

2022 Annual Report

Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC)



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Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC)

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Sec. 2B-21. Agricultural Advisory Committee.

(a) *Definition.* In this Section, "Committee" means the Agricultural Advisory Committee.

(b) *Established.* The Executive must appoint, subject to confirmation by the Council, an Agricultural Advisory Committee.

(c) *Composition; Term.*

(1) The Committee has 15 voting members.

(2) The Executive should appoint:

(A) 12 members to a 3-year term who are bona fide farmers who represent the total farm community and reflect a variety of farm sizes, geographical locations and agricultural projects, at least 3 of whom must be owner-operators of commercial farm land earning 50% or more of their income from farming, and including:

(i) 1 farm economist; and

(ii) 1 conservationist; and

(B) 3 members who have no significant direct financial interest in farming, to a 1-year term to represent broad non-farm County interests. These members may be appointed to successive terms.

(3) The Committee may designate ex-officio members as necessary.

(4) If a member is appointed to fill a vacancy before a term expires, the successor serves the rest of the unexpired term.

(d) *Officers, meetings, and compensation.*

(1) The Committee must elect a chair and vice-chair from among its members.

(2) The Committee meets at the call of the Chair. The Committee must meet as often as necessary to perform its duties, but not less than 10 times each year.

(3) A member serves without compensation. However, a member may request reimbursement for mileage and dependent care costs at rates established by the County.

(e) *Duties.*

(1) The Committee must:

(A) after conferring with the Office of Agriculture, advise the Executive and Council on all matters affecting agriculture in the County;

(B) bring matters of particular importance to the attention of the Executive and Council; and

(C) comment on matters referred to it by the Executive and Council.

(f) *Annual Report.* By January 30 of each year, the Committee must submit to the Executive and Council an annual report that:

(1) outlines the activities undertaken the previous calendar year;

(2) identifies problems affecting agriculture in the County; and

(3) make recommendations for government programs that may be necessary to maintain a healthy agricultural economy in the County.

(g) *Advocacy.* The Committee must not engage in any advocacy activity at the State or federal levels unless that activity is approved by the Office of Intergovernmental Relations.

(h) *Staff.* The Chief Administrative Officer must provide appropriate staff to the Committee. (2009 L.M.C. ch. 26, § 1; 2010 L.M.C. ch. 49, § 1; 2015 L.M.C. ch. 36, § 1.)

Editor's note—2009 L.M.C. ch. 26, § 2, states: Transition. Section 2B-21, as added by Sec. 1 of this Act, establishes an Agricultural Advisory Committee. This Committee continues the

Agricultural Advisory Committee created under Council Resolution 7-1138 and restructured under Council Resolution 8-705. The County Executive may reappoint, subject to Council confirmation, the members of the Agricultural Advisory Committee. The Executive should continue to stagger the terms of the members of the Agricultural Advisory Committee so that approximately one-third of the terms continue to expire each year.

Agricultural Advisory Committee Accomplishments for 2022

1. Participated in the public hearing and Transportation and Environment Committee work session on the Septic Tank Pump Bill 40-21 recommending amendments to remove the sections on required septic easements, penalties, violations, and fines and replace them with educational incentives similar to Howard County.
2. Participated in the Planning Housing and Economic Development Committee work session on ZTA 21-07 advocating that the County Government and MNCPPC are deemphasizing both the TDR and BLT programs. This advocacy included suggestions supported by the League of Women Voters to recommend creating new incentives for using both TDRs and BLTs for affordable housing and work force housing including the densities/equivalencies for one TDR/BLT. This advocacy led to the Office of Legislative Oversight conducting a status report for both the TDR and BLT programs.
3. Advocated to the County Executive and County Council to amend ZTA 21-10 for accessory structures used for on-site farm markets, agritourism and farm alcohol production to remove the 10% size restriction.
4. Advocated to the County Executive against the Termination of the agricultural preservation easement on the Broad Run Creek II farm which became the first agricultural preservation easement terminated in the State of Maryland.
5. Monitored and promoted the Farm to Food Bank Program and Capacity Building Grants used for County farmers expanding local food production for people in need.
6. Advocated to the County Executive and County Council for amendments to the Building Energy Use Benchmarks for Bill 16-21 to exempt agricultural buildings similar to the State of Washington.
7. Participated and promoted the Workshop to Expand Accessory Solar Installations on farms with the MC Green Bank, MCA and OAG.
8. Promoted the new and beginning farmer training courses scheduled between February and April.
9. Monitored several State House and Senate Bills as part of the 2022 MD Legislative Session.
10. Provided input and recommendations for the Rustic Roads Master Plan Update including comments during the Planning Board public hearing.
11. Decimated the deer harvest report for the 2021-2022 Hunting Season and deer harvest rates down statewide and Montgomery County experienced a significant decline of 19%.
12. Participated with the County Council on the National Agricultural Day March 22, 2022 and Proclamation.
13. Promoted the 2022 Annual Farm Tour that featured 19 participating farms.
14. Participated and provided public hearing testimony in opposition to Bill 18-22 Noise Control-Leaf Removal Equipment that proposed a gasoline leaf blower prohibition.
15. Participated and provided public hearing testimony to amend the Decarbonization Bill 13-22 to exempt agricultural buildings and farming uses from the proposed 100% electric mandate.

16. Provided comments to the County Council Planning Housing and Economic Development Committee on the recommendations for Thrive 2050 Plan.
17. Assisted the County Office of Broadband to promote high speed internet to rural residents living in the Agricultural Reserve.
18. Participated in the Transportation and Environment Committee work session to oppose the amendments to the Streets and Roads Bill 24-22 recommended by the Rustic Roads Advisory Committee to expand their membership from 7 to 9 members and remove the income requirements for the three farmer representatives.
19. Reviewed the proposal from Global Supply Solutions, LLC for commodity farmers gathering up corn fodder/stover and processing into briquettes as a clean source of energy burned at the Dickerson Power Plant.
20. Monitoring the announcement from the Town of Poolesville surrounding the detection of Forever Chemicals in wells number 2 and 3 that were offlined.

