

January 16, 2024

To: The Montgomery County Council  
From: John Parrish 9009 Fairview Road, Silver Spring, MD 20910  
Public Hearing Testimony on ZTA 23-09 Farming, Incidental Outdoor Stays

Dear Councilmember,

As a lifelong 65-year resident of Montgomery County I highly value the Agricultural Reserve. In my opinion ZTA 23-09 would undermine farming, our rural heritage, and the environmental values that the Reserve was created to protect. It is your responsibility to continue to protect this heritage now and for future generations.

I urge you to deeply consider the following questions when deliberating ZTA 23-09:

- How would land values change at the expense of farming? What are the social equity implications of allowing this non-agricultural use? Will it benefit the rich at the expense of the poor?
- How would this land use make demands on the ground water aquifer and how may that affect rural residents and farmers that depend on the aquifer for drinking water and irrigation?
- How will an increased demand for ground water affect the base flow of streams and the aquatic life in the streams?
- How do the majority of farmers and residents of the Reserve feel about the proposed land use change?
- What are the potential impacts to rural vistas?
- Will you consider that travelers from outside the region already have plenty of lodging choices available in close proximity to the Reserve if they wish to visit the Reserve?
- What are the short and long-range implications of allowing this non-agricultural intrusion? If this is allowed why not other non-agricultural uses? Where does it stop?

**After considering these questions I urge you to not support this short sighted legislation.**

Thank you for considering and my comments and questions.

Sincerely,

John Parrish