
“The Importance of the PPA and Agricultural Preservation, and the Processes Explained”

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The PPA Plan and Agricultural Preservation

- The PPA Plan focuses on the Rural Tier
  - Due to criteria in Maryland Agricultural Stewardship Act of 2006 (HB 2), the Rural Tier is targeted for the PPA
  - Other parts of the county have agricultural land worthy of protection
- The county now retains only 33 percent of agricultural transfer tax
- Passage of State Law HB 2 requires the PPA Element for certification: PPA Plan is a necessary step
- Certification brings the benefit of retaining 75 percent of the county’s agricultural transfer tax
- Lack of certification has cost millions in lost preservation funds
Process: Identifying the PPA

- Agricultural Preservation was a General Plan Priority PPA designated in Subregions 1, 5, and 6 prior to this plan.

- The PPA Plan proposes PPA designation in the Bowie area (more information in the Plan and Technical Bulletin).

- State Law: Agricultural Stewardship Act of 2006 (HB 2) states that a PPA Element shall be included in the county’s comprehensive plan and shall be based on the following criteria:
  - Contain productive agricultural or forest soils
  - Be capable of supporting profitable agricultural and forestry enterprises where productive soils are lacking
  - Be governed by local policies that stabilize the agricultural and forest land base
  - Be large enough to support agricultural operations
  - Be accompanied by a goal to preserve 80 percent of the PPA
Process: Infusing the Plan with Public Input

- Stakeholder interviews of 27 individuals, March-November 2010
- Development of a PPA Plan webpage shortly after initiation
- Mass mailing to civic organization leaders, July 27, 2010 (197 recipients)
- Three focus group meetings in Accokeek, Baden, and Bowie, August 2010
- Mass mailing to Rural Tier landowners in focus areas of Subregions 1, 5, and 6 and Bowie, October 7, 2010 (2,982 recipients)
- Three community outreach meetings for landowners in Accokeek, Baden, and Bowie, October-November 2010
- Ongoing citizen association briefings, email notifications, and updates to the Prince George’s County Agricultural Preservation Workgroup
- Mailing to Rural Tier landowners and community groups, August 5, 2011 (692 recipients) and December 5, 2011 (6,285 recipients)
- Email to Planning Board email agenda list, August 5, 2011 and January 12, 2012
Process: Infusing the Plan with Public Input
(continued)

- Webpage notification of joint public hearings and email notices
- Newspaper notices, August 12, 2011 and December 23, 2011
- Planning Board Facebook page notice and press releases
- Planning staff distribution of flyers at Economic Development Town Hall (November 1 and 16, 2011) and various other meetings

- Civic Associations:
  - Accokeek, Mattawoman, and Piscataway Creeks Council, April 27, 2011
  - Croom Citizens Association, July 20, 2011

**Briefings:**

- County Council: July 18, 2011
- Historic Preservation Commission: September 20 and November 15, 2011
- Planning Board: January 19, 2012
PPA Plan Goal and Objective

❖ Goal: Preserve 80 percent of the remaining undeveloped land within the priority preservation area, while maintaining and enhancing agricultural and forestry production on already protected farm and forest lands.

❖ Objective (reaffirms the 2002 General Plan objective): Protect a countywide average of 1,500 acres per year of agricultural, strategic forest, or other sensitive lands through land conservation programs.
PPA Plan Policies

- Maximizing the value of farm and forest land
- Actively seeking all available funding
- Minimizing development not consistent with rural character
- Preservation for environmental and economic value
- Reclaiming natural resource areas for agriculture
- Support for new farm and forest enterprises
Agricultural Preservation Tools and Programs for Achieving the PPA Plan Goal

- Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF)
- Historic Agricultural Resource Preservation Program (HARPP)
- Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program
- Rural Legacy Program
- Program Open Space
- Woodland Conservation Banking and Resource Preservation
- Maryland Environmental Trust
- Accokeek Foundation
- Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust
- Black Swamp Creek Land Trust
Corrections and Amendments

- Errata (corrections) to Draft PPA Plan (on Handout #3)
- Amendments (adds new information) (on Handout #4)

The amendments are included in correspondence to the County Council and Planning Board

- Inserted into the public record today
- Available in the handouts
Top Priorities of the PPA Plan

- Identifying the PPA on a countywide basis and preserving 80 percent of the remaining undeveloped land in the PPA

- Obtaining the preservation goal and objective of preserving 1,500 agricultural acres each year (Slide 6)

- Increasing the percentage of the agricultural transfer tax retained to 75 percent

- Giving a higher priority for funding to those agricultural property owners in the PPA
  
  - CR-29-2011 updates program regulations for the county’s Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program to include points for PPA
Why Preserving Agricultural (Farm and Forest) Land is Important

- Farmland ensures a ready source of locally grown food and other products
- Forest enterprises diversify the agricultural sector with a strong timber industry
- Funding the agricultural programs helps secure a critical mass of agricultural land to:
  - Keep the local agricultural economy intact and improving
  - Maintain a balance of developed vs. natural resource lands
  - Protect our watersheds and conserve environmentally sensitive areas
  - Maintain scenic and rural character
What the PPA Plan Does Not Do

The PPA Plan will not

- Change zoning, water and sewer category, or tier boundaries
- Affect the ability to develop at current zoning
- Preclude anyone from developing their property—participation in agricultural preservation is voluntary
- Exclude property from preservation if the property is outside of the PPA
Conclusion

- We seek support for farming as an economic activity from landowners, farmers, citizens, Planning Board and County Council

- Help to preserve valuable, irreplaceable farmland
  - For future generations, to provide locally grown food
  - So that areas that should be developed can be (e.g., in Developed and Developing Tier, transit-oriented development (TOD))
    - So that scarce funds will not be required for sprawl infrastructure

- Stay committed to farming and to small farms and forest enterprises

- Remember that farming is still an important part of our community’s culture and economy
Questions?

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For more information on the PPA Plan go to
www.pgplanning.org/prioritypreservation.htm