

Hello I appreciate this opportunity to express my thoughts on Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) 24-02, Agricultural and Rural Zones – Campground

My name is Patricia Milligan, and I have lived on my small farm (15 acres) in the Ag Reserve for the past 24 years. When I first moved to Montgomery County Maryland in 1998 I couldn't believe that this jewel of land was actually in preserved for farming so close to Washington DC and all its suburbs. When the property that I now own came on the market in 2000, I jumped at the opportunity to buy it and live my life in the Ag Reserve. I am a naturalist, a master gardener, a horse person, and now retired Senior Technical advisor for the USNRC in the Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response.

I am here because I am very concerned about ZTA 24-02- allowing commercial camping and RVs on our farmland. It has been explained to me that this will be a good economic benefit for those landowners who choose to do this. I'm a scientist who made my living with mathematics and I'm having a hard time crunching the numbers necessary to justify this proposal. Roads of some sort must be put in place- you don't have RVs driving across fields, infrastructure to support electricity and water are needed, liability insurance is also necessary for the landowner, port-a potties are needed and along with that comes the trucks that service them. And exactly how much money will a landowner make? The local KOA in Antietam charges ~\$80/night for a 22 foot RV and for that cost you get: hot showers, clean bathrooms, 50 Max Amp service, 60' Max Length, Wi-Fi, Cable TV, pool (5/27 - 9/10), Snack Bar, Propane, Fishing, Firewood, access, Pavilion, KampK9®, ATM Machine, along with facilities for Military Clubs, Motorcycle Clubs, RV Clubs & Rallies. So, for \$80+/- per night you get all of that. Exactly How much will a landowner in the Ag reserve be able to charge? Not enough to make this venture viable financially.

ZTA 24-02 is nothing more than an assault on the integrity of the agricultural reserve zoning. The fact that the original ZTA was crafted by council members who do not represent the Ag reserve and our own council members were not included in the original draft suggests that this was done at the behest of those with money and the desire to have greater access to the land within the ag reserve. I wonder how much it takes to get someone to sell out the Ag reserve, to leave as your legacy the destruction of this great preserve. The Ag Preserve is a jewel in Montgomery county's planning and foresight for preservation. It is a model that is held up and used throughout the United States- as a county that got it right. This ZTA represents a chip into the integrity of the Ag Reserve. And then in a few years, there will be another chip into the zoning and sooner or later you have permanent structures such as hotels, motels with farmland getting the short shrift. The fact that we are even here is utterly shameful and to those council members who drafted the original ZTA which was presented to us some months ago, shame on you. How could you draft something so important and not include those who would be directly impacted and their county council representatives in your original considerations?

As to the specifics, the 100' buffer from a neighbor's property is not enough distance. I do not want to have strangers wandering my fence lines day or night, I do not want people close to my horses without my express permission, after all I am liable for my horses actions even when someone is trespassing on my property (attractive nuisance et al) and I don't want to be kept awake at night by the noise of RV generators and late night parties. Sound travels out here. We have wildlife who will be disturbed by such intrusions- birds both local and migratory, bats, deer, coyotes, fox, racoon, skunks, mink, weasel, etc. What will be the impact on these creatures? The ZTA should specify that there be a mandatory environmental impact statement required by each landowner wishing to host campers/rvers and that

neighbors and the public can review and challenge any findings. The neighbors should also be given the opportunity to absolutely block any requests from neighbors to set up camping facilities, not just “weigh in”. The ZTA should specify that landowners wishing to host campers must put them with 200-300’ of their personal homes- after all if this is such a good thing why shouldn’t the hosts enjoy the experience rather than foist it onto their neighbors? The ZTA should include a provision to assess each participating landowner a fee for road repair, for damage to wildlife, for emotional distress to neighbors and of course pay for any damages to neighboring properties which includes damage to livestock, fencing, land, etc.

We have many daytime visitors to the ag reserve; I’ve never heard any of them express dismay that they couldn’t set up a campsite in the local cow field, corn field, or in my horse pastures.

We who care about the Ag Reserve, and that includes those of us who live here and those of us who spend time enjoying it, don’t want any of this. It is simply a disgrace to Montgomery County and to those who which such foresight proposed and made happen the Agricultural Preserve in 1980.