

## **Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board**

### Regular Meeting Minutes

January 9, 2024

7:00 p.m.

Board: Michael Jamison, John Fendrick, Nick DeLuca

Staff: Mike Scheffel, Natalia Salazar

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 pm.

#### 1. Approval of November meeting minutes

Fendrick made a motion to accept the minutes, Jamison seconded, and the motion carried.

#### 2. AEP/BLT Easement Program

##### a. Fistere Farm – establishing a family burial site

The property, located on Partnership Road in Poolesville, is under a County preservation easement, which does not prohibit a family burial site. Scheffel indicated that there is no action for the Board at the moment; the family still needs to apply for a permit from DPS that will ensure that groundwater will not be contaminated by the burial site.

##### b. Ostrow Farm – request for an ag building

The Jamison family would like to erect an open hoop building in order to be able to store agricultural equipment on the farm, which is located on Darnestown Road in Poolesville. Because it will be an agricultural building, it is permitted by the easement and the Jamisons do not require permission from the Board; they simply wanted to make them aware. They will work with the Soil Conservation District to meet Sediment and Erosion control requirements.

#### 3. Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation

##### a. FY23 Applicants – update

Scheffel is waiting for Sharon Burdette's property to be set in order so he can perform the baseline inspection.

##### b. FY24 Applicants – update

Scheffel will submit the appraisal documentation to the State.

#### 4. RLP Easement Program

##### a. FY23 grant – update

Scheffel would like to make use of the available grant funding with Kevin Foster's property.

b. FY24 grant

Scheffel will apply for a FY25 grant only if there is a property that can take advantage of it.

5. Legislative activities

a. [ZTA 23-08](#) – TDR and Cemetery

Scheffel shared the AAC's testimony letter with the Board prior to the meeting. Jamison asked why the AAC recommended limiting the expansion to 10 acres. Scheffel responded that the limitation is meant to protect as much farmland as possible, in keeping with the intention of the AR zone. Jamison was in favor of the Board submitting a testimony letter similar to that of the AAC.

b. [ZTA 23-09](#) – Incidental outdoor stays, planning board recommendations

Scheffel summarized the contents of the testimony letters submitted by the AAC, Montgomery Agricultural Producers, and Montgomery County Farm Bureau, as well as the Planning Board's recommended standards for the use.

c. Meeting with NFG re: ZTA 23-09, 1/5/2024

Councilmember Fani-Gonzalez heard comments from Lori Larson (AAC) and Michael Jamison (APAB).

d. [MNCPPC solar report](#) re: ZTA 20-01

The report recommends that the County amend the Zoning Code to 1) increase the size of allowed solar installations to 5 MW in order to align with the State and 2) convert solar installations from a conditional to a limited use. Scheffel indicated that all non-agricultural uses in the AR zone are currently conditional uses.

6. Other business

a. The Ag Preservation Program Administrator position interviews were held on 1/4/2024.

b. AAC and APAB new members to be interviewed in January 22<sup>nd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>.

There are three candidates for the APAB, so there will still be one vacant position even if all three candidates are appointed. There are six candidates for the AAC.

- c. RRAC new commodity farmer members and the AAC representative to the RRAC selected.

The AAC nominated Billy Willard Sr. as their representative to the RRAC.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 pm.