



JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.
County Executive

STEPHEN LAFFERTY, Director
Department of Planning

Baltimore County Agriculture Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes

MEETING: October 11, 2023 Board Meeting – 6:30 PM @ The Baltimore County Center for Maryland Agriculture, 1114 Shawan Road, Cockeysville, MD 21030.

Attendees:

Board Members Present: Holly Gilmore, Brenda Strohmer (remote), Joanna Winkler

Ex Officio Members Present: Jim Ensor

Staff: Megan Benjamin, Joe Wiley, Abigail Rogers

Others: Jessica Armacost, Jessica Valmas, Sam Sakay

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES/ADDITION OR DELETION OF AGENDA ITEMS:

A. Approval of Minutes of: September 13, 2023

Motion: To approve the minutes of September 13, 2023

Motioned by: Brenda Strohmer Seconded by: Holly Gilmore

Decision: Unanimous Approval

II. MALPF EASEMENT LANDOWNER REQUESTS/ISSUES

A. **Gracefields, LLC & Westwell, LLC- 13401 Longnecker Road, Parkton- 115+/- ac- (MALPF #03-21-12)**

Request: Request for approval of a farm tenant apartment.

Background: The property came under easement in 2022. At the time of application and easement, the existence of a farm tenant apartment was not noted; however, a farm tenant apartment exists in the barn and is being utilized by a farm tenant.

Owners, Meg Blakey & Rachel Westerlund (trustees of the respective LLCs), request the Board's consideration and recommendation of the existing barn apartment as a farm tenant apartment. The owners require the tenant's assistance to run the farm operation. The farm currently operates as a horse farm. Leasa Hoernig is the full-time farm tenant and occupies the farm tenant apartment. Her responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Gardens and trees-maintenance and care
- Horses-maintenance and care
- Pastures-maintenance and care
- Security/Night watchman

- Vet-tech assistance for equine ambulatory veterinary practice

Discussion: Megan Benjamin presented the background information.

Motion: Approval of a farm tenant apartment.

Motioned by: Holly Gilmore Seconded by: Brenda Strohmer

Decision: Unanimous Approval

III. BALTIMORE COUNTY PERMITS % DEVELOPMENT APPLICANTS

A. Valmas, Jessica and Theodore- 21201 W. Liberty Road, Parkton – 4+/- ac

Request: Verification of farm use for a farm stand.

Background: Jessica and Theodore Valmas requested Board review and recommendation for a farmer's roadside stand on their property located at 21201 W. Liberty Road. The stand, which would sell flowers, is to be located in an existing detached garage. The owners indicated that all flowers sold will be grown on the property. The owners do not intend to have more than three visiting cars at a time. They intend for their stand to be open for business no more than three days a week. The Board was asked to consider, review and verify the status of the farm.

Discussion: Abigail Rogers presented the background information and shared photos taken during a staff site visit. Jessica Valmas said the property has additional space for parking, though it is not currently graveled. Ms. Valmas runs a flower subscription service, so the only people visiting the farm stand would be subscribers who schedule an appointment. Abigail Rogers said that there are no binding terms on what days Ms. Valmas can have her business open or how many cars and visitors she can host. Megan Benjamin said the Board is not reviewing hours or days of operation. Joanna Winkler asked about the code requirements for farm stands. Ms. Benjamin said that farm stands are required by code to have at least 50% of what they are selling be grown on the property. Ms. Valmas said that all flowers she intends to sell are grown on her property.

Motion: Approval for of farm use for farm stand.

Motioned by: Brenda Strohmer Seconded by: Holly Gilmore

Decision: Unanimous Approval

IV. STATUS OF EASEMENT TRANSACTIONS/ INSPECTIONS/ UPDATES

Joe Wiley reported that all required inspections on MALPF, Federal, and County easements will be complete by November.

One MALPF property (Dott) from the FY22 cycle is ready for baseline inspection and will close soon after that is complete.

V. MISCELLANEOUS/ INFORMATION/ CORRESPONDENCE/ NEWS ARTICLES

- Ms. Benjamin reminded the Board of the Planning 101 event being hosted at the Agricultural Center on October 19th. She offered postcards on the event to meeting attendees.
- Joe Wiley mentioned that the CZMP rezoning process has begun and staff will provide a summary of any rural/ag related issues at a future meeting
- Jess Armacost announced that there will be a Grower Connect Event on December 1st at the Ag Center, hosted by the Office of Agriculture.

VII. FUTURE MEETING DATES

Next Meeting: November 8, 2023

VIII. ADJOURNMENT: 6:45 PM