

## Comments on the Zoning amendment for Incidental Overnight Stays in the Ag Reserve

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposed zoning amendment. My name is Marcia Nass and I live in Gaithersburg so am mid-county. I enjoy the open spaces in the Ag Reserve in connection with boarding and riding my horses.

First, I comment on proposed zoning amendment.

Second, I comment on additional provisions that need to be added.

### COMMENTS ON ZONING AMENDMENT TEXT

#### Location of Campsites

The proposal permits campsites 100 ft. from any property line and 125 feet from the public right of way. Accordingly, as one drives or bikes through the Ag Reserve, visible campsites will repeatedly stain the reserve. Campsites will be seen here and there numerous times when driving through. In state parks, campsites are in a specific area so the beauty of the majority of the park is not compromised. This concept of limiting the obstruction from campsites is inconsistent with this zoning proposal.

The 10% or 5 acre limitation for campsites should require the campsites to be in the center of 10% space of the property or the center 5 acre space of the property. That way the feel of open spaces and farmland will not be compromised repeatedly. The magic of the Ag Reserve will not be ruined by multiple intrusions.

To center the campsites in the middle of the properties, instead of 100 feet from an adjoining property line, will not cause homeowners who paid top price for their scenic views to have their property values significantly devalued.

#### RVs

Allowing recreational vehicles must be removed from the proposed amendment. The generator of the vehicles is loud and will disturb the feeling of peace from open space. They are ugly. It makes no sense to dot the Ag Reserve with RVs here and there as you drive or bike through the Ag Reserve.

#### Tents and Removable Structures

There needs to be some guidelines for the look and feel of the tents and removable structures. Can their foundation be permanent and the sides be fabric? Should the tents be so transportable so that they can be put up and taken down by one person like camping when one hikes in? Do we only want to allow yurts that are the traditional, nomadic round tents covered and insulated with felt? Or do we want to allow square or rectangular yurts with windows and doors, frame panel yurts or permanent yurts made of wood?

Are removable structures little movable houses on wheels? Are they permanent yurts on wheels?

An architect known for harmonious buildings in nature should help write guidelines for the tents and removable structures if there is a chance that the tents or removable structures are going to be viewable by neighbors or those driving by. If not visible from the road, then architectural guidelines do not need to be addressed.

#### COMMENTS ON NECESSARY ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

The zoning proposal requires additional provisions so to ensure that the magic of the Ag Reserve is not compromised:

1. No trees should be cut that were part of the view of the adjoining landowner or those driving or biking along the roads of the Ag Reserve.
2. No open space should be compromised if it was part of the view of the adjoining landowner or those driving or biking along the roads.
3. No existing agricultural use or farmland should be compromised by new campgrounds.
4. Campgrounds should not be on Class 1 or 2 soils.
5. Provisions should be added to address necessary oversight to ensure compliance with the zoning requirements.

#### CONCLUSION

In sum, the inclusion of the points above is required to ensure that the unique and valuable jewel of the Ag Reserve is not tarnished. Please represent the interests of your down-county constituents. They need to be able to escape their urban community and enjoy a beautiful ride in the county. We cannot keep losing bit by bit the essence of the Ag Reserve – a peaceful, beautiful place with open spaces

and waving fields. I believe that it is too soon to approve this amendment as these points need to be addressed so to protect the look and feel of the Reserve.

Thank you for your consideration and protecting the interests of the public good.