2022 Ag Advisory Committee Members

Doug Lechlida, Chair

Patrick Jamison, Vice Chair & Farm

Economist Lori Larson, Conservationist

Aliza Silver, Secretary (Non Farmer)

Amanda Cather

Ben Butler

Debra Tropp, Non Farmer

Eleanor Leak

Jane Evans

John Brewer, Non Farmer

Jordan Cissel

Pete Driscoll

Russ Allnutt

**Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee
Agenda January 18, 2022**

1. Call the meeting to order and introductions.
2. Approval of the November 18, 2021, AAC minutes. *Please note the AAC did not meet in the month of December 2021.*
3. **Introduction of Bills: November 2, 2021- Bill 40-21- Individual Water Supply and Sewage Disposal Systems - Amendments (McCartney-Green)**
Lead Sponsor: County Executive at the request of the Council President
https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2021/20211102/20211102_9.pdf *Public Hearing was scheduled for 11/30/21 at 1:30 pm.*
All of the agricultural groups, APAB, MAP, AAC, MSCD and MCFB submitted written testimony opposing Bill 40-21. Robert Butz representing the MSCD also provided oral testimony in opposition to the Bill 40-21 and Robert recommended the County should consider a septic tank program that is based on incentives and education to property owners and not the heavy-handed sledgehammer approach that threaten property rights. The Bill 40-21 will be scheduled with the T&E Committee. *Please see the attached AAC letter to the County Council. The Economic Impact Statement for Bill 40-21 shows that homeowners will spend \$6.1 million every five years to pump out their septic tanks.*
4. **ZTA 21-07 Height and Density Allocations for MPDUs-Affordable Housing- Introduction on October 9, 2021-Public hearing November 8, 2021-PHED Committee recommends approval with amendments-County Action January 18, 2022.** The Office of Agriculture is working with the League of Women Voters to suggest an alternative way to achieve incentives for affordable housing that uses the TDR Overlay Zones. *The Office of Agriculture remitted the attached second letter to the County Council that advocates for amendments that will create incentives for using TDRs for affordable housing.*
https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2021/20211109/20211109_7.pdf
5. **Introduction of ZTA 21-10 Accessory Structures- November 16, 2021- Public hearing is scheduled for January 18, 2022.** *The Office of Agriculture remitted the attached letter to the County Council supporting the ZTA 21-10 since it will not have a material impact on accessory structures used for agricultural purposes. The letter also recommends revisiting the 10% size restriction for accessory structures used for agriculture education and tourism.*
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/Resources/Files/zta/2021/ZTA%2021-10.pdf>
6. **Follow up on the January 13, 2022, meeting between MAP, MCFB, and OAG**
Update on the OAG FY23-28 Ag Land Preservation CIP budget-RESJ ranking 3 out of 4 total points
Update on the OAG FY23 Operating Budget-One BDS position and one Engineering position
Electric Lawn Care-Prohibition on the Use and Sale of gasoline blowers
Reemphasis of TDRs and BLTs used for affordable housing-*See Attached letter from OAG-County Executive requested that his staff work with Margaret Chasson of the League of Women Voters*
Future ZTA on size restriction for Accessory Structures used for ag-education and tourism
Update on Community Solar in the AR Zone including tariffs for energy providers

7. **Update on the Broad Run Creek II Farm LLC** The County Executive, County Council, and Planning Board approved the acquisition of the Broad Run Creek Farm II LLC by County Parks. The CAO approved this acquisition requiring the County Parks to remit \$953,055 and five remaining TDRs the County Government C/O Office of Agriculture. Moving forward, the Parks will own 472 acres as part of a Conservation Park and the remaining 63 acres will be retained by the current owner along with 1 TDR.
https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2021/20211214/20211214_20I.pdf

The Office of Agriculture-OAG believes the decision to terminate the County AEP Easement and allow Parks to create a conservation park was a mistake. The OAG has reporting requirements to the State of Maryland for all transactions involving agricultural preservation easement properties. The OAG does not know if the State will require Montgomery County to reimburse them for the State funds that were used for this transaction.

8. **Update on the Montgomery County Farm to Food Bank program** — a partnership between the Montgomery County Food Security Task Force, the Department of Health and Human Services, Manna Food Center, the Montgomery County Food Council, the Montgomery County Office of Agriculture, and the Greater Washington Community Foundation — has collectively invested and committed over **\$630,000** in local farms to support a sustained and resilient local food supply and provide more nutritious and culturally diverse produce to residents who experience hunger. Since July of 2020, over **112,235 lbs** of fresh, locally produced food has been purchased or donated to over 30 food assistance providers, creating over **90,000 meals** for the Montgomery County community.
9. **FY23-28 Ag Land Preservation CIP Program**-*Please see the attached PDF file on the Capital budget. Also attached, are the summaries on Climate Change and Racial Equity and Social Justice policy change. The OAG received 3 out of 4 total points from the Office of RESJ that could improve access to land for new and beginning BIPOC farmers. The OAG supports the purchase of agricultural easements on farms less than 50 acres contingent upon the County appropriating additional County funding to the project.*
10. **Follow up on Bill 16-21-Environmental Sustainability- Building Energy Use Benchmarking and Performance Standards – T&E Committee on December 9, 2021**

The DEP recommends the bill should apply to equestrian facilities in the County with buildings 25,000 square feet in size or larger to assess the energy being used for lighting, heating, and air conditioning, etc. The DEP presentation included a summary of other jurisdictions around the country including Washington State that exempts all agricultural buildings.

https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/cm/2021/20211028/20211028_TE1.pdf

There was a second T&E Committee work session on December 9, 2021. *The AAC remitted a second letter to the County Council recommending that Bill 16-21 should follow the lead of*

Washington State and exempt all existing and new agricultural buildings. Please note that agricultural buildings were not mentioned during the second T&E Committee work session.

11. **Electric Lawn Care** – We are still waiting for legislation from DEP that proposes the prohibition on the use and sale of gasoline leaf blowers. A broader Electric Lawn Care bill may also be proposed.
12. MCA, OAG, MC Green Bank- Accessory Solar Webinar-*See the attached flyer for this webinar on January 24, 2022.*
13. *Next Meeting of the AAC is February 15, 2022*

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Montgomery Soil Conservation District-January 14, 2022
Agricultural Advisory Committee-January 18, 2022
MCA-Accessory Solar Webinar-January 24, 2022
Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Directors- February 1, 2022
Moco Farmer Forum-February 7, 2022
Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-February 8, 2022
Farm Bureau Day in Annapolis-February 9, 2022
Agricultural Advisory Committee-February 15, 2022
North American Raspberry and Blackberry Conference-Gaithersburg-February 21-23, 2022
Agronomy Update-Urbana Fire Hall-February 23, 2022
Mini-Farmer Conference-One Acre Farm-Reschedule to February 25, 2022
Taste of Maryland-Rescheduled to March 3, 2022

**Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee
Agenda February 15, 2022**

1. Call the meeting to order and introductions.
2. Approval of the January 18, 2022, AAC minutes.

3. **Introduction of Bills: November 2, 2021- Bill 40-21- Individual Water Supply and Sewage Disposal Systems - Amendments (McCartney-Green)**

The Transportation and Environment- T&E Committee work session is still pending.

