**ACTION REQUEST FORM**

**DATE:** March 25, 2015  
**TO:** The Honorable Mayor and City Council  
**FROM:** A. Paul Norby, Director of Planning and Development Services

**COUNCIL ACTION REQUEST:**

Request for Public Hearing on a UDO Text Amendment proposed by City-County Planning and Development Services staff

**SUMMARY OF INFORMATION:**

A UDO Text Amendment proposed by City-County Planning and Development Services staff to amend Chapters A and B of the *Unified Development Ordinances* to create regulations for urban agriculture (UDO-257).

**PLANNING BOARD ACTION:**

**MOTION ON PETITION:** APPROVAL  
**FOR:** UNANIMOUS  
**AGAINST:** NONE  
**SITE PLAN ACTION:** NOT REQUIRED
REQUEST

This text amendment is proposed by Planning and Development Services staff to amend chapters A and B of the *Unified Development Ordinances* (UDO) to create regulations for urban agriculture in Winston-Salem.

BACKGROUND

In recent years, there has been increased interest in allowing urban agriculture in the City of Winston-Salem. This need has been identified by members of the Forsyth Community Local Foods Consortium as well as others interested in being able to grow food in urban and suburban areas. The need for urban agriculture was also highlighted in *Legacy 2030*. *Legacy* recommends encouraging healthy food production in urban as well as rural areas. It also calls for removing barriers to using urban land and buildings for various forms of urban agriculture production.

Currently, agriculture as a stand-alone use (the use “Agricultural Production, Crop”) is only allowed in Winston-Salem in large-lot residential zoning districts (YR, AG, RS-40, RS-30, RS-20 and RS-15), and only with Board of Adjustment (BOA) approval. However, very few lots in Winston-Salem have large-lot zoning (most are zoned RS-9 or RS-12). A minimum of three acres in agricultural production is also required for stand-alone agriculture (smaller, stand-alone agriculture is not currently allowed at all). As a result, stand-alone agriculture is effectively prohibited from most residential areas of the City.

Smaller-scale agriculture can only be accommodated as an accessory use currently. Agriculture is considered an accessory use if it is in association with a principal residence, institution or business on the same zoning lot.

ANALYSIS

In addition to the currently allowed small accessory gardens (which would continue to be allowed as they currently are) and larger, commercially-oriented agricultural crop production uses, the proposed ordinance will also allow the smaller, stand-alone agricultural uses which are currently prohibited in neighborhoods. The potential impacts of agriculture in residential areas should be minimized through the proposed ordinance standards.

The proposed ordinance deletes the use “Agricultural Production, Crop” and replaces it with a new use “Urban Agriculture”. The ordinance defines urban agriculture as “the growing, processing, and distribution of food and other agricultural products through plant cultivation. It may include plant cultivation and the growing of non-food crops such as herbs and ornamentals. The use may include accessory structures and buildings used for agriculture-related storage or field packing”.

STAFF REPORT

DOCKET # UDO-257
STAFF: Kirk Ericson
The amendment proposes allowing Urban Agriculture in all single family and multifamily zoning districts through the BOA special use permit process (Urban Agriculture in the AG district would be allowed with a staff-issued zoning permit). Holding a public hearing where citizens could speak regarding the proposed agricultural use and meeting findings of fact would be required as part of the BOA review process. Agricultural cultivation is also proposed to be set back at least 5’ from adjoining property. Unlike the current “Agricultural Production, Crop” use, no minimum acreage requirements are proposed. This will allow agriculture to be located within neighborhoods on smaller lots. While no formalized parking requirements are proposed by the ordinance, parking areas would be required on a case-by-case basis as determined through the BOA review process.

In addition to residential districts, the ordinance would also allow outdoor urban agriculture with a zoning permit issued by staff in several non-residential zoning districts (LB, PB, HB, GB, LI, GI, IP, C, and MU-S). One parking space per 20,000 square feet of lot area would be required for all nonresidential urban agriculture operations. Additionally, indoor agricultural uses such as hydroponics (growing plants in water) and food processing would be allowed in “Manufacturing A” and “Manufacturing B” uses, which are allowed in industrial zoning districts and certain commercial districts which permit light manufacturing (GB, CPO, E, MU-S).

