Introduced ners Public hearing Council action November 8 Executive action November 4, 20 Effective date January 5, 2021

## **County Council of Howard County, Maryland**

2020 Legislative Session

Legislative day # 14

BILL NO. <u>58 – 2020 (ZRA – 190)</u>

**Introduced by:** The Chair at the request of John P. McDaniel

**AN ACT** amending the Howard County Zoning Regulations to allow the merger of adjoining preservation parcels under specific conditions; and generally relating to preservation parcels.

| Introduced and read first time October 5, 2020. Ordered posted and hearing scheduled.  |
|--|
| By order Alang chulant prof  |
| Having been posted and notice of time & place of hearing & title of Bill having been published according to Charter, the Bill was read for a second time at a public hearing on <u>OCTODE</u> , 2020.<br>By order, <u>August Jones</u> , Administrator |
| This Bill was read the third time on <u>NOVANAC2</u> 020 and Passed V, Passed with amendments, Failed<br>By order <u>A land Schwarth</u> Jones, Administrator  |
| Sealed with the County Seal and presented to the County Executive for approval this By order August 2020 and 2020 m. By order Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator  |
| Approved Wetoed by the County Executive <u>November 4</u> , 2020<br>Calvin Ball, County Executive  |

NOTE: [[text in brackets]] indicates deletions from existing law; TEXT IN SMALL CAPITALS indicates additions to existing law; Strike-out indicates material deleted by amendment; Underlining indicates material added by amendment.

|           | • • •  |
|-----------|--|
| 1         | Section 1. Be it enacted by the County Council of Howard County, Maryland, that the Howard |
| 2         | County Zoning Regulations are hereby amended as follows:                                   |
| 3         |  |
| 4         | By Amending:   |
| 5         |  |
| 6         | Section 104.0: "RC (Rural Conservation) District"  |
| 7         | Subsection G. "Cluster Subdivision Requirements"   |
| 8         | Number I. "Subdivision and Density Requirements"   |
| 9         | Number 4. "Requirements for Preservation Parcel Easements"                                 |
| 10        |  |
| 11        | Section 105.0: "RR (Rural Residential) District"   |
| 12        | Subsection G. "Cluster Subdivision Requirements"   |
| 13        | Number 1. "Subdivision and Density Requirements"   |
| 14        | Number 4. "Requirements for Preservation Parcel Easements"                                 |
| 15        |  |
| 16        | Section 106.0: "106.0 DEO (Density Exchange Option) Overlay District"                      |
| 17        | Subsection B. "Criteria"   |
| 18        | Subsection F. "Requirements for Use of the Density Exchange Option or Cluster Exchange     |
| 19        | Option"  |
| 20        |  |
| 21        |  |
| 22        |  |
| 23        | Howard County Zoning Regulations   |
| 24        |  |
| 25        | SECTION 104.0 RC (Rural Conservation) District   |
| 26        |  |
| 27        | G. Cluster Subdivision Requirements  |
| 28        | 1. Subdivision and Density Requirements  |
| 29        | a. A cluster subdivision consists of cluster lots which are located on a portion or        |
| 29<br>30  | portions of the parcel being subdivided, and a preserved area, which is the entire         |
| 31        | residual area of the parcel being subdivided.  |
| <i></i> 1 |  |
| 32        | b. The preserved area should be retained as a single preservation parcel                   |
| 33        | whenever possible. It may be divided into more than one preservation parcel                |
| 34        | only at the time that the preserved area is originally recorded and only in                |
| 35        | accordance with the purposes of the RC District. [[with the following                      |

