

From: Fisher, Kristin
To: McVary, Jessica; Criss, Jeremy; Scheffel, Mike; Bob Cissel
Cc: Afzal, Khalid; McCarthy, Caroline
Subject: Re: New General Plan--Thrive Montgomery 2050--I need your comments on the Ag Reserve recommendations
Date: Monday, August 3, 2020 7:15:12 PM

Hi Jessica,

Thank you for responding to our "Profitability and Viability of the Agricultural Sector". Your comments and suggestions were very helpful. We support your suggested wording changes to 7.4.6, 7.4.7c, and the additional action under 7.4.1. Below, we have identified a few small suggestions/comments for your consideration:

- Policy 7.4.1, suggested word changes in red: Eliminate **regulatory and other** barriers to broaden access to healthy food, agritourism, and agricultural employment through the support and diversification of the agricultural sector including agritourism, farm alcohol production, and farming in **urban, suburban, and rural areas**. Our intent here (and perhaps it can be achieved in other ways as you see fit), is to encourage farming in all areas of the county by eliminating barriers and unnecessary hurdles. Although farming is already obviously happening in the Ag Reserve, there is much room for improvement in terms of regulatory and cost barriers to entering, expanding, and diversifying agribusinesses.
- Policy 7.4.1 also seems to have guidance for specific issues related to urban and suburban farming (updating the zoning code, tax credits, public benefits). Would it be appropriate to also have something somewhat specific related to our interest in streamlining opportunities for farm business expansion and diversification under Chapter 50? Perhaps if it must stay general, updating language under 3.6.1 to say, "Continue to improve interagency collaboration to streamline review of development projects, **as well as the costs of permitting, taxation, and other barriers to economically viable business expansion and diversification.**" Again, our intent is to remove barriers to farming in all areas of the county, and we have a well-documented list of issues in our "Profitability and Viability" document we shared with you, starting with Chapter 50.
- The Policy and Actions related to internet connectedness in the County (Goal 2.4) do talk about identifying areas that need coverage, but is there a way to strengthen this to intend that more be done that just identifying the problem areas? We, for example, know what areas of the Ag Reserve are lacking this service, and we hope that acting on that knowledge will happen in the next 5 (hopefully not 30!) years. Can an action item be more specific to tackling the issue? Perhaps acknowledging the need to identify internet service as a public utility that all must have access to?

Thanks again for your time working on this and discussing it with us last week.

Best,
Kristin

From: McVary, Jessica <Jessica.McVary@montgomeryplanning.org>
Sent: Sunday, July 26, 2020 2:13 PM
To: Criss, Jeremy <Jeremy.Criss@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Scheffel, Mike <Mike.Scheffel@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Fisher, Kristin <Kristin.Fisher@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Bob Cissel <bobcissel50@gmail.com>
Cc: Afzal, Khalid <khalid.afzal@montgomeryplanning.org>; McCarthy, Caroline <caroline.mccarthy@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: RE: New General Plan--Thrive Montgomery 2050--I need your comments on the Ag Reserve recommendations

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Hi, Jeremy:

Apologies for the delayed response. I appreciate you looping us into your communication with Meredith. During our meeting on Tuesday, I had anticipated that we would resume conversations on the document that you provided previously. However, please let us know if you would like to discuss anything else, particularly in light of Meredith's request.

Also, please feel free to include Meredith in our meeting on Tuesday.

Thank you,
Jessica

From: Criss, Jeremy <Jeremy.Criss@montgomerycountymd.gov>
Sent: Friday, July 24, 2020 10:05 AM
To: McVary, Jessica <Jessica.McVary@montgomeryplanning.org>; Scheffel, Mike <Mike.Scheffel@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Fisher, Kristin <Kristin.Fisher@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Bob Cissel <bobcissel50@gmail.com>
Cc: Afzal, Khalid <khalid.afzal@montgomeryplanning.org>; McCarthy, Caroline <caroline.mccarthy@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: RE: New General Plan--Thrive Montgomery 2050--I need your comments on the Ag Reserve recommendations

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Hello Jessica,

I intentionally copied you on the message to demonstrate to Meredith that agricultural representatives are working with MNCPPC staff and we have a meeting scheduled on Tuesday of next week.

Meredith is requesting me to provide comments back to her on Tuesday and this is problematic for us.