Staff is proposing a unique Special Use Permit review fee for urban agriculture requiring a SUP from the Board of Adjustment. The current permit fee for all uses requiring BOA review is $100. However, during the ordinance development process, several citizens were concerned that a fee that high may unfairly burden low-income individuals and limit their access to urban agriculture. To address this concern, staff is recommending a BOA permit fee of $25 for review of urban agriculture.

No changes are proposed to existing City Code provisions for the keeping of chickens and other animals, which were recently modified by City Council in response to increased interest in keeping backyard livestock (backyard chickens are allowed with a $25 zoning permit from staff).

Overall, staff believes the proposed ordinance will help facilitate urban agriculture as desired by citizens and supported in Legacy 2030, while protecting the residential character of urban and suburban neighborhoods, and providing concerned citizens an opportunity to voice their opinions on proposed urban agriculture sites.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**APPROVAL**
Kirk Ericson presented the staff report.

PUBLIC HEARING

FOR:

Ann Bliss, Forsyth Community Food Consortium, 105 Corbridge Lane, Winston-Salem, NC 27106
- The proposed ordinance speaks to the Board’s commitment to strengthening our local food system.
- I urge your support.

Martha Hartley, 600 S. Main Street, Winston-Salem, NC 27101
- Urban farming was begun in our community 250 years ago when Salem was first established.
- Residential lots were approximately 1/3 acre and all had large gardens which were considered essential. There were also large outlying parcels of land for cultivation.
- Lots which were not yet needed for building were used for gardens and orchards rather than left to be overgrown with weeds and potentially attract rats and snakes.
- There is certainly deep precedent for urban farming in our community and this ordinance can only bring good healthy opportunities for our citizens.

Jane Milner, 2321 Maplewood Avenue, Winston-Salem, NC 27103
- I’m concerned with the overall health of our population which continues to deteriorate.
- I’m in favor of providing more opportunities in our neighborhoods and particularly in the food deserts in our community.
- Approving this text amendment will offer the opportunity for better health.

Mark Jensen, 5670 Lauren Acres Court, Winston-Salem, NC 27103
- These changes will spur innovation in the agricultural and food sectors in both the City and the County.
- The small businesses and nonprofit enterprises will cultivate not only vegetables, but innovation, create jobs and marketable job skills, multiply social capital in our neighborhoods and contribute to better public health.
Alison Duncan, 1450 Fairchild Road, Winston-Salem, NC  27105
- I am the County Community Gardening Coordinator and work for Cooperative Extension.
- To date there are over 100 active community gardens within the City limits. Their benefits extend well beyond their physical boundaries.
- These gardens increase our food access.
- They foster relationships between diverse groups of people.
- Their presence correlates with crime reduction, increased property value, increased civic engagement, and improved community image.
- Adopting this ordinance will provide community gardens with greater legal protection. It will allow community gardens on property which cannot currently be legally cultivated.
- This will improve our city and serve as an example for other cities within our region.
- Asked those who are present and are already involved with community gardens to stand.

Irma Jackson, 846 Granville Drive, Winston-Salem, NC  27101
- Leaving lots vacant does several things:
  - The lot is an eyesore if it is allowed to grow up.
  - There are rodents and snakes.
  - It is a danger to children who will be playing in that area.
- A community garden does several things:
  - It creates a sense of diversity.
  - It increases the safety of the neighborhood as neighbors get to know one another and are more aware of what’s happening in the neighborhood.
  - It creates fresh food.
  - It improves the value of the property as neighbors begin to care more about their own property and don’t let the community garden become overgrown with weeds.
  - It creates the potential for creating jobs.
- Community gardens create a win-win situation.
- It helps the city because it shows you care about these residents.
- Please approve this amendment.

Michael Banner, 515 N. Jackson Ave, Winston-Salem, NC  27101
- I’m very excited about this item.
- There are a lot of people growing food in our urban areas. Urban typically means areas where there are people of African or Latino descent. In our areas there are a lot of food deserts.
- I have to go all the way across town to the “white” section of town to get fresh fruit and vegetables.
- There is a vacant lot next to my house and I have possums and rats which come into my yard. However, it would be illegal to build a garden on that site.
- It would be of much more benefit to our community to have these gardens run properly.
• A root word of Agriculture is “Culture”.
• I feel these food deserts should be the first to receive gardens like these.
• It was very rude to build the market on Liberty without training people in the community on how to get this stuff out of the ground.
• These things have been tried before and they failed. If people from outside the community come in and try to teach us how to grow the food and give us food, our self esteem is still crushed. However, developers still come in and develop our areas. We’d like to be more free to develop our own real estate.