## exceptions:]]

| 2  | [[(1)]] C. Subdivision of a preservation parcel after recordation of the preservation parcel |
|----|--|
| 3  | easement may [[only]] be permitted if the subdivision is necessary to establish a            |
| 4  | boundary line respecting agricultural, historical, or environmental features or              |
| 5  | patterns of use; AND INVOLVES:   |
| 6  | [[(2) Involves either:]]   |
| 7  | [[(a)]] (1)The transfer of land between adjoining parcels that are both                      |
| 8  | entirely protected by an agricultural, environmental, or historic                            |
| 9  | preservation easement held by Howard County or a State agency; or                            |
| 10 | [[(b)]] (2) The exchange of equivalent acreage between adjoining                             |
| 11 | parcels, one of which is a preservation parcel, created in accordance                        |
| 12 | with Section 104.0, 105.0 or 106.0 of these Regulations, wherein the                         |
| 13 | resulting configuration will better facilitate the purpose of the                            |
| 14 | preservation parcel and better ensure its protection; [[and;]] or                            |
|    |  |
| 15 | (3) TWO OR MORE ADJOINING PRESERVATION PARCELS THAT MAY BE                                   |
| 16 | COMBINED TO CREATE A PRESERVATION PARCEL, WHEREIN THE  |
| 17 | RESULTING CONFIGURATION WILL BETTER FACILITATE THE PURPOSE                                   |
| 18 | OF THE PRESERVATION PARCEL, PROVIDED THAT:   |
| 19 | (A) AT THE TIME OF THE COMBINATION, IF A DEVELOPMENT   |
| 20 | RIGHT OR AN EXISTING PRINCIPAL DWELLING UNIT EXISTS, A                                       |
| 21 | LOT MAY BE CREATED TO ACCOMMODATE THE EXISTING   |
| 22 | HOUSE OR A PROPOSED HOUSE ON A PRESERVATION PARCEL.  |
|    |  |
| 23 | 1. FOR PARCELS WITH AN AGRICULTURAL  |
| 24 | PRESERVATION EASEMENT, THE MINIMUM LOT SIZE  |
| 25 | SHALL BE 3 ACRES; OR   |
| 26 | 2. For parcels with other dedicated easements,   |
| 27 | THE MINIMUM LOT SIZE SHALL COMPLY WITH THE   |
| 28 | CLUSTER LOT SIZE REQUIREMENTS.   |
| •  | (4) $0 = 1$ [[ $t_{m,m} \in t_{m}$ ]] $p_{m,m} = 0$ (2) $p_{m,m} = 0$                        |
| 29 | (4) Such [[transfer]] RECONFIGURATIONS may not:  |
| 30 |  |

| 1  | (a) Result in a net increase in the number of farm tenant house rights                 |
|----|--|
| 2  | for the parcel being enlarged; or  |
| 3  | (b) Undermine the original agricultural, environmental or historic                     |
| 4  | preservation purpose for creating the preservation parcel; or                          |
| 5  | (c) Reduce the preservation parcel to less than 20 acres, [[and]]                      |
| 6  | UNLESS OTHERWISE PERMITTED IN SECTION 104.0.G.1.C; OR                                  |
| 7  | (D) ACHIEVE ANY ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS.                             |
| 8  |  |
| 9  | [[(4) Such transfer requires consent of all easement holders. All deed(s) of           |
| 10 | easement shall be amended to reflect the land transfer.]]                              |
| 11 | (5) SUCH LAND RECONFIGURATIONS REQUIRE CONSENT OF ALL EASEMENT                         |
| 12 | HOLDERS. ALL DEED(S) OF EASEMENT SHALL BE AMENDED TO                                   |
| 13 | REFLECT THE LAND RECONFIGURATION AND ALL OF THE PROPERTY                               |
| 14 | SHALL REMAIN SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE EASEMENT TO                              |
| 15 | WHICH IT WAS SUBJECT PRIOR TO THE RECONFIGURATION.                                     |
| 16 |  |
| 17 | 4. Requirements for Preservation Parcel Easements                                      |
| 18 |  |
| 19 | a. The easement agreement for each preservation parcel shall be approved by the        |
| 20 | County and executed by the property owner prior to recordation. The easement shall run |
| 21 | with the land, shall be in full force and effect in perpetuity, and shall describe and |
| 22 | identify the following:  |
| 23 | (1) The location and size of the preservation parcel.                                  |
| 24 | (2) Existing improvements on the preservation parcel.                                  |
| 25 | (3) A prohibition on future residential, commercial or industrial                      |
| 26 | development of the preservation parcel, other than the uses listed in                  |
| 27 | Section 106.1. The easement must specify the primary purpose of the                    |
| 28 | preservation parcel and prohibit the use of the preservation parcel for                |
| 29 | incompatible uses.   |
| 30 | (4) A prohibition on future subdivision of the preservation parcel, EXCEPT             |
| 31 | AS PERMITTED IN SECTION 104.0.G.1.c.   |

