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County Executive

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Department of Planning

## Baltimore County Agriculture Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

**MEETING: April 10, 2019 Field Meeting 2:30 – 4:15 pm and Board Meeting – 6:30pm – 8:20 pm @ The Baltimore County Center for Maryland Agriculture, 1114 Shawan Road, Cockeysville, MD 21030**

**FIELD MEETING INTRODUCTION:** The field meeting commenced at 2:30 pm.

**Motion:** Steve Myer

**Second:** John Merryman

**Decision:** Unanimous Approval

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Gail Ensor, John Merryman, Steve Myer

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Scott Welsh, Russell Berk

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Kaylee Justice and Joseph Wiley (staff)

**RECESS:** The meeting was recessed at 2:35 pm.

**MEETING RECONVENED:** The meeting was reconvened at 2:50 pm.

**A. Kings Eye, LLC. – 3332 Butler Road, 157 +/- acres**

**Request-** Request for recommendation of approval for Agricultural Subdivision

**DISCUSSION:** The Board and staff members drove on site to view the property. Staff explained how the property would be reconfigured and added to neighboring farms.

**RECESS:** The meeting was recessed at 3:30 pm.

**MEETING RECONVENED:** The meeting was reconvened at 3:40 pm.

**B. Harrison (MALPF #06-73-19e)/Offutt – 3018 Black Rock Road, Upperco 175.972 +/- acres**

**Request-** Request for recommendation of approval for Land Swap.

**DISCUSSION:** The Board and staff members visited this property during the field meeting to view the areas of the land swap. Staff discussed that the septic reserve area would need to be delineated to ensure it was not included with the swap.

**RECESS:** The field meeting was recessed at 3:47 pm.

**MEETING RECONVENED:** The meeting was reconvened at 4:02 pm.

**C. Bacon Hall Farm (BC #04-07) – 16300 Cedar Grove Road, Sparks Glencoe 237 +/- acres**

**Request-** Request for recommendation for two on-site improvements conditioned upon County Council approval to amendment of easement.

**DISCUSSION:** The Board and staff members visited this property during the field meeting to view the location of the proposed farm maintenance building and the outdoor riding ring on site. Joe Wiley (staff) explained that the easement was partially funded with Federal funds and would require SHA review as well. Kaylee Justice (staff) added that the addition of these improvements would require an amendment to the Deed of Easement as well. The Board discussed concerns of run-off as they were unsure of the slope of the proposed canopy.

**RECESS:** The field meeting was recessed at 4:15 pm.

## **BOARD MEETING AT THE BALTIMORE COUNTY CENTER FOR MARYLAND AGRICULTURE**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** John Merryman, Gail Ensor, Steve Myer

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Scott Welsh, Russell Berk

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Wally Lippincott (Staff), Joe Wiley (Staff), Kaylee Justice (Staff), Ann Jones (Ex-officio), Daniel Schuster, Tatiana Caldera and Dino La Fiandra (Landowner and Representative), Bruce Doak (Consultant), Mike Ruby (Country Chronicle), Kevin and Deborah Purkey (Landowners), Anna Peterson (Landowner), Ned Halle and Jack Fisher (Representatives).