Ellen Kirby, 3965 Rosebriar Lane, Winston-Salem, 27106
• I am one of the coordinators of the food bank for the Children’s Home on Reynolda Road. There are over 100 acres here and it includes a farm, which was originally used to provide food for the Children’s Home.
• We are privileged to have about two acres of our land to grow food for Second Harvest Food Bank.
• Six benefits of community gardens and urban agriculture.
  • Use of available land for growing food.
  • Education about growing food
  • Knowledge about best practices
  • Learning about composting, cover crops - related to sustainability
  • New respect for farmers
  • Teaching youth marketable skills, both growing and selling
  • Preservation of open space
  • For people, especially children to learn where their food comes from. How important it is to grow and eat safe, nutritious food.
• Every garden has a spin-off effect to create more gardens, better science education, better self-esteem among other things.

AGAINST: None

WORK SESSION

During discussion by the Planning Board, the following points were made:

George Bryan: I certainly want to voice my support. Having been greatly involved in community gardening over the years, it is important. There is a great demand for local produce. We need to bring urban agriculture back into Winston-Salem.

Arnold King: It has been great to get to know people at the farmer’s market in Kernersville.

Paul Mullican: This is a win-win situation.
MOTION: Clarence Lambe moved approval of the text amendment.
SECOND: Paul Mullican

VOTE:
   FOR: George Bryan, Melynda Dunigan, Tommy Hicks, Arnold King, Clarence Lambe,
        Darryl Little, Paul Mullican, Brenda Smith
   AGAINST: None
   EXCUSED: None

________________________________________
A. Paul Norby, FAICP
Director of Planning and Development Services
UDO-257
AN ORDINANCE REVISING
CHAPTERS A AND B OF THE UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCES
TO CREATE REGULATIONS FOR URBAN AGRICULTURE.

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, that the Unified Development Ordinances is hereby amended as follows:

Section 1. Chapter A, Article II of the UDO is amended as follows:

Chapter A - Definitions Ordinance
Article II – Definitions

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, CROP (W). The use of land for the primary purpose of raising and harvesting row, field, or tree crops on a commercial basis on a tract of land consisting of a minimum of three (3) acres. The growing and sale of agricultural crops on the premises shall not constitute agricultural crop production.

MANUFACTURING A. A manufacturing establishment engaged in the fabrication or assembly of products from prestructured materials or components whose operations, including storage of materials; indoor agriculture; processing, fabrication or assembly of products; and loading and unloading of new materials and finished products occurs completely within an enclosed building. Because of the nature of its operations and products, Manufacturing A produces little or no noise, odor, vibration, glare, and/or air and water pollution, and, therefore, has minimal impact on surrounding properties. Notwithstanding the previous requirements, NAICS groups only permitted in Manufacturing C shall not be permitted in Manufacturing A.

MANUFACTURING B. A manufacturing establishment whose operations, including storage of materials; indoor agriculture; processing, fabrication or assembly of products; and loading and unloading of new materials and finished products occurs completely within an enclosed building. Noise, odor, dust, or vibration from the manufacturing process may result in only minor impacts on adjacent properties. Notwithstanding the previous requirements, NAICS groups only permitted in Manufacturing C shall not be permitted in Manufacturing B.

URBAN AGRICULTURE (W). The growing, processing, and distribution of food and other agricultural products through plant cultivation. It may include plant cultivation and the growing of non-food crops such as herbs and ornamentals. This use may include accessory structures and buildings used for agriculture-related storage or field packing. Urban Agriculture as defined here does not include the accessory cultivation of plants on residential lots solely for the use and/or consumption of the occupants of said lots, or on-site accessory sales as authorized in Section B 2-6.5(B) of the UDO.

