



CITY OF HARRISONBURG COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

409 SOUTH MAIN STREET, HARRISONBURG, VA 22801

OFFICE (540) 432-7700 • FAX (540) 432-7777

August 31, 2026

**TO THE MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA**

SUBJECT: *Consider a request to amend the Zoning Ordinance related to Poultry Hatcheries*

**EXTRACT FROM THE DRAFT MINUTES OF HARRISONBURG PLANNING
COMMISSION MEETING HELD ON:** August 12, 2026

Chair Baugh read the request and asked staff to review.

In February 2026, City Council approved Zoning Ordinance (ZO) amendments that established definitions for “meat processing and storage facility” and “poultry processing and storage facility.” The amendments also added poultry processing and storage facility as a by right use in the M-1, General Industrial District, and added meat processing and storage facility as a use allowed only by special use permit (SUP) in the same district.

The amendment created the opportunity for someone to be able to establish a new meat processing and storage facility with the approval of a SUP while also creating a pathway for a nonconforming meat processing facility to become conforming through the same process. Staff worked with the applicant to develop the new definitions in a way that distinguished poultry processing from other types of meat processing, consistent with the long-standing interpretation of the ZO that poultry processing in the M-1 district is allowed by right. When drafting the amendments, staff did not address standalone poultry hatcheries and unintentionally made poultry hatcheries a nonconforming use, as they were outside the scope of the previous application.

After becoming aware of this issue, staff began work on a new amendment to codify the long-standing interpretation that a poultry hatchery is also a by right use in the M-1 district and provide a definition for poultry hatcheries. This amendment will clarify that poultry hatcheries are allowed by-right in the M-1 district. Staff worked with the Virginia Poultry Federation to identify three operational hatcheries within City limits; which are all located within the M-1 District:

- George's Hatchery: 410 Stone Spring Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22801
- George's Hatchery: 1620 South Main Street, Harrisonburg, VA 22801
- Cargill Hatchery: 1724 Country Club Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802

Copies of the drafted amendment and definition were shared with the President of the Virginia Poultry Federation, Hobey Bauhan. No concerns were raised regarding the proposed changes.

Staff recommends approval of the ZO amendments.

Councilmember Dent said I have a question about what the poultry industry calls table eggs. Is that considered poultry processing? For example, if a hen is laying eggs to be packaged and sold in the grocery store, is that included? I do not think there is any such use in the City, but just in case that arises.

Mr. Blanks said no, I am not aware of that being present in the City. Perhaps it is something that we would be able to amend if we felt it was needed, if it came up.

Councilmember Dent said I remember Hobey Bauhan, the Director of the Virginia Poultry Federation, saying that we do not generally produce table eggs in this area. That was the first I had heard that phrase. He said it is clearly a distinction from these hatcheries that are meant to produce live poultry as opposed to eggs for the grocery store.

Mr. Blanks said we did coordinate with the Virginia Poultry Federation on these changes. We provided Mr. Bauhan the text of the ordinance in advance to see if he had any commentary. He did not have any comments and was supportive of the change.

Councilmember Dent said as long as you checked with him, you are okay.

Mr. Blanks said yes.

Chair Baugh asked if there were any more questions for staff. Hearing none, he opened the public hearing and asked if there was anyone in the room or on the phone wishing to speak to the request. Hearing none he closed the public hearing and opened the matter for discussion.

Commissioner Jezior said it seems pretty straightforward, just correcting the change we made before that excluded it. I am good.

Councilmember Dent said it is more that, once we started defining and adding another definition.

Commissioner Jezior said problems arise that you do not expect.

Councilmember Dent said maybe someday table eggs will emerge. Who knows?

Commissioner Kettler said move to recommend approval of the zoning ordinance amendments.

Councilmember Dent said second.

Chair Baugh called for a roll call vote.

Commissioner Kettler	Aye
Vice-Chair Porter	Aye
Commissioner Seitz	Aye
Commissioner Jezior	Aye
Councilmember Dent	Aye
Chair Baugh	Aye

The motion to recommend approval of the zoning ordinance amendment passed (6-0). The recommendation will move forward to City Council on September 8, 2026.

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