



AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting Agenda February 20, 2024

1. Introductions
2. Approval of the January 16, 2024 AAC minutes
3. [Bill 40-21](#), Individual Water Supply and Sewage Disposal Systems – Amendments

The OAG will continue to monitor this bill, which will be scheduled for a second T&E Committee Work Session.

4. Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) Report on the status of Transferable Development Rights (TDRs) and Building Lot Termination (BLT) programs

The OAG will continue to monitor the process of the Planning Department providing recommendations to the County Council on these programs.

5. [SB1082/HB1328](#), Solar Energy and Energy Storage - Development and State Procurement

This bill would create the Utility-Scale Solar Design and Siting Commission, which would provide recommendations related to solar energy development and land conservation and preservation, including an approach for solar development on prime and productive soils that does not include soil classification prohibitions.

It would also require the MD Energy Administration Solar Technical Assistance Program to develop a database identifying and recommending State land suitable for solar development, including land held under easement by the MD Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) and Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR). By December 1, 2025, MALPF would be required to submit to the Solar Technical Assistance Program: "(1) A list of real property owned and conservation easements held by the foundation; (2) The funds required to renew each conservation easement; and (3) Recommendations concerning requirements for the State to return land held by the foundation under a conservation easement to its original condition."

6. [HB0762](#), Montgomery County - Alcoholic Beverages - Class B Beer, Wine, and Liquor License - Off-Premises Consumption

The MC 9-24 draft bill that the Montgomery County delegation submitted to the General Assembly was introduced as HB0762. This bill would allow farm alcohol businesses with a County Class B alcohol license to sell beer and wine produced off-site for off-premises consumption. It is still in the House, which will hold a hearing on February 19, 2024.



AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

7. [ZTA 23-09, Farming – Incidental Outdoor Stays](#)

Based on the testimony provided by several agricultural and community groups and individuals for the January 16, 2024 public hearing, Councilmember Natali Fani-Gonzalez (lead sponsor) requested that the Planning, Housing, and Parks Committee work session for this ZTA be scheduled during the summer and stated that in the meantime she will continue to engage with stakeholders. Councilmembers Marilyn Balcombe and Dawn Luedtke have also indicated they will be reaching out to the agricultural community for input.

8. [ZTA 23-08, TDRs and Cemeteries](#)

In response to the testimony submitted by the AAC and APAB for the January 16, 2024 public hearing, Councilmember Marilyn Balcombe (lead sponsor) introduced an amendment to limit the right to a one-time expansion of 10 acres onto an abutting property. The ZTA was assigned to the Planning, Housing, and Parks Committee, which during its January 29, 2024 work session voted unanimously to support these amendments.

9. Visit Montgomery Rural Branding Initiative

Visit Montgomery received a grant from the Economic Development Administration for branding and marketing agritourism businesses in Montgomery County. On January 30, 2024, Visit Montgomery and the OAG hosted a listening session to receive feedback from the agritourism businesses in the county, including operations offering pick-your-own, farm markets, tasting rooms, workshops, ag education, events, and other activities. On February 28, 2024, a listening session will be held to receive feedback from other stakeholder groups (MC Dept. of Planning, MC Dept. of Parks, Montgomery Countryside Alliance, Sugarloaf Citizens Association, Heritage Montgomery, Rustic Roads Advisory Committee, and many others).

10. Vacancies in the APAB, AAC, and RRAC

The OAG and Lori Larson interviewed five candidates for the five AAC vacancies and made the following nominations to the County Executive: four farmer members (Paula Linthicum, Fred Lechliden, Jeff Dowling, and Tom Precht) and one non-farmer member (Ellen Gordon).

The OAG and the Chair of the APAB, Michael Jamison, interviewed three candidates for the four APAB vacancies and made the following nominations to the County Executive: two farmer members (Sarah Daken and Randy Stabler) and one non-farmer member (Nick Magliato).

The County Executive recommended all five AAC and three APAB nominees on February 7, 2024 and they will be confirmed by the County Council on February 27, 2024.

The application period for the RRAC ended on January 5, 2024. Tom Linthicum, Mason Hopkins, and John Jamison applied as farmer members. On January 17, 2024, the County Executive's office indicated that the applicants would be contacted for interviews and that Billy Willard's nomination as



AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

the AAC representative to the RRAC would be made at the same time as that of the three farmer members.

11. Vacant Agricultural Preservation Program Administrator position

The interview committee selected Dr. Mike Weyand, who officially started on February 12, 2024. Dr. Weyand previously worked in the Montgomery Soil Conservation District and is therefore familiar with the county.

12. The next meeting of the AAC will be held on March 19, 2024 at 7:00 pm via Microsoft Teams.

13. Upcoming meetings and events:

UME Central MD Agronomy Update: February 21, 2024

Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board meeting: March 5, 2024

Montgomery Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting: March 8, 2024

Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board meeting: March 12, 2024

National Agriculture Day County Council Luncheon and Proclamation: March 19, 2024