NOTE: Items to be deleted are indicated with a strikeout; items to be added are indicated with an underscore.
UDO-257 March 2015 - 8 -
Section 2. Chapter B – Zoning Ordinance, Article II – Zoning Districts, Official Zoning Maps and Uses is amended as follows:

**Chapter B – Zoning Ordinance**  
**Article II – Zoning Districts, Official Zoning Maps and Uses**

### 2-4 PERMITTED USES

| AGRICULTURAL USES | YR | AG | RS40 | RS30 | RS20 | RS15 | RS12 | RS9 | RS7 | RS6 | RM8 | RM7 | RM6 | RM5 | RM4 | RM3 | RM2 | RM1 | MU | MLUS | CONDS |
|-------------------|----|----|------|------|------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-------|
| **Agricultural Production, Crops** (W)(L.o) | A  | A  | A    | A    | A    | A    | A    | A   | A   | A   | A   | A   | A   | A   | A   | A   | A   | A   | A   | A   | A    |
| **Urban Agriculture** (W)(L.o) | Z  | A  | A    | A    | A    | A    | A    | A   | A   | A   | A   | A   | A   | A   | A   | A   | A   | A   | A   | A   | A    |

Z = Permit From Zoning Officer  
A = Board of Adjustment Special Use Permit  
P = Planning Board Review  
E = Elected Body Special Use

1 See Section B.2-1.3(E)(3)  
2 See Section B.21.3(G)(3)  
3 See Section B.2-5.67  
4 Per Section B.2-1.3(L), Major Retail & Business District (MRB-5)  
5 SUP not required if requirements of Section B.2-5.2(A) are met  
6 See Section B.2-5.65.

The number in the CONDS column references the subsection of Section B.2-5 (i.e., 23 refers to Section B.2-5.23)

This Table should be used in conjunction with Sections B.2-4.1 through B.2-4.6.

NOTE: Items to be deleted are indicated with a strikeout; items to be added are indicated with an underscore.

UDO-257 March 2015
3-1 DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

3-1.2 SUPPLEMENTARY DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The following supplementary dimensional requirements shall apply to all buildings and structures not subject to the general dimensional requirements of Section B.3-1.1.

(X) Urban Agriculture

Land being used for agricultural cultivation shall be set back a minimum of five (5) feet from all adjoining parcels or rights-of-way.

3-3 PARKING, STACKING, AND LOADING AREAS

3-3.2 OFF-STREET PARKING REQUIREMENTS

(A) Number of Spaces

Table B.3.8 contains the parking requirements for motor vehicles. Special requirements, including maximum allowed spaces applicable to new uses constructed after the effective date of this Ordinance, are provided under the Notes column where appropriate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table B.3.8 PARKING REQUIREMENTS</th>
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<td>PRINCIPAL USE</td>
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<tr>
<td>AGRICULTURAL USES</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agricultural Production, Crops (W)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban Agriculture (W)</td>
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</tbody>
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Section 3. A new Special Use Permit fee for Urban Agriculture for the Zoning Board of Adjustment shall be set at $25 and added to the adopted fee schedule.

Section 4. This ordinance shall be effective upon adoption.

NOTE: Items to be deleted are indicated with a strikethrough; items to be added are indicated with an underscore.

UDO-257 March 2015 - 10 -
Shelly Stewart

From: Margaret Norfleet Neff <mneff@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2015 6:42 PM
To: Shelly Stewart
Subject: Fwd: Urban Ag Ordinance Hearing Today!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Shelly,

I had to leave the hearing due to a broken septic system but here is a statement of support. Thanks!

Margaret

My name is Margaret Norfleet Neff and I am the owner of Beta Verde LLC that is a food based project that founded the Cobblestone Farmers’ Market in Old Salem and manages both Cobblestone markets, our area’s only fully vetted sustainable producer only market. In addition, we own 16 acres within the city limits (3733 Millhaven Road) of which a small area is cultivated and much more is possible.

In three years, we have seen our attendance go from an average of 250 to over 2500. We have seen a huge increase in the sales of herb, vegetable and fruit plants as well as bagged compost, all produced sustainably and locally. Gross revenues are in the proximity of a half million dollars. This is only the tip of the iceberg in terms of economic development and access to good food produced in our area. The opportunity to significantly increase food production for personal consumption, donation and/or retail in our city limits builds community and recycles more locally spent dollars in our community.

