



## Harford County Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes  
July 5, 2022

### Opening

The meeting of the Harford County Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board was called to order at 7:00pm on July 5, 2022 at 220 South Main Street, Bel Air, Maryland 21014.

### Board Attendees

Jeff Holloway, Jim Morris, Jackie Smithson and John Stump

Megan McMillian was unable to attend.

Staff: Bill Amoss & Jen Wilson

Guests: Greg Szoka, Susan Kelly, Chad Rice, Kim Rice, & Jasmine Rice

### Approval of Minutes

Mr. Morris moved to approve minutes from the May 3, 2022 meeting with Mr. Holloway seconding. The minutes were approved as presented.

### New Business

- The Board reviewed a request presented by Mr. Greg Szoka and Ms. Susan Kelly for a 10-foot-wide access easement across the Lands of Pennington under a HALPP easement. The Kelly's purchased their lot in the 1970's and have always used the existing driveway that is partially on the Pennington farm and the adjacent lot, which is under separate ownership. The Kelly's would now like to create a formal access easement to memorialize the verbal agreement that has been in place for use of the Pennington land. The current access point provides better sight distance than if a driveway were built on the panhandle portion of the Kelly's lot. The easement would not require the loss of cultivated land and will not provide access for additional lots to be created. A motion was made by Mr. Holloway to approve the request and was seconded by Mr. Morris. The motion passed.
- The Board reviewed a request presented by Mr. Greg Szoka and Mr. Chad Rice for an agricultural subdivision of  $\pm 7$  acres of the Walter Farm, LLC property under a HALPP easement to be consolidated with the Rice property. The 7 acres in question includes an existing  $\pm 3$ -acre septic reserve area for the benefit of Mr. Rice's property. Mr. Rice is hoping to increase his property to 10-acres in size for the ability to create a farm market and kayak rental on his property at the corner of Walter's Mill Road and Deer Creek Church Road. Mr. Rice is currently working to restore the old mill located on his property for this project. Mr. Rice intends to sell local produce and agricultural products from farms in the County. The site already contains adequate parking areas and is often used by local residents

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to access Deer Creek. Mr. Amoss provided the Board with the current Harford County Code regulating such requests. The Board discussed if a home could be built on the Rice property. The right to do so currently exists with the Rice property. The additional 7 acres would not increase that ability, nor would a dwelling be able to be constructed on the 7 acres. The 7 acres would remain under the HALPP easement and be subject to all restrictions of the easement. A motion was made by Mr. Morris to approve the request. The request was seconded by Mr. Holloway. The motion passed.

- The Board reviewed the eight (8) MALPF applications for the FY2023 round. The Board awarded their discretionary points for ranking as listed below. For each property, the Board reviewed aerial photos, information in the applications, and information provided by the owners in their discussions with staff regarding their farm operations and any hardship situations. The points awarded will be added to the score given by the ranking system and the final ranking will be submitted to MALPF for use during their offer process

Applicant	Contribution to Agriculture	Special Conditions
Bandy	5	0
Bertrand	0	0
Bonham	10	0
Caswell	0	10 (hardship consideration)
Cattail, LLC	10	10 (hardship consideration)
McKnight	5	0
Schucker	5	0
Thompson	5	0

- Mr. Amoss updated the Board on the status of the Rural Legacy Program. One (1) easement of 107 acres is scheduled to settle on July 15<sup>th</sup>. With the funds remaining from the grant, staff was able to secure an agreement of sale for a 30-acre easement and the survey is now under way for that property.
- Mr. Amoss reviewed the nine (9) easements working toward settlement in the County Program. Three (3) have recently settled with the others getting closer. One (1) owner has additional survey work to complete in order to erase lots. The deadline for settlement is currently August 8 unless the County Council extends the deadline.
- Mr. Amoss updated the Board on potential changes to the County Program. Staff and members of the study group met with the County Executive to discuss the possible changes. The County Executive is reviewing the information and is expected to get back with everyone on taking the next steps and when the next round of offers can move forward.
- Mr. Amoss updated the Board on the status of MALPF easements. Two (2) easements remain to settle for FY21, one of which is expected to settle shortly. All FY2022 offers have been made. One (1) owner is preparing to record a plat and is quickly moving toward settlement. Two (2) applicants are re-applying for the FY2023 cycle. The eight (8) FY2023 applications have been submitted to MALPF for their review.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm