food or drink. The only food they desire is nectar (their carbohydrates) and pollen (their protein). They have been bred for hundreds of years to be docile/non-aggressive. Honeybees typically do not sting unless their hive is threatened (you walk up to it and do something to it) or you threaten the individual bee (swat it, step on it, or squish it). That being said, there are people who have been stung (by whatever insect) who have suffered anaphylaxis and had to go to the hospital. For these people, the thought of having tens of thousands of bees next door can cause a serious emotional or psychological fear that cannot and should not be dismissed. In these instances, the City Manager (or designee) would have to make the tough choice of allowing the registration or not.

5 Supports

Reply to Jim Schedin



[Jim Schedin](#) about 1 month ago

I should also add that an annual inspection performed by an ACO would be all that is needed to ensure that the requirements were being met. The ordinance would have to have built-in requirements, which, if the beekeeper was found in violation of, would result in the beekeepers registration being revoked or suspended until the violation was corrected. Failure to correct would result in the city requiring the beekeeper to cease operations, or potentially taking further legal actions against the beekeeper.

0 Supports

Reply to Jim Schedin



[Joel Stegner](#) about 1 month ago

Expecting the beekeeper available for stings on his or her property is a reasonable precaution, possibility with signage communicating the hazard.

0 Supports

Reply to Joel Stegner



[Arlene Forrest](#) about 1 month ago

If this initiative goes forward, it will be important for the participating beekeepers to contribute to educating the community about the activity. People will

continue to confuse honeybees with the yellow jacket hornets that are invading their picnic. Yes, honeybees (like bumblebees) can sting if provoked and occasionally hives will swarm. But there is less potential for nuisance to neighbors or the general public than many other hobbies or public activity. For example, we allow dog ownership. Dogs and other pets provide a healthy contribution to people's lives. But dogs can get loose, they can bite, carry disease and leave stinky surprises. Some people are extremely fearful of dogs. Basic regulations require us to care for our pets properly and safely and not allow them to inappropriately impose on others. Regulations can be imposed when and if required, but it's unproductive and unfair to react to unrealistic anticipated hazards that are not based in fact.

3 Supports

Reply to Arlene Forrest



[Louann Waddick](#) about 1 month ago

After "gathering" information on honey bees, I believe that bee keeping in Edina is a good idea and not hazardous to the community. Maybe it is a good idea to require keepers to have an epipen on site along with the other requirements.

1 Support



[Lisa Nelson](#) about 1 month ago

An epipen requires a prescription. I don't think you can expect a homeowner to offer a prescription epipen to a casual visitor to their property, unless you are going to insure that the homeowner isn't held liable for any medical problems arising from use of the epipen.

0 Supports

Reply to Lisa Nelson

Reply to Louann Waddick



[Mary Alden](#) 26 days ago

I have heard some people express concerns about the possibility of bees swarming. Urban beekeepers are trained in how to divide hives to prevent swarming. If there should be a swarm, it will swarm to a tree. The U of M Bee Squad and the Hobby Beekeepers groups have people on call who will come and retrieve the swarm.

1 Support

Reply to Mary Alden



[Louise Segreto](#) 21 days ago

Municipalities that have allowed honeybees will tell you that complaints associated with urban bee keepers are far and few between. People who are involved with the keeping of hives are largely very educated and careful about the care of their hives. Science supports that honey bees are not aggressive. But, convincing a person who has been stung by a wasp of this is very difficult. Honestly, most bug and insect bites result in some skin irritation and allergic reaction, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the great outdoors.

The proposal is that a permit be required for the keeping of bees in Edina. If complaints are received by the City which are substantiated by an on-site visit by a City rep, the permit could be revoked.

If someone has a known fatal allergy to bee stings, wouldn't they carry an epipen or have one at hand in emergencies?

1 Support

comment...

Reply to Louise Segreto

Sign Up

[Connect](#)

email address...

Sign Up

Participants



[Residential Beekeeping?](#)22 Apr

[City Staff](#) from City of Edina

On this Earth Day, join our online discussion and let us know what you think about residential beekeeping. <http://bit.ly/1f0DHF9>

Shared with all neighborhoods in [General](#)

[REPLY 10](#)

Judith, Jim, Krista and [2 others](#) thanked you

[Brian S. from Arden Park](#)22 Apr

Awesome idea. Pollinate, pollinate, pollinate.

[Thank Remove](#)

Krista thanked [Brian](#)

[Bright D. from Country Club](#)22 Apr

Yes. We need more of them

[Thank Remove](#)

[Gary C. from The Heights](#)22 Apr

I would love for Edina residents to be given the opportunity to do this, if they have a large enough yard to place hives where they will not be disturbed by kids and pets. If it is allowed, you might require the signing of an agreement by all adjoining neighbors. Without that provision, I envision some serious unneighborly disputes.

[Thank Remove](#)

[Phyllis N. from Brookview Heights](#)22 Apr

I have a bee allergy.
This would not please me at all.

[Thank Remove](#)

[Shelly S. from Parkwood Knolls](#)22 Apr

It is fine with me, I love honey! We also need native bees and insects. Let's include native plantings in our landscapes to increase the diversity of life on our planet. I recommend the book Bringing Nature Home by Douglas Tallamy. Happy Earth Day everyone!

[Thank Remove](#)

[Jim S.](#) from [Pamela Park](#)22 Apr

As a parent of a child with life threatening allergies, I fully support the EEC's initiative to allow residential beekeeping in Edina, simply because honeybees (unlike other stinging insects like wasps and hornets) are bred to be docile/non-aggressive. Our society simply needs more pollinators, and honeybees can fill that void until we can help our native pollinators rebound.

[Thank Remove](#)

Matthew, Judith, Jenna thanked [Jim](#)

[Patty and Wally O.](#) from [The Heights](#)22 Apr

More pollinators for sure!

[Thank Remove](#)

Judith thanked [Patty and Wally](#)

[Dave B.](#) from [Birchcrest](#)22 Apr

No, it's not a good idea. Bees and kids don't mix. Beekeeping was fine in Edina when it was a farm community but with the density of population we have now, it's not practical and presents a danger to neighbors.

[Thank Remove](#)

[Danette H.](#) from [Grandview](#)24 Apr

When you choose a nursery and plants for your yards and gardens you should avoid nurseries whose plants use the insecticide Neonicotinoids. That is what is killing bees. It gets in the pollen, etc. Be sure to ask your nursery and be selective. We need to save the bees!

[Thank Remove](#)

Bob thanked [Danette](#)

[Shannon M.](#) from [The Heights](#)9 May

I have a severe, life threatening bee allergy (anaphylactic shock) and do not want residential bee keeping in Edina. I would no longer be able to be outside in my yard if a neighbor had bee keeping.

[Thank Remove](#)