The Urban Agriculture Ordinance offers changes in the parameters of agriculture in the city that will spur the opportunity for more neighborhoods and residents to grow their own food in their yards and neighborhood community gardens with the option to grow produce or flowers for sale. This activity will promote cleaner air, water and health.

-------- Forwarded message --------
From: Mary Brennan <mjbrenn2@ncsu.edu>
Date: Thu, Mar 12, 2015 at 11:23 AM
Subject: Re: Urban Ag Ordinance Hearing Today!
To: Ellen Kirby <ellen.kirby@gmail.com>, "irjackson@earthlink.net" <irjackson@earthlink.net>, Livingstone Mawator <livingstone@rocketmail.com>, "Halsey, Jonathan" <jhalsey@wsfoundation.org>, Linda Birdsong <birdsoll@forsyth.cc>, "Duncan, Alison L." <duncanal@forsyth.cc>, Margaret Norfleet-Neff <mneff@gmail.com>

Details I failed to include in the last email:

Shelly Stewart, City-County Planning Board  shellys@cityofws.org  *Ask her to forward your comments to board & include in official minutes to be forwarded to city council.

Administrative Secretary  (336) 747-7040

URBAN AGRICULTURE

MOVING FORWARD IN FORSYTH COUNTY

Small urban farms around the country are succeeding! These city-based enterprises illustrate how agricultural entrepreneurship can increase access to healthy food, catalyze economic growth, revitalize neighborhoods, and
improve environmental conditions. The Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Planning and Development Service, with input from the Forsyth Community Food Consortium, is proposing a new Urban Agriculture Ordinance. This ordinance creates opportunity for agricultural entrepreneurs to bring the benefits of urban farming to our cities. Please plan to voice your support at the upcoming Public Hearing.

The City-County Planning Board - Public Hearing
Thursday, March 12th, 2015
4:30 pm

Public Meeting Room
5th Floor - Bryce A. Stuart Municipal Building
100 E. First St. Winston-Salem, NC.

On Thu, Mar 12, 2015 at 11:09 AM, Mary Brennan <mjbrenn2@ncsu.edu> wrote:
Greetings,

Thank you for agreeing to speak at the planning board public hearing today in support of the urban agriculture ordinance. A former planning board member suggested that our speakers be short and to the point, and to email a copy of their complete remarks to shellys@cityofws.org, the planning board secretary, and ask that they be put in the formal minutes of the meeting. We will have a total of 12 minutes to speak in favor of the ordinance. A staff member encouraged us to have a good showing of people in attendance, and I will ask for all in the audience who are in support to stand. Please share Shelly's email address and ask others to send email as well. Here are a few details to help you!
Your actions are most appreciated and will make a difference for the betterment of our community.

Kind regards,
Mary Jac

Mary Jac Brennan,
Extension Agent Commercial Horticulture for Small Farms & Local Foods
NC Cooperative Extension, Forsyth County
1450 Fairchild Road
Winston-Salem, NC 27105
336-703-2869 (office)
336-399-1001 (cell)
336-767-3557 (fax)
http://www.forsyth.cc/CES/

Extension provides practical education you can trust to help people, businesses, and communities solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future.

--
Mary Jac Brennan,
Extension Agent Commercial Horticulture for Small Farms & Local Foods
NC Cooperative Extension, Forsyth County
Extension provides practical education you can trust to help people, businesses, and communities solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future.
Please read this at tonight’s meeting and add it to the official minutes...

Our City of Arts and Innovation would benefit greatly from urban farms and the growth of an agricultural entrepreneurship movement. Let’s show people around the world that Winston-Salem is a city on the leading edge of earth-friendly growth.

Cheryl Schirillo-Johnson
cheryl@MyBridges.net, 336.682.9737

PR/Marketing...Web Site Design...Public Art...Fundraising...Sherpa Vision & Business Evolution for Creatives and Healing Arts Practitioners

Founder & CEO, Bridges Connecting Communities (MyBridges.net)
Co-Creative Founder, Imagination Installations.com
Dear Members of the Winston-Salem Planning Board:

I am writing in support of the proposed Urban Agriculture Ordinance to be presented for your consideration today. I am strongly in favor of its adoption. I also want to thank the planning staff for their diligent efforts in working with community partners on the Urban Agriculture ordinance.

