

**From:** [Pamela S. Ulmer](#)  
**To:** [Thanh Dang](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Form submission from: Agenda Comment Form  
**Date:** Thursday, June 13, 2024 10:42:19 AM

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**From:** HarrisonburgVA.gov via HarrisonburgVA.gov <noreply@harrisonburgva.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 12, 2024 5:13 PM  
**To:** Pamela S. Ulmer <Pamela.Ulmer@harrisonburgva.gov>  
**Subject:** Form submission from: Agenda Comment Form

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**Submitted on:** Wednesday, June 12, 2024 - 5:13pm

**Name:** Amy Mercer

**Type of Meeting:** Harrisonburg Planning Commission

**Date of Meeting:** Wed, 06/12/2024

**Agenda Item Number:** 4b.

**Comment:**

I support the proposal to allow beekeeping within the city limits, but would suggest a modification. I wonder if the requirement that hives be placed at least 10 feet from property lines could be reviewed or at least have the possibility for waiver in some cases. (Full disclosure I would find it prohibitive to keeping bees on my property if hives have to be 10 feet from the property line.) Many city backyards are not that big and have limited placement options for hives. Property lines tend to have plantings and fences that offer shade and barriers that make them good places for hive placement, while spaces 10 feet away from them offer less of this. Bees forage over several miles and are going to cross property lines in the city regardless of how close the hive is to the line. The flyway barrier seems like a good precaution to keep people from approaching the hive, since bees are more likely to defend the hive. If this barrier is sufficiently high, however, it shouldn't make as big a difference, in my opinion, how far the hive is from a property line. I realize that it's hard to legislate being a good neighbor, but it seems to me that a number of other factors impact the interaction between bees and the beekeeper's neighbors other than an arbitrary number of feet from the property line. In my case, for example, the only really practical place to keep bees is between a shed and a property line (the shed is 5 feet from the line, per code, putting the space for the bees less than 5 feet from the line). The neighbor's vegetable garden is on the other side of the line, which is a space in which

bees are actually wanted. On the other hand, I can imagine a parent of a child with a bee-sting allergy having concerns about a neighbor's hive regardless of where in the yard it was located. In my opinion, a good urban beekeeper communicates with neighbors, listens to their concerns and opinions and is responsive to them. I'd love to see some allowance for different circumstances. Thanks for considering!

**Contact:** No

**Contact Info:** I don't have a special need to be contacted, but am happy to discuss.