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Residents cry fowl

Reverse NIMBYism to be decided Monday night

By Mallory Clarkson

Going against the grain, a group of residents are crying, "yes in my backyard," at least when it comes to raising chickens. They want to make the decisions over what happens on their own property, not city council.

The poultry proponents left a Community and Neighbourhoods Committee (CNC) meeting in anger after the backyard chicken debate was cut short last Tuesday. Although many signed up to speak at the next committee meeting, they may not get the chance to have their say.



Photo by Mike Maloney/London Community News

With mom Lynn leading the way, young urban gardener Jason is just one of a growing number of people hoping London council will consider a request to allow residents to keep backyard chicken coops.

Lynn Adams said the motion to pen up more conversation on the subject left her deflated.

"I never thought they would do that," she told London Community News. "(Council) want to just end it."

Adams said she followed the proper process — asking to be put on a delegation list — to say her piece to councillors. Three city staffers replied, confirming the public meeting would take place.

"The Chair of the CNC (Ward 12 Councillor Harold Usher) asked that any requests for delegations (regarding) backyard chickens for the June 14 CNC meeting be directed to the staff proposed Public Participation Meeting on Aug. 16," wrote Betty Mercier, committee secretary, to Adams.

But, council slamming the gate on future talks had many speaking out over what they perceived to be an undemocratic process.

"My problem is (council) denied me from speaking last night (and) at that time they also said they don't want to do the public participation meeting in August," she said.

"I'm not saying make the decision about backyard chickens or not, I'm saying, vote to let us have a public participation meeting.

"That's really important."

Around 50 people were in the gallery at 4 p.m. waiting to hear their mayor and councillors discuss the issue — many with small children.

By the time the issue was on the table, four hours later, only a handful remained.

Adams said she wondered why it wasn't moved up.

"Last year, they moved up the item in the agenda so that all these citizens that were here could talk about the issue," she said. "But, this time... the chair wouldn't move it up."

The Adams family lives in a quaint home, tucked away in downtown London. Lynn grows already grows

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