**INTRODUCTION:** The meeting was reconvened at 6:30 pm by Gail Ensor.

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

A. Approval of Minutes of: **February 13, 2019**

**Motion: To approve the minutes of February 13, 2019.**

**Motion by: Steve Myer                      Second by: John Merryman**

**Decision: Unanimous Approval**

B. Addition or Deletion of Agenda Items.

### **II. MALPF EASEMENT LANDOWNER REQUESTS/ISSUES**

**A. Harrison (MALPF #06-73-19e)/Offutt – 3018 Black Rock Road, Upperco 175.972 +/- acres**

**Request-** Request for recommendation of approval for a land swap.

**Background:** Michael and Elizabeth Harrison (MALPF #03-96-17e) currently operate Willowdale Farm Associates on their 175.972 acre property located at 3018 Black Rock Road in Upperco. The Offutt family are direct relatives to the Harrison family and own an adjacent 2.63 acres. At the time the easement was recorded, the Offutt property was excluded. Their property is improved with a dwelling and a pool. As indicated in the letter provided by Bruce E. Doak Consulting, LLC. Mr. Doak presented in his letter that the families have maintained portions of each other's property over time and wish to swap these areas. Mr. Doak also included in his letter that the Harrison Family (Willowdale Farm) will grant an easement over approximately 0.2 of an acre to the Offut family and the Offut family will be granting an easement over approximately 0.6 of an acre to Willowdale Farm.

**DISCUSSION:** Gail Ensor (Chair) gave an overview of the request and the field visit that took place earlier in the day. The Board requested that the SRA be clearly identified to ensure that it was not part of the swap. Wally Lippincott (staff) questioned the process in which Mr. Bruce Doak (consultant) would bring this in for County review. Mr. Doak shared that this could come in either as an Agricultural Subdivision or a Zoning Hearing and that he could clarify the SRA on the request.

**Motion:** The Board recommends approval of the land swap and recommends that the subdivision is for agricultural purposes.

**Motion by:** Steve Myer                      **Second by:** John Merryman  
**Decision:** Unanimous Approval

**B. Peterson (MALPF #03-84-01e) – 18720 Graystone Road, 149.357 +/- acres**

**Request-** Request for recommendation of approval for Agricultural Subdivision.

**Background:** When the Peterson property went under easement, a 3.103 acre lot was excluded for the purpose of creating a lot to be utilized by the Peterson family, while the 149.357 acres currently under easement has been utilized for farming purposes. The 3.103 acre lot is currently unimproved and the owners are requesting an Agricultural Subdivision.

**DISCUSSION:** Wally Lippincott (staff) gave an overview of the request sharing that the 3.103 acres was intentionally left out of the easement. Gail Ensor (Chair) asked what the current agricultural operation of the farm was to which Mr. Bruce Doak (consultant) responded was currently being farmed for corn. Mr. Doak shared that this had been recorded as a separate lot year's back and that it was not a part of the agricultural operation of the easement property.

**Motion:** The Board recommends that the subdivision is for Agricultural purposes.

**Motion by:** Steve Myer                      **Second by:** John Merryman  
**Decision:** Unanimous Approval

**III. BALTIMORE COUNTY EASEMENT/LANDOWNER REQUESTS/ ISSUES**

**A. Bacon Hall Farm (BC #04-07) – 16300 Cedar Grove Road, Sparks Glencoe 237 +/- acres**

**Request** – Request for recommendation for two on-site improvements conditioned upon County Council approval to amendment of easement.

**Background:** Bacon Hall Farm has been in continuous active agricultural use for several years and houses several outbuildings used for crops and hay, as well as a large indoor riding ring (44 stalls), 150' x 180'), a large outdoor riding ring (120' x 240') and several paddocks. Additionally, the Farm offers horseback riding lessons through a program for disadvantaged youth. The owners are requesting review from the Ag Board for two improvements on the farm which include a canopy or roof structure for outdoor ring and a maintenance shed.

**DISCUSSION:** Gail Ensor (Chair) gave an overview of the request and the field visit that took place earlier in the day. Ms. Ensor asked if the owner, Mr. David Schuster, or his representative, Dino La Fiandra, had any drawings or elevations of the proposed canopy. Mr. Schuster shared that although they did not have any elevations of the canopy, it would be a standing seam metal roof and be comparable to the roof on other existing agricultural structure on site. Mr. La Fiandra offered to submit architecture for review if needed. Wally Lippincott (staff) explained that this would also require SHA review as well as an amendment to the Deed of Easement.

**Motion:** The Board recommends approval of the addition of the canopy to the outdoor ring and a maintenance shed on the property conditioned upon County Council approval to amendment of easement.