We will continue with our follow up meeting on Tuesday July 28, 2020 at 10:00 am and then remit comments back to Meredith later next week.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks J

Please take a moment to answer this quick satisfaction survey about our interaction today: <https://forms.gle/yXhnxpQLtHgFPtBXG>

Jeremy V. Criss
Office of Agricultural Services, Director
18410 Muncaster Road
Derwood, Maryland 20855
301-590-2830 (Office)
301-943-9766 (Cell)

jeremy.criss@montgomerycountymd.gov
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/agsservices>

CONNECT WITH The Office of Agriculture



Montgomery County Ag Reserve
93,000 acres

From: McVary, Jessica <Jessica.McVary@montgomeryplanning.org>
Sent: Friday, July 24, 2020 9:51 AM
To: Scheffel, Mike <Mike.Scheffel@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Criss, Jeremy <Jeremy.Criss@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Fisher, Kristin <Kristin.Fisher@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Bob Cissel <bobcissel50@gmail.com>
Cc: Afzal, Khalid <khalid.afzal@montgomeryplanning.org>; McCarthy, Caroline <caroline.mccarthy@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: RE: New General Plan--Thrive Montgomery 2050--I need your comments on the Ag Reserve recommendations

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Good morning, everyone.

I'm not sure if I was intentionally included in this email communication, but I am grateful to you for the heads up about the County Executive's concerns. Hopefully our conversations over the last several months have demonstrated Montgomery Planning's commitment to the Ag Reserve. We look forward to working further with you and other members of the agricultural community to address these concerns.

If you would like to meet in advance of our meeting on Tuesday morning, I'm happy to do so.

Thank you,
Jessica

From: Scheffel, Mike <Mike.Scheffel@montgomerycountymd.gov>
Sent: Friday, July 24, 2020 8:53 AM
To: jeremy.criss@montgomerycountymd.gov; Fisher, Kristin <Kristin.Fisher@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Bob Cissel <bobcissel50@gmail.com>
Cc: McVary, Jessica <Jessica.McVary@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: RE: New General Plan--Thrive Montgomery 2050--I need your comments on the Ag Reserve recommendations

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.
I have time both today and Monday to talk. Just let me know when.

Mike Scheffel
Office of Agricultural Services, Agricultural Land Preservation Program Administrator
18410 Muncaster Road
Derwood, Maryland 20855
301-590-2856 (Office)
443-487-2971 (Cell)
mike.scheffel@montgomerycountymd.gov
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/agsservices>
CONNECT WITH The Office of Agriculture
Montgomery County Ag Reserve
93,000 acres
Please take a moment to answer this quick satisfaction survey about our interaction today: <https://forms.gle/yXhnxpQLtHgFPtBX6>

From: Criss, Jeremy
Sent: Friday, July 24, 2020 8:47 AM
To: Scheffel, Mike <Mike.Scheffel@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Fisher, Kristin <Kristin.Fisher@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Bob Cissel <bobcissel50@gmail.com>
Cc: McVary, Jessica <Jessica.McVary@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: FW: New General Plan--Thrive Montgomery 2050--I need your comments on the Ag Reserve recommendations

Good Morning Mike, Kristin and Bob,
Please see the attached message that sent to the CE staff just now on the Thrive 2050 plan.
I would like us to huddle up on TEAMS before Tuesday's meeting at 10:00 with MNCPPC.
Also please see the second attached message that I sent to Jessica on Monday regarding the responses in blue from the MNCPPC staff.
We need to discuss these responses to make sure the agricultural representatives are on the same page when we talk with MNCPPC next Tuesday at 10:00am.
Please let me know if you have some time today or Monday.
Thanks J

Please take a moment to answer this quick satisfaction survey about our interaction today: <https://forms.gle/yXhnxpQLtHgFPtBX6>

Jeremy V. Criss
Office of Agricultural Services, Director
18410 Muncaster Road
Derwood, Maryland 20855
301-590-2830 (Office)
301-943-9766 (Cell)
jeremy.criss@montgomerycountymd.gov
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/agsservices>
CONNECT WITH The Office of Agriculture



Montgomery County Ag Reserve
93,000 acres

From: Criss, Jeremy
Sent: Friday, July 24, 2020 8:38 AM
To: Wellington, Meredith <Meredith.Wellington@montgomerycountymd.gov>
Cc: Mike Scheffel <Mike.Scheffel@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Fisher, Kristin <Kristin.Fisher@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Bob Cissel <bobcissel50@gmail.com>; McVary, Jessica <Jessica.McVary@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: RE: New General Plan--Thrive Montgomery 2050--I need your comments on the Ag Reserve recommendations

