

**Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda
May 15, 2018**

Attendees: Pete Driscoll, Doug Lechliden, Ben Allnutt, Lori Larson, Eleanor Leak, Linda Lewis, Patrick Jamison, Chuck Schuster

Guests: Steve Robinson

Staff: Jeremy Criss

- 1. Meeting Called to Order and Introductions.**
- 2. Approval of the April 17, 2018 Meeting Minutes. Passed as written Driscoll/Lewis**
- 3. The County Council PHED Committee reviewed the ZTA 18-01 Solar Collection System that proposes 2-megawatt community solar in all zones with exception to Agricultural Zone. Accessory Solar (120% of onsite energy consumption) will continue to be allowed in the Agricultural Reserve-AR zone. The AAC submitted a letter in support of the ZTA 18-01 and recommended that ground mounted solar installations should NOT be located on prime and productive soils. On April 30, 2018, the PHED Committee discussed adding the AR zone for community solar, but they voted against including the ag zone now.**
http://montgomerycountymd.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=132&event_id=7735&meta_id=155058
- 4. The County Council has introduced ZTA 18-03 Farm Alcohol Production-Standards. The public hearing was held earlier today. The AAC submitted a letter supporting the ZTA with the understanding that amended will be offered that tethers the use to farming.**
http://montgomerycountymd.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=169&clip_id=14831&meta_id=152429

Doug Lechliden testified at the public hearing along with Caroline Taylor-MCA, Bob Cissel-MAP, Tom Hartsock, Robert Butz, Drew Baker, Jessica Snyder, Edward Boyce, and Phil Muth. Doug said the County DPS must be careful in regulating this new use in light of the folks that testified against it. Starting in 2021, all new wineries in the State must produce at least 51% of the grapes they use in producing wine or have 20 acres of grapes in production. Farm Breweries will not be able to achieve this level of production unless we establish some type of contract growing agreements for barley production. Seven of the Nine County Council members are supporting the ZTA 18-03 as introduced.

- 5. The County Council Introduced ZTA 18-04 proposed by the County Executive-Non-Conforming uses in place prior to October 2014 can be expanded. The public hearing is scheduled for May 15, 2018. This Davis Airport is the subject of the ZTA.**

http://montgomerycountymd.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=169&clip_id=14831&meta_id=152431

Staff asked everyone to turn to the May 2, 2018 letter from the County Executive where he recommended limiting the scope and focus of the ZTA 18-04. Staff said the ZTA will probably be approved without push back given the recommendations from the CE.

- 6. Follow up on the DNR proposed changes to the 2018-2019 hunting regulations. The County Council, AAC, MAP, and the MSCD forwarded letters to the DNR recommending that Montgomery County be designated as a Suburban Deer Archery Zone and exempt from the proposed reductions in bag limits for both antlered and antlerless deer. Jeremy confirmed with MD DNR staff today that they have all of the letters from the agricultural groups.**
http://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/hunt_trap/Comments/Hunting_Seasons/HUNT_Season_Comments.aspx

The committee discussed the recommendations from the MD DNR to not support the Suburban Deer Archery Zone for Montgomery County including unlimited bag limits of harvested antlerless and antlered deer. The MD DNR believes an unlimited bag limit equates deer to be vermin and they are going to change this perception. The DNR is recommending a 10 bag limit on antlerless deer harvested as outlined in the Washington Post article below. The Committee agreed to write a letter back to DNR to explain how the deer are destroying the under story of the forest that many birds and turtles depend on for survival. The letter will request the basis of changing the hunting regulations. Motion Cropp/ Larson.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/maryland-wants-to-put-a-limit-on-bow-hunting-antlerless-deer/2018/05/11/09e46df0-5240-11e8-9c91-7dab596e8252_story.html?utm_term=.a098b152dbb7

