

GARRETT COUNTY AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
c/o GARRETT COUNTY PLANNING & LAND MANAGEMENT
203 S. 4th St. – Room 210
Oakland, Maryland 21550
301-334-1920 ■ FAX 301-334-5023

MINUTES

The 68th meeting of the Garrett County Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board was held in the office of Planning & Land Management on Monday, March 26, 2018 at 11:00 a.m. Attendees included Chairman George Bishoff, Paul Petersheim, Gary Berkebile, Anne Davidson and Carl Bender. Staff included Chad Fike and Gary Aronhalt.

1. Chairman Bishoff called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. The first order of business entailed review of the April 29, 2016 minutes. The minutes were approved unanimously.
2. Reports of Officers – There were no updates from the Officers.
3. Unfinished Business- Mr. Fike provided an update on Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) easements. MALPF will be continuing a 2-year cycle, and will be taking applications in July, 2018. The Charles & Peggy Gosnell (DC-119) and Daniel & Daniel Ganoë II easements are complete. Valley of Hope Farms, LLC. (SY-121) has received an offer, and are currently in the process of addressing some mineral rights issues that were discovered during the title search. Patricia Hummel and Robert Opel both received Insufficient Funds Offers from MALPF, and both declined to accept the reduced offers. Robert Opel plans to reapply in 2018. Patricia Hummel also plans to reapply in 2018 for only the portion of her farm north of US Route 50.

Mr. Aronhalt then provided an update on the Bear Creek Rural Legacy Program. The County is now required, by DNR, to obtain natural gas drilling feasibility studies for all applicant properties with severed mineral rights. The County has submitted four offers to purchase easements for the Rural Legacy Program. All four have been declined, with landowners citing low offer prices as the reason for declining. Mr. Fike indicated that after the Septic Bill passed, all parcels typically have the same number of development rights, regardless of acreage, which may have impacted appraisal values.

4. New Business –
 - A.) A District application (SY-126) was submitted by Dwayne & Karen Kinsinger to create a 33.44-acre District located off of Pleasant Valley Road. Mr. Aronhalt indicated that the property meets all criteria for District eligibility including that the property contains less than 50 acres; however, it is adjacent to a DNR easement that permits eligibility; that the land is actively used for Agricultural purposes; and that at least 50% of the land is in USDA Soil Capability Class I, II and III, and the land lies outside the boundary of an existing water and sewer service. Mr. Fike indicated that he had confirmed with MALPF staff that the property, although less than 50 acres, was eligible for preservation due to the adjacent easement held by DNR. In consideration of these facts the Board

approved the application by a unanimous vote and forwarded their recommendation to the County Commissioners for approval.

- B.) A District application (CR-127) was submitted by Dennis & Eileen Buckel to create a 387.39-acre District located along Peat Moss Road. Mr. Aronhalt indicated that the property meets all criteria for District eligibility including that the property contains over 50 acres; that the land is actively used for Agricultural purposes; that the land lies outside the boundary of any existing water and sewer service area and that at least 50% of the land is in Woodlands Group I and II. In consideration of these facts the Board approved the application by a unanimous vote and forwarded their recommendation to the County Commissioners for approval.
- C.) A District application (CR-128) was submitted by Joseph M. Yoder to create a 90.23-acre District located along Dorsey Hotel Road and Peavine Road. Mr. Aronhalt indicated that the property meets all criteria for District eligibility including that the property contains 50 acres; that the land is actively used for Agricultural purposes; and that at least 50% of the land is in USDA Soil Capability Class I, II and III, that the land lies outside the boundary of any existing water and sewer service area. In consideration of these facts the Board approved the application by a unanimous vote and forwarded their recommendation to the County Commissioners for approval.
- D.) A District application (NY-129) was submitted by Frank Vitez to create a 172.63-acre District located along Mill Run Road. Mr. Aronhalt indicated that the property meets all criteria for District eligibility including that the property contains 50 acres; that the land is actively used for Agricultural purposes; that the land lies outside the boundary of any existing water and sewer service area and that at least 50% of the land is in Woodlands Group I and II. In consideration of these facts the Board approved the application by a unanimous vote and forwarded their recommendation to the County Commissioners for approval.
- E.) Mr. Aronhalt announced that the current terms for the Garrett County Agricultural Advisory Board members would expire on 28 December 2018. Carl Bender indicated that he did not plan to renew his term. All other members present agreed to extend their terms for an additional five years. Mr. Fike thanked Mr. Bender for his many years of service and asked the Board to think about potential candidates to fill the vacancy.

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Gary W. Aronhalt
Planning & Land Management