As an extension agent here in Forsyth County, I am excited about the potential local foods development that urban agriculture will provide for our citizens. My job at extension is to provide technical assistance and education to farmers and growers and to help food entrepreneurs with value added products. I look forward to supporting new urban agricultural enterprises in Winston-Salem as a result of the adoption of this ordinance.

Agriculture as a legal use of empty lots in our urban core makes sense for our society, economy and our environment. Many speakers have spoken well to these points. Cooperative Extension supports the adoption of this ordinance. I know there is also a lot of support for the adoption of the urban agriculture ordinance in our community and in the audience today. I would like to ask all who are here to show their support for the adoption of this ordinance to please stand. I hope that the planning board will send this ordinance forward to the city council with grand support, as has been represented here today.

Thank you very much,

Mary Jac Brennan,
Extension Agent Commercial Horticulture for Small Farms & Local Foods
NC Cooperative Extension, Forsyth County
1450 Fairchild Road
Winston-Salem, NC 27105
336-703-2869 (office)
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Extension provides practical education you can trust to help people, businesses, and communities solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future.
Dear Members of the Winston-Salem Planning Board:

I am writing in support of the proposed Urban Agriculture Ordinance to be presented for your consideration today. As the Co-Executive Director of Carolina Common Enterprise, a non-profit community and cooperative development center with an office in Winston-Salem, I am familiar with policies that promote the development of a robust regional food system. The adoption of an urban agriculture ordinance will not only increase access to healthy food by challenged urban neighborhoods, but could contribute to their economic and community development.

As a participant in the Local Foods "Lunch" hosted by Cooperative Extension, I have witnessed firsthand the contributions the Planning Department has made towards the process. I truly appreciate their dedication to crafting the best possible ordinance to address urban agriculture needs in this city.

I urge your favorable consideration of this ordinance.

Becky L. Bowen, J.D.
Co-Executive Director
Carolina Common Enterprise
919-628-4317
To Whom It May Concern:

Because of a last minute schedule change, I am unable to make it to the meeting today at 4:30 pm. I hope that you will approve this measure to help us move WS toward a more green culture of sustainable food supply. I applaud the efforts.

peace,

Rev. Kelly P. Carpenter

---

Rev. Kelly P. Carpenter
Green Street Church
a United Methodist Congregation
639 S. Green Street
Winston-Salem, NC 27101
(336) 722-8379
www.greenstreetchuch.org
Shelly Stewart

From: Ann Bliss <ann_bliss@earthlink.net>
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2015 3:25 PM
To: Shelly Stewart
Subject: In support of the proposed Urban Agriculture Ordinance

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Ms. Stewart, Members of the Planning Board and Department Staff:

I am writing on behalf of the Forsyth Community Food Consortium to applaud the proposed Urban Agriculture ordinance and urge its approval.

We especially appreciate the planning staff’s outreach to the Consortium and their participation at our monthly local food networking forums. The time they gave to researching best practices in other communities, their willingness to share those findings with other participants, and their genuine interest in the concerns and suggestions of others speaks highly of the Board’s commitment.

We are grateful, and believe their work presents the Board with an important opportunity to strengthen our local food system.

Thank you.

Ann C. Bliss
Executive Council.
Forsyth Community Food Consortium.
http://forsythlocalfood.org
Good afternoon Ms. Stewart,

Please see the attached document that contains the complete remarks I will give during the public comment period this afternoon.

Best,
Alison Duncan

---
Alison Duncan
Community Gardening Coordinator
NC Cooperative Extension, Forsyth County

1450 Fairchild Road
Winston-Salem, NC 27105
forsythcommunitygardening.com
forsyth.cc/ces
T 336.703.2850 :: C 336.705.8823 :: F 336.767.3557

Sign up to receive The Bulletin Board
Good afternoon.

My name is Alison Duncan and I am Forsyth County’s Community Gardening Coordinator. I work for the Cooperative Extension Service.

I am here today to voice my support for the Urban Agriculture Ordinance, specifically as it relates to community gardens.