4. **ZTA 21-07 Height and Density Allocations for MPDUs-Affordable Housing-**

The Office of Agriculture is working with the League of Women Voters to suggest an alternative way to achieve incentives for affordable housing that uses TDRs. The Office of Agriculture remitted a second letter to the County Council that advocates amendments to TDR Overlay zones that will create incentives for using TDRs for affordable housing. Please see the attached request from Council Member Reimer the Office of Legislative Oversight-OLO to provide a status on the use of both TDRs and BLTs to the Council. This will be the first report on the status of TDRs and BLTs since 2008.

5. **Public Hearing and Action on Supplemental Appropriation FY22-27 Ag Land Preservation CIP Program-February 8, 2022-Please see the attached PDF file on the Racial Equity and Social Justice-RESJ recommendations on the Supplemental Appropriation totaling \$3,675,816 for Ag Land Preservation Easements and OAG staff responses to the Office of Management and Budget.**

6. **Follow up on Bill 16-21-Environmental Sustainability- Building Energy Use Benchmarking and Performance Standards**

The letter from the AAC to the County Council recommended that Bill 16-21 should be amended, and Montgomery County should follow the lead of Washington State and exempt all existing and new agricultural buildings.

7. **Beginning Farmer Course-** The Beginning Farmer Course will start next Thursday evening, February 10, and run for a total of 9 weeks. For more information, visit the registration website. The local in-person classes will be held at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds. Topics will include soils, crop planning, financing, equipment, permits and licenses, and pest management.

8. **State Bills in the 2022 Legislative Session we are tracking.**

SB 39 Feasibility Study to reinstate MDA Meat Inspectors

SB 268 Transfer of Enforcement from MDA to MDE for pesticide enforcement-Withdrawn

HB 485 Sunday Hunting in Montgomery County

HB 184 On-Farm Composting Facilities Regulations

HB 318 On site wastewater regulations

SB 296 Agritourism Definition to include Incidental overnight farm stays

SB 567 SDAT Assessments on Farm Alcohol Production and Agritourism properties

HB 934 Prohibition on the Use and Sale of Gasoline Blowers

9. Mike Scheffel and Jeremy Criss have a meeting with MNCPPC staff to begin discussions on the Rustic Roads Master Plan Update. <https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/RusticRoadsFunctionalMasterPlan1996ocr300.pdf>

<https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/transportation/highway-planning/rustic-roads/rustic-roads-master-plans/>
10. The MD-DNR Released the deer harvesting report for the 2021-2022 Hunting Season and deer harvest rates are down statewide and Montgomery experienced a significant decline approximately 19%. <https://news.maryland.gov/dnr/2022/02/10/maryland-hunters-report-taking-70845-deer-in-2021-2022-season/>
11. The next meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee is March 15, 2022.

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Beginning Farm Courses start on Thursday -February 10, 2022 and continues for 9 weeks.
Agricultural Advisory Committee-February 15, 2022
North American Raspberry and Blackberry Conference-Gaithersburg-February 21-23, 2022
Agronomy Update-Urbana Fire Hall-February 23, 2022
Mini-Farmer Conference-One Acre Farm-Rescheduled to February 25, 2022
Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Directors- March 1, 2022
Taste of Maryland-Rescheduled to March 3, 2022
Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-March 8, 2022

**Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee
Agenda March 15, 2022**

1. Call the meeting to order and introductions.
2. Approval of the February 15, 2022, AAC minutes.
3. **Bill 40-21- Individual Water Supply and Sewage Disposal Systems - Amendments (McCartney-Green)**

All Agricultural Groups opposed the Bill 40-21 during the November 30, 2021, Public Hearing. The Transportation and Environment- T&E Committee work session is still pending. The Council is working on the CIP and Operating Budgets through March.

4. **ZTA 21-07 Height and Density Allocations for MPDUs-Affordable Housing-**

As a follow up from Council Member Reimer request to the Office of Legislative Oversight- OLO for a status on the use of both TDRs and BLTs, the OAG met with the staff of the OLO and MNCPPC to begin discussions on the data sets that are kept for TDRs. This includes the Development Right Fund that was created as a safety net if developers did not purchase TDRs. The Development rights Fund was sunset in 1995 because developers purchased TDRs. The last TDR status report was done in 2008.

5. **Follow up on Bill 16-21-Environmental Sustainability- Building Energy Use Benchmarking and Performance Standards**

There have been two T&E Committee work sessions on Bill 16-21 and a third is scheduled for March 14, 2022. The letter from the AAC to the County Council recommended that Bill 16-21 should be amended, and Montgomery County should follow the lead of Washington State and exempt all existing and new agricultural buildings.

6. **Beginning Farmer Course-** The Beginning Farmer Course will start Thursday, February 10, and run for a total of 9 weeks. For more information, visit the registration website. The local in-person classes will be held at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds. Topics will include soils, crop planning, financing, equipment, permits and licenses, and pest management. The OAG will participate on April 7, 2022 to review the County permitting and licensing requirements.

7. **Rustic Roads Master Plan Update-**

Mike Scheffel and Jeremy Criss are preparing a power point presentation that will feature pictures of Rustic Roads along with testimonials from farmers regarding their views of the Rustic Roads program and MDCOT maintenance and improvements. The APAB has prepared a very informative letter outlining the concerns the Board has with the Rustic Roads. *Please see the attached message and guidelines on foliage and tree maintenance along Rustic Roads.*

<https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/RusticRoadsFunctionalMasterPlan1996ocr300.pdf>

<https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/transportation/highway-planning/rustic-roads/rustic-roads-master-plans/>

8. Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation-

The MALPF will accept easement applications on July 1, 2022, and there are some limited opportunities for funding in Round Two which require matching funds from the County. Anyone interested in exploring this opportunity please contact Mike Scheffel in the OAG to understand the requirements and the deadlines.

9. PHED Committee Recommendation on the FY23 Ag Land Preservation CIP On March 7, 2022 PHED recommended an increase of \$500K in Current Revenue for FY23 to cover the on-going Planning, Design and Supervision-PDS expenses that are not related to CIP that we have been trying to migrate back to the Operating Budget since 2010. The PHED Committee recommended these PDS expenses should be removed from the CIP in FY24.

10. National Agricultural Day and County Council Proclamation- Council members Rice, Navarro, and Friedson will sponsor a Proclamation for National Agricultural Day on March 22, 2022 at the beginning of the County Council Work Session. Leaders of the agricultural groups are invited along with the farmers that participate with the Farm to Food Bank Program.