**Motion by:** John Merryman                      **Second by:** Steve Myer  
**Decision:** Unanimous Approval

**B. Kings Eye, LLC. (MET Easement) – 3332 Butler Road, 157 +/- acres**

**Request** – Request for recommendation of approval for Agricultural Subdivision.

**Background:** The subject property is to be reconfigured to join abutting farms with complimentary existing farm operations. The materials were provided at the meeting.

**DISCUSSION:** Gail Ensor (Chair) gave an overview of the request and the field visit that took place earlier in the day. Jack Fisher (Representative) gave background on the property and explained how the property would be reconfigured. Wally Lippincott (staff) shared that this was one of the County's first MET easements and explained the requirements for Agricultural Subdivisions. Ned Halle (Representative) added that this would require an amendment to the MET easement and the house would remain. Mr. Halle identified that they are also looking into doing stream restoration on the site.

**Motion:** The Board recommends that the subdivision is for Agricultural purposes.

**Motion by: John Merryman**  
**Decision: Unanimous Approval**

**Second by: Steve Myer**

## V. PROGRAM POLICY

### A. LESA Ranking Criteria

**Background:** Landowner's applications are due to the County on May 1, 2019 and must be forwarded to the State by July 1, 2019. Staff will review applications and run the Land Evaluation (Gen Ag) component of the LESA (Land Evaluation Site Assessment) scoring. The deadline for submitting materials for a County Council Resolution is July 16, 2019 for the September 16, 2019 County Council meeting.

Staff will prepare materials for the Advisory Board to score the applications for the Site Assessment (Ag Board Score) component of the LESA. For FY19 easement ranking the Board visited farms and ranked. Staff suggests that the Board review their scoring of all farms but visit only the new applications. See attached.

It is anticipated that State funding will be similar to FY19 and the State has again limited counties to only 12 applications with one modification. MALPF will allow the counties to submit up to 5 additional replacement applications in the event any of the 12 recommended applications receives an easement offer.

Staff recommends the following final ranking procedure as indicated below. This method is based upon selecting both best farms and best farms for the money to send to the State. To achieve that some farms will be selected based on their LESA score alone while others will be based on a combination of LESA score and bid price. This will be done in the following way:

Rank all farms by LESA score

Optimize LESA score by asking price

Calculate the anticipated amount of First Round funds

Select farms in LESA ranking order until utilize First Round funds (Best farms).

In cases where a First Round choice was ranked in the top 12 in the MALPF FY19 Cycle add an additional farm up to 5 alternates.

Select the remaining farms from Optimization starting with highest score. If the 5 alternates were not used for the First Round selections, add alternates to the farms selected by Optimization until use up the 5 alternate picks.

See attached LESA updates.

**DISCUSSION:** The Board discussed the proposed changes to the ranking criteria and suggested that irrigation be added to Stewardship/Conservation and that the added language of "three sides" be removed from Strategic Location.

**Motion:** The Board recommends to adopt the above described easement application selection methodology for the ranking of farms in the MALPF FY20 Cycle specifically to select the best farms based on LESA and the most competitive based on price and quality based on Optimization.

**Motion by: John Merryman**  
**Decision: Unanimous Approval**

**Second by: Steve Myer**

## **VI. MISCELLANEOUS/ INFORMATION/ CORRESPONDENCE/ NEWS ARTICLES**

- A. Complaint Updates**
- B. Ethics Report Reminder**
- C. MALPF Status**
- D. Site Visit Procedures**

**Background:** Staff gave brief update on complaints, ethics report reminder, MALPF Status, and site visit procedures.

## **VII. FUTURE MEETING DATES**

The next scheduled meeting date is May 8, 2019.

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion: To Adjourn the Board meeting (@8:20 pm)**

**Motion by: John Merryman**  
**Decision: Unanimous Approval**

**Second by: Steve Myer**