As of today, there are more than 100 active community gardens located within the Winston-Salem city limits. The benefits of these community gardens extend well beyond their physical borders. Our city’s community gardens increase access to fresh produce in food insecure areas. They foster relationships between diverse groups of people. They unite neighborhoods, families, associations, clubs, and faith groups. They provide green space and opportunities for physical and social activity. Furthermore, the presence of community gardens correlates to crime reduction, increased property value, increased civic engagement, and improved community image.

With the adoption of the proposed Urban Agriculture Ordinance, community gardens in our city will have greater legal protection. Additionally, the Urban Agriculture Ordinance will allow groups to establish community gardens on property that cannot currently be legally cultivated. This ordinance will support existing and future community gardens in our city. It is a progressive measure which will improve our city and serve as an example to other municipalities in our region.

For these reasons, I urge the Board to recommend adoption of the Urban Agriculture Ordinance.

Thank you.
Attached please find a letter of support from Livingstone Flomeh-Mawator. He would like it distributed to the planning board and entered into the official minutes of today’s public hearing.

Thank you,
Mary Jac

--
Mary Jac Brennan,
Extension Agent Commercial Horticulture for Small Farms & Local Foods
NC Cooperative Extension, Forsyth County
1450 Fairchild Road
Winston-Salem, NC 27105
336-703-2869 (office)
336-399-1001 (cell)
336-787-3557 (fax)
http://www.forsyth.cc/CES/

Extension provides practical education you can trust to help people, businesses, and communities solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future.
MORE THAN MANNA: MORINGA OLEIFERA
In support of URBAN AGRICULTURE in Winston-Salem.
1540 Attucks Street, Winston-Salem, NC 27105
Phone: 336-473-6531
E-mail: flivingstone@rocketmail.com

My name is Livingstone. I have always been interested in plants and vegetables since early childhood. Throughout my youth and adulthood, I have always had a garden to grow plants and vegetables for myself and my family’s consumption.

Between 2004 and 2007, I grew vegetables like collard greens, mustard greens, okra, peppers, eggplants, beets, radishes, sweet potatoes, corn and a specialty crop called moringa in my backyard which is about .23 acres for personal consumption and sales.

In 2008, I seriously started growing a demonstration plot of the specialty crop called moringa in my backyard after I lost my job as a MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR.

From 2009 through 2014, I grew and processed moringa leaf products for human consumption. Presently, I am in the process of developing the by-products of the moringa leaf powder into Farm Animal Feed Additives, FAFA, to be sold to farmers.

Working on the same demonstration plot in my backyard, I have been able to successfully scale up production from 250 to 600 kilograms in three years.

I have worked with North Carolina A & T State University Extension Specialists and continue to research the production and marketing of the moringa products.

Currently, my family and I live on an urban farm in Forsyth County. I am committed to mentoring men who have a hard time finding work for various reasons. I have taught them how to prepare the soil, how to plant and care for the moringa products and then how to harvest and process moringa products for the market.

There is a great economic potential for success in the production of value-added products from the specialty crop called moringa. Presently, I am unable to meet demand for the moringa products.

I am planning to produce several thousand bottles of Moringa Leaf Powder Capsules with the raw materials produced in 2014. I will be able to create a value-added product from the raw materials produced, hire additional employees and share what I have learned with the greater community.

I will be able to expand my farming enterprise to increase my yields and increase my income.

I WHOLEHEARTEDLY SUPPORT THE URBAN AGRICULTURE INITIATIVE.
THANK YOU.
Shelly Stewart

From: irjackson@earthlink.net
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2015 12:48 PM
To: Shelly Stewart
Subject: Speaking for the urban agriculture rezoning proposal
Attachments: vote for zoning vacant lots.doc

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Miss Shelly I am attaching what I plan to say this afternoon at this hearing. I was asked to forward it to you by Mary Jac Brennan. Can this be added to what the city council people on this committee get as a part of their minutes and information?
Irma Jackson
My name is Irma Jackson and I am speaking for the proposal to rezone vacant lots so that urban agriculture would take place.