11. County Executive FY 23 Operating Budget Recommendations will be released on March 15, 2022.

OAG and the MSCD Operating Budget-Status of requested new positions.
County Staff updates-Cathy Yingling UM-Extension resigning March 31, 2022
Rick Walter, UM-Extension Director retiring July 2022

12. The next meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee is April 19, 2022 at 7:00 pm. We should discuss conducting this meeting in person and held at the Up County Regional Services Center in Germantown.

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Agricultural Advisory Committee-March 15, 2022
Sherwood High School Farm Tours-March 16, 2022
National Agriculture Day with the County Council-March 22, 2022
Community Solar Webinar-OAG, MCA, MC Green Bank-March 24, 2022
Annual Montgomery Weed Control Board of Directors-March 25, 2022
Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Directors- April 5, 2022
Montgomery Soil Conservation District-April 8, 2022
Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-April 12, 2022

**Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee
Agenda April 19, 2022**

1. Call the meeting to order and introductions.
2. Approval of the March 15, 2022, AAC minutes.
3. **Bill 40-21- Individual Water Supply and Sewage Disposal Systems - Amendments (McCartney-Green)**

All Agricultural Groups opposed the Bill 40-21 during the November 30, 2021, Public Hearing. The Transportation and Environment- T&E Committee work session is still pending. The Council is working on the CIP and Operating Budgets through April.

4. **ZTA 21-07 Height and Density Allocations for MPDUs-Affordable Housing-**

*As a follow up from Council Member Reimer request to the Office of Legislative Oversight-OLO for a status on the use of both TDRs and BLTs, the OAG met with the staff of the OLO and MNCPPC to begin discussions on the data sets that are kept for TDRs. The OAG responded back to MNCPPC regarding there preliminary findings that only 500 TDRs = 2,500 acres still are retained on properties in the TDR Sending Area. **The OAG does not support his finding.** The OAG found properties totaling 8,000 acres = 4,869 TDRs that are **NOT** encumbered by TDR easements. This figure does not include the properties that still have retained TDRs even though they are encumbered by TDR easements.*

5. **Final Reading of Bill 16-21-Environmental Sustainability- Building Energy Use Benchmarking and Performance Standards-April 19, 2022**

There have been three T&E Committee work sessions on Bill 16-21. The T&E Committee did not recommend agricultural buildings be exempt from this Bill 16-21. The T&E Committee stated that they would like all buildings 25,000 square feet and larger including churches to be covered by this Bill 16-21. Please see the attached third letter from the AAC to the County Council recommending that Bill 16-21 be amended, and Montgomery County should follow the lead of Washington State and exempt all existing and new agricultural buildings.

6. **Rustic Roads Master Plan Update-**

*The OAG is developing a power point presentation titled **The Rustic Roads Through the Eyes of the Farmer** that will feature pictures of Rustic Roads along with testimonials from farmers regarding their views of the Rustic Roads program and MCDOT maintenance and improvements. There are about 10 farmers that have responded so far. The APAB has prepared a very informative letter outlining the concerns the Board has with the Rustic Roads. The OAG remitted comments to the MNCPPC staff on the Planning Board Briefing document that contains recommends minimizing drainage ditches along the Rustic Roads and it provides recommendations and guidelines for foliage and tree maintenance along Rustic Roads.*

<https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/RusticRoadsFunctionalMasterPlan1996ocr300.pdf>

<https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/transportation/highway-planning/rustic-roads/rustic-roads-master-plans/>

7. The County Council Recommendation on the FY23 Ag Land Preservation CIP

On March 29, 2022, The County Council recommended an increase of \$500K in Current Revenue for FY23 to cover the on-going Planning, Design and Supervision-PDS expenses that are not related to CIP that we have been trying to migrate back to the Operating Budget since 2010. The PHED Committee recommended these PDS expenses should be removed from the CIP in FY24. The OAG has shown the CE and the County Council the amounts of local funding allocated to Ag Land Preservation in Frederick, Howard, Carroll, and Baltimore Counties that range from \$2.0 million to \$5.5 million per year.

8. National Agricultural Day and County Council Proclamation-

Council members Rice, Navarro, and Friedson sponsored a Proclamation for National Agricultural Day on March 22, 2022, at the beginning of the County Council Work Session. Leaders of the agricultural groups were invited along with the farmers that participate with the Farm to Food Bank Program.

9. County Executive FY 23 Operating Budget Recommendations March 15, 2022.

The OAG proposed a new Business Development Specialist – The BDS position will reinstate the BDS position that Kristin Fisher once held and prior to 2010.

The MSCD proposed a new Engineering Position-Technical assistance on small ponds etc.

County Staff updates-Cathy Yingling UM-Extension resigned March 31, 2022

Alga Piechocinski-UM Extension-4H retiring April 30, 2022

Linda Walters-UM Extension-Master Gardeners retiring July 2022

Rick Walter, UM-Extension Director retiring October 2022

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-April 19, 2022

Agricultural Advisory Committee-April 19, 2022

PHED Committee-OAG FY23 Operating Budget-April 25, 2022

Poolesville Crossvines Groundbreaking-April 28, 2022

CE update with MAP, MCFB, OAG-April 28, 2022

Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Directors- May 3, 2022

Western MD Trucking Forum-SHA-May 10, 2022

Montgomery Soil Conservation District-May 13, 2022

Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee -June 21, 2022
Office of Agriculture- Jeremy Criss

Call the meeting to Order-

Approval of the April 19, 2022, AAC minutes-*Please note there was no meeting in May-*

Bill 40-21- Individual Water Supply and Sewage Disposal Systems - Amendments (McCartney-Green)

All Agricultural Groups opposed the Bill 40-21 during the November 30, 2021, Public Hearing. The Transportation and Environment- T&E Committee work session is still pending. The Council approved the CIP and Operating Budgets on May 26, 2022, that the Council is on recess until June 13, 2022.

Office of Legislative Oversight on the Status of TDRs and BLTs -

The OAG staff and MNCPPC are working together to review and update the status on the use of both TDRs and BLTs. The OAG is encouraged by the MNCPPC responses regarding their preliminary findings. We are getting closer to the number of remaining TDRs in both the Sending Area=Agricultural Reserve Zone and the TDR Receiving Areas = Overlay Zones. We learned there were internal reports from 2012 and 2015 from MNCPPC to County Council that were never sent. We believe these reports show that no new TDR/BLT Receiving Areas had been recommended by the Planning Board. This finding helps to further demonstrate that the County has deemphasized the use of both TDRs and BLTs.

