



Howard County

Agricultural Land Preservation Program

MEMORANDUM

Subject: Testimony for the Sachs Property Installment Purchase Agreement

To: Lonnie Robbins, Chief Administrative Officer, Department of Administration

Through: ✓ Valdis Lazdins, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning

Through: Beth Burgess, Chief, Resource Conservation Division, Department of Planning and Zoning *BB*

From: Joy Levy, Agricultural Land Preservation Program Administrator, Department of Planning and Zoning *JL*

Date: February 14, 2017

The Department of Planning and Zoning supports Council Bill No. -2017. This bill approves an Installment Purchase Agreement to acquire an agricultural preservation easement on property owned by Sharon Sachs. Section 15.507(g)(4) of the Howard County Code requires County Council approval of a multi-year Installment Purchase Agreement pursuant to Section 612 of the Howard County Charter.

The approval of an Installment Purchase Agreement for the Sachs property would preserve 20.56 acres of productive farmland in the County, adding to over 22,400 acres that have been preserved to date. This farm is owner operated and is also desirable due to the significant amount of preserved land nearby.

The purchase price of the easement is \$536,500, however; when twice yearly interest payments are factored in, the overall cost of the Sachs acquisition will be \$645,947. The funding comes from a portion of the transfer tax dedicated to the Agricultural Land Preservation Program.

Having met all eligibility criteria for the acquisition of an agricultural preservation easement, staff supports Council Bill No. -2017 and hopes that the County Council moves to approve it. Thank you for your consideration.

cc: Jennifer Sager, Legislative Coordinator, Department of Administration
 Stanley Milesky, Director, Department of Finance
 Lisa O'Brien, Senior Assistant County Solicitor, Office of Law
 Sachs File