Vacant lots are often an eyesore in neighborhoods because the grass grows long in the summer and it is the breeding ground for rodents and reptiles that may be unwanted. Using that land for the community to grow vegetables on would do several things for the neighborhoods. Potentially it can result in:

1. Neighbors getting to know each other which helps to create diversity,
2. Increase the safety in the neighborhood because you now can recognize your neighbors and are more likely to tell if someone is a stranger;
3. Create fresh food that you would know the origin of especially in neighborhoods where there might be limited access to fresh food. This food could be available the year round since there are crops which could be planted in all seasons and harvested;
4. Improve the value of property because people now may take more pride in their property
5. Potentially create jobs for the neighborhood with an organized system of gardening that becomes a small business for produce.

I think these are all good things we want in our communities and they may even help to eliminate crime during the warm weather months of the year and help those struggling with feeding their families.
To: City-County Planning Board

I encourage you to adopt the proposed amendments to the UDO concerning regulations for urban agriculture. The proposed amendments will remove obstacles that currently exist for small-scale innovation and economic development in the agricultural and food sectors throughout the county. In addition to growing food, these small businesses and not-for-profit enterprises will also likely cultivate marketable skills, social capital, increased access to healthy foods, and thereby improved public health. In approving the amendment, you will help implement one of the recommendations of the Local Food System study the county commissioned in 2012 and published in 2013.

Mark Jensen
Executive Committee, Forsyth Community Food Consortium
Shelly Stewart

From: info@triadfarm2table.com
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2015 10:56 AM
To: Shelly Stewart
Subject: urban farming zone change

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Hello,
As the manager of Triad Farm To Table Cooperative and a member of the Forsyth Community Food Consortium, I would like to endorse the proposed zoning amendment which would allow for urban farming. I believe it is a win-win idea.

Thanks,
Susan Williamson
Shelly Stewart

From: Eric Bushnell <Eric.Bushnell@ieee.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2015 8:00 AM
To: Kirk Ericson; Shelly Stewart
Subject: UDO-257, Urban Agriculture

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Kirk and Shelly,

Here is a statement from the Winston Salem Neighborhood Alliance in favor UDO-257, suitable for distribution to Planning Board members:

The Winston Salem Neighborhood Alliance supports UDO-257 and its aim to encourage urban agriculture projects. Neighborhoods can benefit from readily available, locally grown foods, and we appreciate the Planning Department's vision and initiative to promote productive gardens.

Eric Bushnell
on behalf of the Winston Salem Neighborhood Alliance
Attn: Shelly S. –
Re: legal use of land for community gardens

Ms. Shelly - Winston-Salem needs community gardens for many reasons. Urban agriculture promotes environmental sustainability by reducing greenhouse gas emissions caused by transporting food over long distances. Community gardens bring neighbors together, educate children about the earth and growing healthy vegetables for their nutrition. Community gardens are an effective and attractive use of lots that have been abandoned. They provide food for organizations like the Food Bank, Samaritan Ministries and many churches have food banks for members and residents who experience food insecurities.

Thank you for this opportunity to support our community gardens in Winston-Salem, Virginia Cooper.
Hi, Ms. Stewart-

It is my understanding that you are collecting letters of support for the Urban Agriculture Ordinance. Please accept the email below from The Winston-Salem Foundation, and please distribute it to the members of the City-County Planning Board accordingly.

Thanks,
Jonathan Halsey

Dear Members of the City-County Planning Board:

In 2011, The Winston-Salem Foundation partnered with the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners to commission Forsyth Futures’ report entitled Forsyth County’s Community Food System: A Foundation to Grow. In 2013, the Foundation provided the initial funding to create the Forsyth Community Food Consortium to guide the implementation of key recommendations from the study:

1) to serve as a convener and catalyst for the Forsyth County community food system
2) to facilitate the connections and relationships needed to develop programs and leverage resources
3) to inform local government
4) to advocate for policies

Because the Foundation believes a coordinated and active local food system is necessary for a healthy community, please accept this letter of support for the proposed Urban Agriculture Ordinance, which was developed by the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Planning and Development Service with input from the Forsyth Community Food Consortium. The Winston-Salem Foundation believes this proposed Urban Agriculture Ordinance is good for our community because it can 1) protect community gardens; 2) improve access to healthy food; 3) improve economic health by creating jobs and developing the workforce; 4) revitalize communities; and 5) improve environmental conditions.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jonathan Halsey
Director, Community Engagement
The Winston-Salem Foundation
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Winston-Salem, NC 27101-2702
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Investing in our community by making philanthropy and its benefits available to all.