Introduction of Bill 13-22 Buildings-Comprehensive Building Decarbonation-Public Hearing July 26, 2022, at 1:30 pm.

This is another climate change bill similar to Bill 16-21 where the AAC requested all existing and new agricultural buildings should be exempt and the County Council ignored this recommendation.

https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2022/20220614/20220614_3E.pdf

On the bottom of page (2) the Exemptions sections begins on line 27 and carries over to page (3).

27 (c) **Exemptions.** All-electric building standards do not apply to new
28 construction, major renovations, or additions in:

29 (1) the emergency backup systems of buildings that require an
30 emergency system and hence backup power;

31 (2) buildings primarily used by a utility regulated by the Maryland
32 Public Service Commission for the generation of electric power or

- 33 steam;
- 34 (3) applications for building permits submitted to the Department
- 35 prior to the effective date of the regulation;
- 36 (4) district combined heat and powers facilities; and
- 37 (5) buildings used for the following uses, as defined in Chapter 59:
- 38 (A) Manufacturing and Production uses;
- 39 (B) Crematory;
- 40 (C) Life Sciences; and
- 41 (D) Commercial Kitchens.
- 42 (E) Agricultural Buildings including but not limited to agricultural buildings used for Agritourism and Farm Alcohol Production.**

Rustic Roads Master Plan Update-

*The OAG is developing a power point presentation titled **The Rustic Roads Through the Eyes of the Farmer** that will feature pictures of Rustic Roads along with testimonials from farmers regarding their views of the Rustic Roads program and MCDOT maintenance and improvements. There are about 15 farmers that have responded so far. The APAB has prepared a very informative letter outlining the concerns the Board has with the Rustic Roads. The OAG remitted comments to the MNCPPC staff on the April 21, 2022, Planning Board Briefing document that contains recommends minimizing drainage ditches along the Rustic Roads and it provides recommendations and guidelines for foliage and tree maintenance along Rustic Roads. The OAG remitted to the Planning staff the days and times for all of the Agricultural organizations and as of now the Planning staff has only met with the Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board.*

<https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/RusticRoadsFunctionalMasterPlan1996ocr300.pdf>

<https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/transportation/highway-planning/rustic-roads/rustic-roads-master-plans/>

FY 23 Operating Budget for the OAG-

The OAG is working with the Office of Human Resources to fill Cathy Yingling' s position. The OAG is working with Rick Walter UM-Extension to create a contract for Alga Piechocinski.

The OAG is working with Rick Walter UM-Extension to find a replacement for Santana Mays who is now working in Baltimore County Extension-4H. Santana will continue to us help us in MC for the spring show, 4H camps, and County Ag Fair to weigh in animals.

The OAG is working with Rick Walter UM-Extension to find a replacement for Linda Walters.

On July 1st, the OAG will begin working with the Office of Human Resources to:

Fill the BDS position that Kristin Fisher once held and prior to 2010.

Fill the MSCD Engineering Position-Technical assistance on small ponds etc.

County/State Staff updates-

Linda Walters-UM Extension-Master Gardeners retiring July 2022

Rick Walter, UM-Extension Director retiring October 2022

2022 Farm Tour- The OAG will be sponsoring the 2022 Farm Tour that will be held on Saturday July 23 and Sunday July 24, 2022, featuring a total of 19 farms. The Brochure is at the print shop and should be available next week. This year's Farm Tour will feature a New APP: where visitors can download Visit Montgomery's Adventure Planner App to access a special farm tour digital passport.

Next meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee- July 19, 2022-

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Agricultural Advisory Committee-June 21, 2022

Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Directors- July 5, 2022

Montgomery Soil Conservation District-July 8, 2022

Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-July 12, 2022

Agricultural Advisory Committee-July 19, 2022

Montgomery County Farm Tour-July 23 & 24, 2022

MCPS Summer Camps-August 2,3,4, 2022

Montgomery County Agricultural Fair-August 13-20, 2022

Agricultural Leaders Luncheon-August 15, 2022

COG FARM Committee Tour of Ag Reserve-September 9, 2022

Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee -September 20, 2022
Office of Agriculture- Jeremy Criss

Call the meeting to Order-

Approval of the July 19, 2022, AAC minutes- *Please note the AAC did not meet in August due to the County Agricultural Fair.*

Bill 40-21- Individual Water Supply and Sewage Disposal Systems - Amendments (McCartney-Green)

The Bill 40-21 will be discussed during the October 24, 2022, Transportation and Environment Committee. The OAG remitted to the agricultural groups an amended copy of the Bill 40-21 that removes all of the sections that would be burdensome to property owners. The OAG suggests that the agricultural groups need to schedule a meeting with the County Council President Gabe Albornoz to request this Bill be delayed until next year when the new County Council begins.

Bill 18-22 Noise Control – Leaf Removal Equipment – Amendments- *This Bill 18-22 was introduced back in June and the Public Hearing is scheduled for September 20, 2022. Please see the attached letter from the AAC opposing this Bill 18-22.*

https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2022/20220920/20220920_9.pdf

Office of Legislative Oversight on the Status of TDRs and BLTs -

The OAG staff and MNCPPC are working with the Office of Legislative Oversight to gather data and information to update the TDR and BLT programs. The OLO staff has presented draft sections of the final report and the OAG is providing comments and additional information. The OAG believes the findings from this report will show that the County Government and MNCPPC have not proposed new receiving capacity for TDRs for the past 10 + years.

Bill 13-22 Buildings-Comprehensive Building Decarbonation scheduled for Planning Housing and Economic Development Committee on October 17, 2022.

All agricultural groups provided letters to the County Council and the MAP provided in person testimony during the public hearing. The Council Member Hans Riemer has responded to the letters from the agricultural groups stating that agricultural and farming uses will be exempt from the Bill 13-22. Hans has instructed the Council Staff to draft this exemption for agricultural and farming uses.

https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2022/20220614/20220614_3E.pdf

Rustic Roads Master Plan Update-

The OAG provided additional comments to MNCPPC on July 29, 2022, in response to the messages from MNCPPC dated July 15, 2022, outlining the progress and status of the Rustic Roads Master Plan Update.

*The OAG is developing a power point presentation titled **The Rustic Roads Through the Eyes of the Farmer** that will feature pictures of Rustic Roads along with testimonials from farmers regarding their views of the Rustic Roads program and MCDOT maintenance and improvements. There are about 15 farmers that have responded so far.*

<https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/RusticRoadsFunctionalMasterPlan1996ocr300.pdf>

<https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/transportation/highway-planning/rustic-roads/rustic-roads-master-plans/>

County/State Staff updates-

The new OAG staff replacing Cathy Yingling will start on October 10, 2022.

