

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

1. Call the Meeting to Order-Introductions:
2. Approval of the February 16, 2021 AAC meeting minutes.
3. The County Council acted on the Solar ZTA 20-01 on February 23, 2021. They voted 7 to 2 requiring conditional use of approval and 5 to 4 votes for the protection of both Class I and II prime soils from locating solar fields. The DEP found that a total of 445 properties consisting of soil Class III-VIII, that are greater than 5 acres in size, total 4,462 acres in the Agricultural Reserve for potential solar fields. The Montgomery County Revenue Authority is developing a pilot agrivoltaic project on the properties where the Poolesville Golf Course is located.
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OMB/Resources/Files/omb/pdfs/fy21/ciprec/P391801.pdf>
4. Council Member Andrew Friedson proposed Bill 5-21 Agricultural Land Preservation-Solar Collection Systems-Dedication of Business Personal Property Tax Revenue. The Public Hearing was conducted on March 9, 2021 and the following folks testified in support of the Bill. Michael Jamison, Chair of APAB and Randy Stabler. *Please see the attached letter from the AAC.*
https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2021/20210119/20210119_11B.pdf
5. The County Council Approved the Composting ZTA 20-04 on February 9, 2021. The agricultural agencies are working to schedule an On-Farm Composting training workshop this spring. We will inform everyone of how 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%.
6. 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 was on March 2, 2021. The following folks testified in support of the SRA. Drew Baker, Ed Boyce, Kevin Keyes, and Chris Miller. *Please see the attached letter from the AAC.* There will be opposition on this SRA by the Planning Board and other civic groups.
7. **Please see the Grant funding opportunities that are now available through MARBIDCO that were attached to the cover memorandum with my report.**
8. Update on State Legislation for the 2021 Session.

HB 490 Pilot-Commercial sales venison-Deer Management Permits-Withdrawn
HB 7 Income Tax Credit-Venison Donation Expenses-MC Deer Donation Program.

HB 1488 General Assembly overrode 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 assigned to Summer Study
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-Unfavorable vote in committee

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Montgomery County Ag Advisory Committee-March 16, 2021 7:00 pm.

MDA GAP Certification Training-March 22-23, 2021 for MC food producers

Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Directors- April 6, 2021 7:00 pm

Montgomery Soil Conservation District-April 9, 2021 9:00 am

Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-April 13, 2021 7:00 pm