

**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

6<sup>th</sup> Annual Farmers Forum-February 23, 2023