The new UME staff Arnelle Ngalula Quashine for Alga Piechocinski's Faculty Tenure position started on September 12, 2022.

Rick Walter's Area Extension Director position was announced, two candidates were interviewed, and the UME announced there was a failed search for this position that will be announced again.

The Master Gardeners administrative position to replace Linda Walters was posted and the UME announced there was a failed search for this position that will be announced again.

The 4H job description for the position that was held by Santana Mays will be posted soon.

FY 23 Operating Budget for the OAG:

The BDS position that Kristin Fisher once held and prior to 2010 was sent to OHR to be announced.

The MSCD Engineering Position-Technical assistance on small ponds was sent to OHR to be announced.

Proposal to assign an FSA Executive Director for both Prince Georges and Montgomery County-This proposal is coming from the FSA leadership, and it would mean that Montgomery County farmers would no longer work with Missy Donnelly and that Montgomery County Farmers would continue to receive their FSA programs and services from the Derwood Office.

Maryland Agricultural Community Discussion with US Senator Ben Cardin-September 19, 2022, at 1:30 pm Please see the attached announcement and Request for RSVP to participate.

The Office of Agriculture is requesting suggested Federal Agricultural programs and/or policies to discuss during this meeting.

Update on the FY22 Farm to Food Bank-F2FB Program- Please see the attached report outlining the progress of this program for FY22 where a total of 32 farmers are participating by expanding local food production and selling the food to Manna Food Center for people in need at competitive prices.

Full County Council work session on the Thrive 2050 Plan on Thursday September 22, 2022, at 1:30 pm. There is a full County Council work session to discuss new chapters on the Environment, Economic Development and Racial Equity.

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/resources/Thrive2050/index.html>

Survey from the Montgomery County Office of Broadband Programs for Agricultural Reserve resident without broadband

PLEASE COMPLETE THE SURVEY BY FRIDAY OCTOBER 7, 2022. For more information, there will be two online community meetings:

- 7pm Wednesday September 21, 2022 <https://bit.ly/MoCoComMeet1>
- 7pm Tuesday September 27, 2022 <https://bit.ly/MoCoComMeet2>

Map of occupied unserved rural Montgomery County properties – Blue have no broadband service; Yellow will be served by Verizon

Please tell us by Oct 7 if you are not in a yellow or blue area and do not have broadband service
<https://bit.ly/Ruralsurvey>

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Poolesville Day-September 17, 2022-OAG and TEBS are promoting high speed broadband
Maryland Agricultural Community discussion with US Senator Ben Cardin- September 19, 2022
MSCD Cooperators Dinner-September 19, 2022
Agricultural Advisory Committee-September 20, 2022
MCFB Legislative Event at Calleva-September 29, 2022
Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Directors- October 7, 2022
Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-October 11, 2022
Montgomery Soil Conservation District-October 14, 2022
Agricultural Advisory Committee-October 18, 2022
Montgomery County Farm Bureau Dinner Banquet-November 1, 2022

Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee -October 18, 2022
Office of Agriculture- Jeremy Criss

Call the meeting to Order-

Approval of the September 20, 2022, AAC minutes-

Bill 40-21- Individual Water Supply and Sewage Disposal Systems - Amendments (McCartney-Green)

The Bill 40-21 will be discussed during the October 24, 2022, Transportation and Environment Committee. The OAG remitted to the agricultural groups an amended copy of the Bill 40-21 that removes all of the sections that would be burdensome to property owners. The OAG suggests that the agricultural groups need to schedule a meeting with the County Council President Gabe Albornoz to request this Bill be delayed until next year when the new County Council begins.

Bill 18-22 Noise Control – Leaf Removal Equipment – Amendments- *This Bill 18-22 was introduced back in June and the Public Hearing was on September 20, 2022. Please see the attached letter from the AAC opposing this Bill 18-22.*

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2022/20220920/202209209.pdf>

Bill 24-22 Streets and Roads-Amendments from the Rustic Roads Advisory Committee

The Bill 24-22 Streets and Roads will be discussed during a Work Session with the Transportation and Environment Committee on October 17, 2022. The RRAC is recommending amendments to Bill 24-22 that will increase the number of RRAC committee members from 7 to 9 and remove the income requirements for farmers. Please see the attached letter from the AAC on the amendments to Bill 24-22.

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/cm/2022/20221017/20221017TE1.pdf>

Office of Legislative Oversight on the Status of TDRs and BLTs -

The Office of Legislative Oversight-OLO staff has presented draft sections of the final report and the OAG and MNCPPC are providing comments and additional information. The total supply of TDRs in the AR Zone=Sending Area +4,000 and the total demand from 131 TDR Overlay zones=Receiving Areas 1,117 TDRs. With diminished capacity at 50% this means that only 558 TDRs will be realized in these TDR Overlay Zones. The OAG believes the findings from this report will show that the County Government and MNCPPC have not proposed new receiving capacity for TDRs for the past 10 + years. Here is a recent article from the Delmarva Farmer that provides the farmers perspective on the importance of how farmers use the equity from the TDR and BLT programs [Saving suburban farms, and their value – American Farm Publications](#) There is another

group meeting scheduled for October 26, 2022 and OAG believes the final OLO report should be completed in November.

Bill 13-22 Buildings-Comprehensive Building Decarbonation scheduled for Planning Housing and Economic Development Committee on October 17, 2022.

All agricultural groups provided letters to the County Council in opposition. Hans Riemer has provided the language to exempt agricultural and farming uses from Bill 13-22 and added to the existing exemptions for manufacturing, production, crematory, and commercial kitchens.

https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/cm/2022/20221017/20221017_PHEd2.pdf

Rustic Roads Master Plan Update-

On October 3, 2022, the OAG received the press release for the Rustic Roads Master Plan Working Draft.

Here's the press release:

[Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan Working Draft to be presented to the Planning Board on October 6 - Montgomery Planning](#)

The MNCPPC staff will be presenting The Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan Update Working Draft to the Planning Board on Thursday October 6, 2022, and staff is asking the Planning Board to approve it as the Public Hearing Draft. There is a proposed Planning Board Public Hearing on Thursday, November 17, 2022, with more details to follow.

The OAG is developing a power point presentation titled **The Rustic Roads Through the Eyes of the Farmer** that will feature pictures of Rustic Roads along with testimonials from farmers regarding their views of the Rustic Roads program and MCDOT maintenance and improvements.

County/State Staff updates-

The new OAG staff replacing Cathy Yingling will be delayed until November 10, 2022, because the CAO requested a month to help recruit a new Executive Administrative Aide.

