

Animal Welfare Advisory Committee
300 Dufferin Ave.
London, ON N6A 4L9

March 2, 2016

Dear Chair and Members of the Community of Protective Services Committee,

I am writing this letter in hopes of having the current bylaw regarding teacup pigs as pets in the city of London amended. Currently teacup pigs are classified as a farm animal and still considered by many as "swine". I am an animal lover, have a rescue dog and would love to add a "teacup" or "micro-mini" piglet to my family. I have done a great deal of research in this area and was upset to learn that the current bylaw does not recognize these small animals as pets, especially in light of the current breeding size that is now offered.

I understand that when the bylaw was put into place, any such "pet" pigs were potbellied pigs that grew to quite a large size, and were often "discarded" or sent to sanctuaries as their cuteness wore off and people realized how big they would become. They would also need a much larger space than a home and city yard to roam in. Fortunately, teacup pigs are now being bred to a size of between 10 and 50 pounds (the size of an average dog) and are not potbellied pigs at all. Of course, such guarantees of size come from reputable breeders.

Teacup pigs have become very popular because of their intelligence, small size and affectionate nature. They are non-shedding and therefore hypoallergenic, a great alternative for people who are allergic to cats and dogs. They are easily trained to use a litter box, do not smell and are considered to be very clean animals. They do not get fleas like dogs and in general, have few health issues. They appeal to many as possible pets. Testimonials will attest to their affectionate nature, strong human bonds, entertaining nature and ability to easily adjust and love children and other household pets alike.

The current bylaw allows for other exotic animals such as various lizards and snakes to be kept as long as they measure a certain length or are a certain weight. I would think a snake, which can be bought relatively inexpensively on kijiji would pose a greater threat than a small pig that is kept indoors. Snakes can become large and are carnivorous.

It is my belief that the current bylaw is outdated and if worded correctly, would allow for pig enthusiasts, who are willing to pay \$2000 and up (the cost of one of these little guys) to have a teacup pig as a pet... with certain parameters set. A good example would be weight restrictions (i.e. must not exceed 50-70 pounds which is the size of an average dog). They must be spayed or neutered and must not be bred unless the parties interested are reputable breeders who live outside of the city with agricultural zoning. The pigs must be vaccinated and must only be outdoors if the owner has a fenced in yard or the animal is on a leash and harness. Perhaps a license should also be required just as it is for dogs and cats.

I appreciate you taking my concerns and suggestions into consideration. I give consent for this to be placed on the public agenda.

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