

**Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee-
February 16, 2021 Agenda**

1. Call the Meeting to Order-Introductions:
2. Approval of the January 19, 2021 AAC meeting minutes.
3. The Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection-DEP is proposing legislation that will require all residents with septic systems to have them pumped out every 5 years and there will be a \$100 rebate. The purpose of legislation is to protect ground water and extend the life of the septic systems. Representatives from the DEP will be attending our AAC meeting to discuss this further.
4. The County Council conducted a Straw vote on the Solar ZTA 20-01 on January 26, 2021. *Please see the attached AAC letter that was remitted to the County Council.* They voted 6 to 3 for conditional use of approval and 5 to 4 to protect both Class 1 and 2 prime soils from locating solar fields. The ZTA is supposed to be scheduled on the County Council agenda for ACTION February 23, 2021. We are trying to understand language of the amendments from the Straw Vote. The DEP is reelevating the soils GIS layer to better understand why parcels greater than 15 acres in size was chosen when we are aware of several pending solar fields in both Howard and Baltimore counties that range in size from 4-13 acres.
5. Council Member Andrew Friedson proposed Bill 5-21 Agricultural Land Preservation-Solar Collection Systems-Dedication of Business Personal Property Tax Revenue. The Public Hearing scheduled for February 9, 2021 was postponed because the Solar ZTA 20-01 has not been adopted by the County Council. *The AAC should provide a letter of support.*
https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2021/20210119/20210119_11B.pdf 5.
6. The County Council Approved the Composting ZTA 20-04 on February 9, 2021. This ZTA will increase the amount of off-site materials (wood chips, horse manure-bedding materials, food scraps) used in the compost process from 20% to 50%.
https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2021/20210209/20210209_12A.pdf
7. The County Council introduced the Subdivision Regulations Amendment SRA 21-01 to exempt farm facilities from the subdivision process Chapter 50 for commercial buildings used for Agritourism, On-Site Farm Markets and Farm Alcohol Production. The public hearing is scheduled for March 2, 2021. *The AAC should provide a letter of support.* We learned that the MDE regulations require subdivision of lots that were recorded after November 18, 1985 and this regulation may negatively impact the SRA 21-01. There will be opposition on this SRA by the Planning Board and other civic groups.
8. Update on State Legislation for the 2021 Session.

HB 490 Pilot-Commercial sales venison-Deer Management Permits
HB 7 Income Tax Credit-Venison Donation Expenses-MC Deer Donation Program.
HB 1488 General Assembly over rode Governor's veto 2020-MD Farmer Procurement
HB 831 MD Food Resiliency Council-Food insecurity due to Pandemic
HB 472 Glyphosate Prohibition-HB 474 was withdrawn by the sponsor
HB 991 Forest Banking-Forest Banking Credits for existing, standing forests
HB 1069 Private Well Safety Program-New Transfer Tax
HB 581 COVID-19 Differential Pay
HB 577 H2A and H2B Seasonal Workers due to the Pandemic

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Montgomery County Ag Advisory Committee-February 16, 2021 7:00 pm.
Full Council ACTION on Solar ZTA 20-01 February 23, 2021
Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Directors- March 2, 2021 7:00 pm
Council Public Hearing on SRA 21-1 March 2, 2021
Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-March 9, 2021 7:00 pm
Montgomery Soil Conservation District-March 12, 2021 9:00 am