The new UME staff Arnelle Ngalula Quashine for Alga Piechocinski's Faculty Tenure position started on September 12, 2022.

Rick Walter's Area Extension Director position was announced, two candidates were interviewed, and the UME announced there was a failed search for this position that will be announced again.

The Master Gardeners administrative position to replace Linda Walters was posted and the UME announced there was a failed search for this position that will be announced again.

The 4H Agent Associate that Santana Mays held was finally posted on September 29, 2022.

FY 23 Operating Budget for the OAG:

The BDS position that Kristin Fisher once held and prior to 2010 was posted and the closing date is October 25, 2022.

The MSCD Engineering Position-Technical assistance on small ponds was posted September 29, 2022, by OHR.

Update on the FY22 Farm to Food Bank-F2FB Program-

Please see the attached report outlining the progress of this program for FY22 where a total of 32 farmers are participating by expanding local food production and selling the food to Manna Food Center for people in need at competitive prices. For the past three years, the funding for F2FB program has been divided into two components-Direct Purchases of Food from participating farmers and Capacity Building Grants to help farmers implement new infrastructure to grow more local food. With the number of participating farmers increasing each year, the funding for Direct Purchases of Food ran out in June of 2022. A decision was made to temporarily suspend the Capacity Building Grants program and move this funding for Direct Purchases of Food. The program partners worked with the County Government to propose a FY23 Supplemental Appropriation totaling \$150,000 to reinstate the Capacity Building Grants component. This Supplemental Appropriation was introduced on October 11, 2022, and we expect the funds will be available in November. The farmers will remit grant applications in November so the funds can be distributed to the highest ranked farmers prior to March 2023 and prior to the 2023 growing season.

https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2022/20221011/20221011_4J.pdf

Full County Council work sessions on the Thrive 2050 Plan

There are full County Council work sessions to discuss new chapters on the Environment, Economic Development and Racial Equity and the November 2021 PHED Committee Draft. Please see the attached letter from the Office of Agriculture on the Thrive 2050 PHED Committee draft.

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/resources/Thrive2050/index.html>

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Quarterly meeting with CE, MAP, OAG, and MCFB-October 13, 2022
Montgomery Soil Conservation District-October 14, 2022
PHED Committee Work Session- Bill 13-22 Decarbonization-October 17, 2022
T&E Committee Work Session-Bill 24-22 Streets and Roads-October 17, 2022
Agricultural Advisory Committee-October 18, 2022
SCA Event on Regenerative Agriculture-October 22, 2022
T&E Committee Work Session-Bill 40-21 Septic Tank Pump-October 24, 2022
Montgomery County Farm Bureau Dinner Banquet-November 1, 2022

Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-November 8, 2022
Rustic Roads Master Plan Update-Public Hearing-November 17, 2022

Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee -November 15, 2022
Office of Agriculture- Jeremy Criss

Call the meeting to Order-

Approval of the October 18, 2022, AAC minutes-

Bill 40-21- Individual Water Supply and Sewage Disposal Systems - Amendments (McCartney-Green)

During the October 24, 2022, Transportation and Environment Committee work session several questions were raised that DEP staff did not have all the information. Another T&E Committee work session will be scheduled, and we do not expect this legislation to be scheduled until the new County Council begins after the holidays.

Bill 13-22 Buildings-Comprehensive Building Decarbonation scheduled for a second Planning Housing and Economic Development Committee on November 3, 2022.

During the November 3, 2022, PHED Committee Work Session, the Committee agreed to exempt all farming uses as defined in Chapter 59 Zoning including Farm Alcohol Production. The Bill is scheduled for a full Council Work Session on Tuesday November 15, 2022.

Bill 18-22 Noise Control – Leaf Removal Equipment – Amendments-

This Bill 18-22 Noise Control-Leaf Removal Equipment was introduced on June 21, 2022, and the Public Hearing was on September 20, 2022. Some of the agricultural groups remitted letters to the County Council opposing the Bill 18-22. A County Council work session has not been scheduled yet.

https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2022/20220920/20220920_9.pdf

Bill 24-22 Streets and Roads-Amendments from the Rustic Roads Advisory Committee

During the October 17, 2022, Transportation and Environment Committee work session the Bill 24-22 Streets and Roads was discussed. Some of the agricultural groups remitted letters to the County Council opposing the RRAC amendments to Bill 24-22. The Committee agreed to delay the RRAC recommended amendments to Bill 24-22 that would increase the number of RRAC committee members from 7 to 9 and remove the income requirements for farmers. The Committee agreed to assign the RRAC recommended amendments to the Rustic Roads Master Plan process that is currently underway including the Planning Board public hearing on November 17, 2022, at 6:00 pm.

Rustic Roads Master Plan Update-

Here's the press release for the November 17, 2022, Planning Board Public Hearing:

Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan Working Draft to be presented to the Planning Board on October 6 - Montgomery Planning

Please see the attached draft letter from Doug Lechluder outlining his personal views of the Rustic Roads Program.

*Lori Larson has agreed to present the power point presentation titled **The Rustic Roads Through the Eyes of the Farmer** that features pictures of Rustic Roads along with testimonials from farmers regarding their views of the Rustic Roads program and MCDOT maintenance and improvements.*

Office of Legislative Oversight on the Status of TDRs and BLTs -

Comments on the Draft Office of Legislative Oversight-OLO report are due back to OLO staff on November 16, 2022. The Chapter 5 Summary of Findings and OLO Recommendations is still pending.

The findings from this report will show that the County Government and MNCPPC have not proposed new receiving capacity for TDRs for the past 10 + years. The findings will also show that the imbalance of TDRs in the sending area is more than three times higher than the total TDR capacity in receiving areas. The OAG is hopeful that the new Planning Board and new County Council will help to address the imbalance of TDRs that has existed since the program began.

UME Staff updates-

Chuck Schuster has been selected to serve at the Acting/Interim Area Extension Director that Rick Walter held.

The Master Gardeners administrative position to replace Linda Walters was posted a second time and it closed on October 28, 2022, and the applicants are under review.

The 4H Agent Associate position that Santana Mays held was posted on September 29, 2022, and it closed on October 28, 2022, and the applicants are under review.

*University of Maryland Extension is seeking to fill **ten (10) Tech Extension Educator/Navigator** positions, with one position at each of the following county Extension office locations:*

- *Central Maryland (1 position in Montgomery or Howard County)*

Jeremy does not know where this position will be assigned Montgomery or Howard County?

FY 23 Operating Budget for the OAG:

The BDS position that Kristin Fisher once held and prior to 2010 was posted and the closing date is October 25, 2022.