Hello Meredith,
I am doing well although it has been a difficult week with the joint PHED/T&E committee recommendation to support the Solar ZTA 20-01.
When we informed the County Executive about this yesterday Marc responded that this news is depressing.
The County Council is about to make an irreversible mistake that will negatively impact farming and result in the reduction of farmland for agricultural production.
In regards to your message below, please see the attached messages that shows how the Office of Agriculture and the Montgomery Agricultural Producers are working with MNCPPC on Thrive 2050 Plan.
The agricultural representative drafted the word document titled Profitability and Viability of the Agricultural sector.
The MNCPPC provided the responses in blue.
There is a follow up meeting set up for next Tuesday July 28, 2020 at 10:00 between these agricultural representatives and the MNCPPC staff.
Please let us know if you would like attend this meeting.
Following the meeting the agricultural representatives will be finalizing our comments.
Please let us know if you have any questions.
Thanks J

Please take a moment to answer this quick satisfaction survey about our interaction today: <https://forms.gle/yXhnxpQLtHgFPtBX6>

Jeremy V. Criss
Office of Agricultural Services, Director
18410 Muncaster Road
Derwood, Maryland 20855
301-590-2830 (Office)
301-943-9766 (Cell)
jeremy.criss@montgomerycountymd.gov
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/agsservices>
CONNECT WITH The Office of Agriculture



Montgomery County Ag Reserve
93,000 acres

From: Wellington, Meredith <Meredith.Wellington@montgomerycountymd.gov>
Sent: Friday, July 24, 2020 7:19 AM
To: Criss, Jeremy <Jeremy.Criss@montgomerycountymd.gov>
Subject: New General Plan--Thrive Montgomery 2050--I need your comments on the Ag Reserve recommendations

Hi Jeremy,

How are you?

The Commission has released a draft of a new General Plan. The Planning Board will hold a public hearing on it in October or November.

The County Executive is sending comments on the draft to the Planning Department next week.

Could you please send me your comments on the draft's recommendations for the Agricultural Reserve by this coming Tuesday? The comments can be as brief as works for you.

As I read the draft's recommendations, if approved, this new General Plan would weaken the Ag Reserve and open it up for more new uses like solar. Here is the link to the draft, and the page numbers where the Ag Reserve is discussed:

<https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Final-staff-report-vision-goals-policies-and-actions-for-6-11-20-PB-.pdf>

Pages 48-60 Please check out p. 58, in particular.

The current General Plan Refinement from 1993, shows a true commitment to the Ag Reserve. Here is the link to the 1993 Plan, and the page numbers where the Ag Reserve is discussed:

<https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/GeneralPlanRefinement1993ocr.pdf>

See pages 32-33.

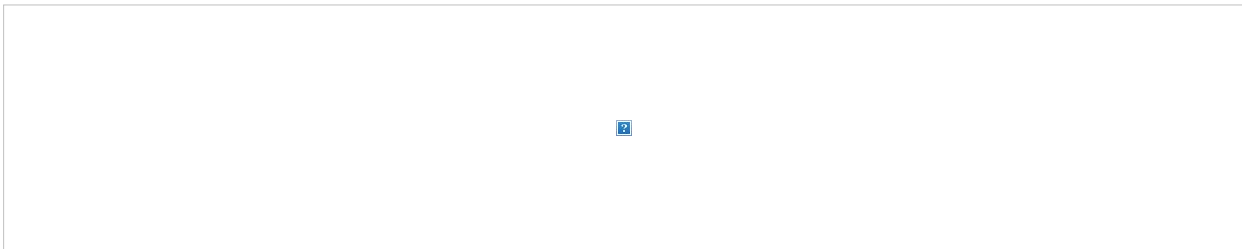
I know how busy you are, Jeremy, but your comments can make a difference.

Thanks,

Meredith
301-580-4700

Meredith Wellington
Land Use Planning Policy Analyst
Office of the Montgomery County Executive
101 Monroe Street, Second Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850
240-777-2006

Take 10 minutes to be counted now – visit: <https://2020census.gov/>



For COVID-19 Information and resources, visit: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COVID19