



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING
STARKE COUNTY PLAN COMMISSION
53 East Mound Street, Knox, IN 46534
Office: 574-772-9133 | plancomm75@starke.in.gov

RESOLUTION 2026-PC-12

**A RESOLUTION OF THE STARKE COUNTY PLAN COMMISSION CONCERNING A PROPOSAL
TO AMEND TEXT OF THE STARKE COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE**

WHEREAS: The Starke County Plan Commission wishes to make certain changes and amendments to the Starke County Zoning Ordinance, said proposal identified as 2026-PC-12; and

WHEREAS: A public hearing was held on _____, 2026, at _____ p.m. concerning this matter by the Starke County Plan Commission; and

WHEREAS: Notice was provided according to law concerning said public hearing; and

WHEREAS: The Starke County Plan Commission passes and adopts this Resolution to make the following findings and recommendations.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE STARKE COUNTY PLAN COMMISSION AS
FOLLOWS:**

That attached hereto as **Exhibit “A”** is 2026-PC-12, the Certified Proposal to Amend Article 6 of the Starke County Zoning Ordinance regarding Residential Livestock Keeping and Agricultural Uses.

That in considering the above amendments, the Starke County Plan Commission has given due consideration:

- To be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan regarding the balance of the County's traditional agricultural backbone with the reasonable expectations of quiet enjoyment in residential districts;
- To establish clear, enforceable, and tiered property standards to mitigate localized nuisances such as noise, odor, and property damage;
- To provide a predictable and responsible framework for residential hobby farming and 4-H projects.

The Starke County Plan Commission finds that the above-stated reasons are sufficient to support the amendments as set forth above.

That Notice of said public hearing was provided by the Starke County Plan Commission in accordance with **IC 36-7-4-604**, via publication in **The Leader** newspaper.

That the Starke County Plan Commission hereby certifies and forwards this Resolution to the Starke County Board of Commissioners with a **favorable recommendation**.

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PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE STARKE COUNTY PLAN COMMISSION THIS ____ DAY OF _____, 2026.

STARKE COUNTY PLAN COMMISSION

Mike VanDeMark, Plan Commission Chair

ATTEST:

John McCurrie III, Plan Commission Secretary

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ORDINANCE NO. 2026-_____

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ARTICLE 6 OF THE STARKE COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE REGARDING RESIDENTIAL LIVESTOCK KEEPING AND AGRICULTURAL USES

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of Starke County, Indiana ("the Board") is the legislative body authorized to adopt and amend zoning ordinances under I.C. § 36-7-4-600 *et seq.*;

WHEREAS, the Starke County Plan Commission recognizes the need to balance the County's agricultural heritage with the safety and sanitation of increasingly dense residential districts;

WHEREAS, the Starke County Plan Commission has recommended a revised ordinance text to establish clear, enforceable, tiered property standards for the keeping of livestock and poultry;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF STARKE COUNTY, INDIANA:

SECTION 1: INTENT The purpose of this amendment is to balance the traditional agricultural backbone of Starke County with the reasonable expectations of quiet enjoyment in high-density residential districts. These regulations are established to mitigate localized nuisances—such as noise, odor, property damage, and pest attraction—by explicitly regulating the keeping of livestock and poultry and prohibiting nuisance animals within R-3 zones.

SECTION 2: AMENDMENT TO GENERAL DEFINITIONS The existing definition of "Agricultural" within the general definitions section of the Starke County Zoning Ordinance is hereby amended to read as follows (added text in **bold**):

2. Agricultural: All uses incidental to farming operations, such as tillage of soil, production, marketing of crops, livestock and poultry, storage of farm products, all accessory buildings, and land use incidental thereto. It is deemed under this Article 6 that such use shall not include the manufacture or processing of agricultural products. **Furthermore, for parcels located within an R-3 (High-Density Residential) zoning district, the keeping of livestock and poultry shall not be classified as a general Agricultural use by right, but rather as "Residential Livestock Keeping," subject to the specific parcel size regulations of Section 6-12-2 Specification B.**

SECTION 3: AMENDMENT TO 6-12-2 SPECIFICATION B The "Definition" and "Location Permitted" subsections of Section 6-12-2 Specification B are hereby struck and replaced with the following. All other existing provisions within Section 6-12-2 Specification B (including but not limited to Front Yard, Side Yard, Ground Floor Area, Vision Clearance, and Vehicle Parking) shall remain unchanged and in full force and effect:

Definition: Agricultural use includes all buildings used exclusively for agricultural purposes on a tract of land containing ten (10) acres or more. Temporary housing for seasonal workers shall be considered as buildings used for agricultural purposes. Permanent residential buildings shall not be deemed to be agricultural use under this Article 6.

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Location Permitted: The keeping of livestock and poultry, and the location of associated buildings, pens, and enclosures, may be permitted across districts subject to the following standards to mitigate localized nuisances:

1. R-3 (High-Density Residential) Districts: To protect dense neighborhoods and mitigate localized nuisances, the keeping of livestock and poultry within R-3 districts shall be regulated strictly by parcel size. **Additionally, all nuisance animals are strictly prohibited across all R-3 parcels, regardless of size.**

- **Category A (Parcels under 1.0 Acre):** The keeping of any livestock, poultry, or nuisance animals (including swine, roosters, guinea fowl, and peafowl) is strictly prohibited. Permitted animals shall be exclusively limited to domestic pets (such as cats and dogs).
- **Category B (Parcels 1.0 to 1.49 Acres):** A maximum of three (3) female chickens (hens) are permitted. All large livestock, medium livestock, swine, roosters, guinea fowl, and peafowl are strictly prohibited. All permitted poultry must be fully confined within a secure, fully enclosed coop and attached fenced run; free-ranging outside of this enclosure is strictly prohibited. Coops and enclosed runs must be set back a minimum of forty (40) feet from all property lines.
- **Category C (Parcels 1.5 Acres and larger):** A maximum of six (6) female chickens (hens) are permitted. All large livestock, medium livestock, swine, roosters, guinea fowl, and peafowl remain strictly prohibited. All permitted poultry must be fully confined within a secure, fully enclosed coop and attached fenced run; free-ranging outside of this enclosure is strictly prohibited. Coops and enclosed runs must be set back a minimum of fifty (50) feet from any adjoining property line.

2. All Other Zoning Districts: Buildings and pens for livestock and poultry, excluding pastures grazing less than one head per acre, may be permitted if they are more than 150 feet from the nearest residentially developed area and/or business district, except that pigsties, sheds, and manure disposal lagoons shall be at least three hundred (300) feet from such residential area or district. Open pastures grazing less than one head per acre may extend to the property line.

SECTION 4: ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES The following enforcement standards shall apply specifically to animal keeping within R-3 districts:

- **Administrative Authority:** The Director of Planning and Building, or his designated representative, shall have the authority to inspect properties upon receipt of a complaint to verify compliance with headcount, containment, setback, and sanitation standards.
- **Penalties:** Any person failing to comply with the provisions of this amendment shall be subject to the enforcement procedures and penalties set forth in Section 6-12-3-2-11 of the Starke County Zoning Ordinance.

SECTION 5: SEVERABILITY If any provision within this Ordinance is held to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 6: EFFECTIVE DATE This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and following its publication as required by law.

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