The MSCD Engineering Position-Technical assistance on small ponds was posted September 29, 2022, by OHR and only one candidate applied. The OHR will post this position again.

Update on the FY22 Farm to Food Bank-F2FB Program-

Please see the attached announcement and requirements for the Capacity Building Grants.

Proposal on Corn Stover/Fodder used as an alternative clean energy:

During the summer, the Office of Agriculture-OAG started to hear about an initiative promoted by Johnny Jamison. This initiative would consist of commodity farmers redirecting corn residue/stover/fodder as an alternative clean source of energy and not residue management/soil amendments. Please note that the OAG is not promoting this initiative; and the OAG has agreed to make sure the agricultural community and agricultural groups are aware of this initiative and to conduct a survey for farmer interest etc. Please see the attached description of this project that was prepared by Allan Marega of Global Supply Solutions, LLC.

Next Meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee

December 20, 2022, at 7:00 pm

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee-November 15, 2022
Rustic Roads Master Plan Update-Public Hearing-November 17, 2022
Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Directors-December 8, 2022-Location???
Montgomery Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors-December 9, 2022
Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-December 13, 2022-Cancelled
Agricultural Advisory Committee-December 20, 2022

Report of the Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee -December 2022
Office of Agriculture- Jeremy Criss

Bill 40-21- Individual Water Supply and Sewage Disposal Systems - Amendments (McCartney-Green)

During the October 24, 2022, Transportation and Environment Committee work session several questions were raised that DEP staff did not have all the information. Another T&E Committee work session will be scheduled with the new County Council sometime after the holidays.

Bill 13-22 Buildings-Comprehensive Building Decarbonation scheduled for a second Planning Housing and Economic Development Committee on November 3, 2022.

During the November 3, 2022, PHED Committee Work Session, the Committee agreed to exempt all farming uses as defined in Chapter 59 Zoning including Farm Alcohol Production. The Bill was adopted by the County Council on November 29, 2022.

Bill 18-22 Noise Control – Leaf Removal Equipment – Amendments-

This Bill 18-22 Noise Control-Leaf Removal Equipment was introduced on June 21, 2022, and the Public Hearing was on September 20, 2022. Some of the agricultural groups remitted letters to the County Council opposing the Bill 18-22 which prohibits gasoline leaf blowers. A County Council work session will be scheduled after the holidays. We are hearing about some proposed exemptions from County Council members regarding the prohibition of gasoline leaf blowers.

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2022/20220920/202209209.pdf>

Bill 24-22 Streets and Roads-Amendments from the Rustic Roads Advisory Committee

During the October 17, 2022, Transportation and Environment Committee work session the Bill 24-22 Streets and Roads was discussed. Some of the agricultural groups remitted letters to the County Council opposing the RRAC amendments to Bill 24-22. The Committee agreed to delay the RRAC recommended amendments to Bill 24-22 that would increase the number of RRAC committee members from 7 to 9 and remove the income requirements for farmers. The Committee agreed to assign the RRAC recommended amendments for Bill 24-22 to the Rustic Roads Master Plan Update process that is currently underway including the Planning Board public hearing on November 17, 2022.

Rustic Roads Master Plan Update-

Here's the press release for the November 17, 2022, Planning Board Public Hearing:
[Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan Working Draft to be presented to the Planning Board on October 6 - Montgomery Planning](#)

*Lori Larson presented the power point presentation titled **The Rustic Roads Through the Eyes of the Farmer** that features pictures of Rustic Roads along with testimonials from farmers regarding their views of the Rustic Roads program and MCDOT maintenance and improvements. Several farmers attended the public hearing to demonstrate their concerns surrounding the Rustic Roads Program.*

The OAG received a gag order from Dale Tibbitts, Special Assistant to the County Executive prohibiting the County Boards-APAB and Committees-AAC from testifying at the Planning Board Public Hearing.

Office of Legislative Oversight on the Status of TDRs and BLTs -

The Draft Office of Legislative Oversight-OLO report has been remitted to the County Administrative Officer and comments are due back to OLO staff on January 5, 2023.

The findings from this report shows that the County Government and MNCPPC have not proposed new receiving capacity for TDRs since 2012. The findings also show that the imbalance of TDRs in the sending area -4,565 TDRs is more than three times higher than the total TDR capacity in receiving areas-966 TDRs. The OAG is hopeful that the new Planning Board and new County Council will help to address the imbalance of TDRs that has existed since the program began and take the necessary actions to get the TDR program back on track.

UME Staff updates-

Chuck Schuster has been selected to serve at the Acting/Interim Area Extension Director that Rick Walter held. There are several candidates that have applied for the Area Extension Director and Presentations are scheduled for January 4, 2023, starting at 9:30 am.

The Master Gardeners administrative position to replace Linda Walters was posted a second time and the applicants are under review.

The 4H Agent Associate position that Santana Mays held was posted on September 29, 2022, and it closed on October 28, 2022, and the applicants are under review.

*University of Maryland Extension is seeking to fill **ten (10) Tech Extension Educator/Navigator** positions, with one position at each of the following county Extension office locations:*

- *Central Maryland (1 position in Montgomery or Howard County)*

Jeremy does not know where this position will be assigned Montgomery or Howard County?

FY 23 Operating Budget for the OAG:

The BDS position that Kristin Fisher once held and prior to 2010 was posted and the closing date is October 25, 2022, and the interviews for six candidates were held on December 13 and 16, 2022.

The MSCD Engineering Position-Technical assistance on small ponds was posted September 29, 2022, and again on November 11, 2022. The OHR is allowing the MSCD to interview the one candidate that applied.

Update on the FY22 Farm to Food Bank-F2FB Program-

There are 25 applications from participating farmers to the capacity building grants program (up to \$10,000) for the third year of the program. Grant announcements are pending between now and the beginning of the new year 2023.

Update on the New County Council for 2023

Evan Glass, President

Andrew Friedson, Vice President

The Planning Housing and Economic Development Committee has been split up

There will be a new Planning, Housing and Parks Committee

There will be a new Economic Development Committee

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Directors-January 3, 2023

UME Area Director Candidates-Presentations-January 4, 2023

Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-January 10, 2023

Montgomery Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors-January 12, 2023

Agricultural Advisory Committee-January 17, 2023

Good Agricultural Practices-GAP Certification Training-January 27, 2023

Taste of Maryland-February 2, 2023

Annual Montgomery Weed Control Board of Directors-February 15, 2023

Annual Agronomy Update-February 22, 2023

6th Annual Farmers Forum-February 23, 2023