- 7. There have been five Agritourism Study Advisory Committee meetings (November 29, 2017, January 17, 2018, February 21, 2018, April 2, 2018 and April 18, 2018). The next meeting is May 16, 2018. The Agritourism Advisory Committee has discussed many ideas related to events and activities on farms, but they have no agreements on specific recommendations. The MNCPPC staff proposed how the Agritourism review and approval process may align with Heritage Montgomery Management Plan with the Transportation section of MNCPPC including Rustic Roads.**
- 8. Promotion of Gleaning food to be donated to people in need with the benefits of the Tax Credit for donating food. The following farmers have indicated they will work with Community Food Rescue to donate food this season. Lewis Orchard, Butlers Orchard and Red Wiggler Community Farm.** <http://news.maryland.gov/mda/press-release/2017/09/11/food-donation-tax-credit-pilot-program-now-in-effect-southern-maryland-farmers-eligible-for-up-to-5000-state-tax-credit/>
- 9. We are working to schedule an event on July 20, 2018 for celebrate the 50th Anniversary and Recognition of Conservation Tillage including no till farming in the County. The event will consist of an optional tour of farms in the morning with a**

luncheon (capped attendance of 250 people x \$20 per person = \$5,000) and short program at the County Agricultural Fair. The OAG is looking for funding sponsors for the luncheon. We have the following groups contributing up to \$500- OAG, MSCD, MCFB, UM-Extension, Willard Agri-Service. We are still working on sponsorship funding from Mid Atlantic Farm Credit, Gladhill Tractor and Mercer Grain and any other farmers that wish to contribute.

- 10. On April 25, 2018, The Transportation and Environment Committee agreed with the Director of the Montgomery County Department of Transportation regarding the replacement of the Zion Road bridge. The Council T&E Committee DOT recommends that a new two-lane bridge will replace the existing one lane bridge. Jeremy wants to thank the farmers that attended the T&E Committee Work session. Doug Lechluder, Michele Cropp, Tom Linthicum. JB Debnam, Todd Greenstone, Eric Spates, Bob Cissel. Please see page three in the T&E Committee packet below.**
http://montgomerycountymd.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=169&clip_id=14943&meta_id=154688

[Update from the May 3, 2018 meeting with the Director of DOT regarding dust on River Road.](#)

Doug Lechluder explained how some of the push back on the Zion Road bridge replacement completely ignores the \$1.6 million in savings to the County Government and tax payers once a double lane bridge is built. A new double lane bridge for Zion Road is good for the agricultural community. Jeremy explained how DOT staff is also working to address the dust problems along River Road that negatively impacts agricultural fields of products. The OAG is working with Linda Lewis to schedule a meeting of River Road residents in July to discuss improvements to River Road.

- 11. The Office of Agriculture conducted an Agricultural Reserve Bus Tour of four properties on May 9, 2018. We visited Eric Spates-Stoney Castle Farm. Keith Miller-MC Revenue Authority-Poolesville Economic Development Facility-Custom Grape Cush Pad. Ben Allnutt-Homestead Farm. Lori Larson-Wyndham Oaks Farm.**
- 12. The next meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee is June 19, 2018 at 7:00 pm. The meeting location will be at the Germantown Holy Cross Hospital.**

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

**Montgomery Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors-May 11, 2018@ 9:00am
Ag Advisory Committee-May 15, 2018 @ 7:00pm-Ag History Farm Park
Agritourism Study Advisory Committee-May 16, 2018 @ 6:00pm
Montgomery County Farm Bureau Picnic-June 3, 2018
Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Supervisors-June 5, 2018@ 7:00pm
Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-June 12, 2018 @7:00pm**

Status of new appointments to the AAC-

An Interview Committee was established consisting of Doug Tregoning, Kristin Fisher and Jeremy Criss and Interviews were conducted on May 7, 2018.

Aliza applied for renewed term

Pete and Patrick both applied for second term

Steven George Feyes said he was interested in applying for term as non-farmer

New farmers that applied for membership – Susan and Ben Butler (aunt and nephew, but two different farms) and Angie McNally

Zach Ferguson and Leonard Yourman applied as non-farmers.

We will need to replace David Weitzer-farmer member and Dennis Kamber as non-farmer.

Motion to Adjourn the meeting: Larson/Cropp