AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

July 7, 2021

The Honorable Tom Hucker, President
Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Council President Hucker: Thrive 2050 Public Hearing Draft- The Planning Board Recommendations are not helpful

On behalf of the Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee-AAC, please accept this letter with our concerns surrounding the recommendations of the Planning Board for the Thrive 2050 Public Hearing Draft.

Several leaders of the agricultural community began meeting with the Planning Staff in 2019 to discuss the Thrive 2050 update to the County's Master Plan-1964 Wedges and Corridors Plan and the 1993 General Master Plan Refinement. Please see the attached report titled - **The Profitability and Viability of the Agricultural Sector** that was developed by the leaders of the agricultural community and remitted to the Planning Staff.

The agricultural community was encouraged that Planning Staff incorporated many of our recommendations into the Thrive 2050 Master Plan update. However, we are now concerned that the Planning Board is taking us backwards by removing our recommendations and inserting them into an appendix thereby reducing the importance of the Agricultural Reserve including the policies and programs that are critical to the success of farming and agricultural operations in Montgomery County.

We ask that you ignore and/or reverse the Ag Reserve recommendations of the Planning Board and rely upon the recommendations of the Planning Staff on the Thrive 2050 Master Plan update.

We thank the County Council for this opportunity to present our views on the Thrive 2050 Public Hearing Draft and we will participate in the County Council Committee Work Sessions when this Thrive 2050 Master Plan update is scheduled.

Sincerely,

Doug Lechlider

Doug Lechlider, Chairman

Cc: Marc Elrich, County Executive