| 1  | (5) Provisions for maintenance of the preservation parcel.                                   |
|----|--|
| 2  | (6) Responsibility for enforcement of the easement.  |
| 3  | (7) Provisions for succession in the event that one of the parties to an                     |
| 4  | easement agreement ceases to exist.  |
| 5  |  |
| 6  | SECTION 105.0 RR (Rural Residential) District  |
| 7  |  |
| 8  | G. Cluster Subdivision Requirements  |
| 9  | 1. Subdivision and Density Requirements  |
| 10 | a. A cluster subdivision consists of cluster lots which are located on a portion or          |
| 11 | portions of the parcel being subdivided, and a preserved area, which is the entire           |
| 12 | residual area of the parcel being subdivided.  |
| 13 | b. The preserved area should be retained as a single preservation parcel                     |
| 13 | whenever possible. It may be divided into more than one preservation parcel                  |
| 15 | only at the time that the preserved area is originally recorded and only in                  |
| 16 | accordance with the purposes of the RC District [[with the following                         |
| 17 | exceptions:]]  |
|    |  |
| 18 | [[(1)]] C. Subdivision of a preservation parcel after recordation of the preservation parcel |
| 19 | easement may [[only]] be permitted if the subdivision is necessary to establish a            |
| 20 | boundary line respecting agricultural, historical, or environmental features or              |
| 21 | patterns of use; AND INVOLVES:   |
| 22 | [[(2) Involves either:]]   |
| 23 | [[(a)]] (1)The transfer of land between adjoining parcels that are both                      |
| 24 | entirely protected by an agricultural, environmental, or historic                            |
| 25 | preservation easement held by Howard County or a State agency; or                            |
| 26 | [[(b)]] (2) The exchange of equivalent acreage between adjoining                             |
| 27 | parcels, one of which is a preservation parcel, created in accordance                        |
| 28 | with Section 104.0, 105.0 or 106.0 of these Regulations, wherein the                         |
|    |  |

| 1  | resulting configuration will better facilitate the purpose of the            |
|----|--|
| 2  | preservation parcel and better ensure its protection; [[and;]] or            |
| 3  | (3) Two or more adjoining preservation parcels that may                      |
| 4  | BE COMBINED TO CREATE A PRESERVATION PARCEL, WHEREIN                         |
| 5  | THE RESULTING CONFIGURATION WILL BETTER FACILITATE THE                       |
| 6  | PURPOSE OF THE PRESERVATION PARCEL, PROVIDED THAT:                           |
| 7  | (A) AT THE TIME OF THE COMBINATION, IF A DEVELOPMENT                         |
| 8  | RIGHT OR AN EXISTING PRINCIPAL DWELLING UNIT EXISTS, A                       |
| 9  | LOT MAY BE CREATED TO ACCOMMODATE THE EXISTING                               |
| 10 | HOUSE OR A PROPOSED HOUSE ON A PRESERVATION PARCEL.                          |
| 11 | 1. FOR PARCELS WITH AN AGRICULTURAL  |
| 12 | PRESERVATION EASEMENT, THE MINIMUM LOT SIZE                                  |
| 13 | SHALL BE 3 ACRES; OR   |
| 14 | 2. FOR PARCELS WITH OTHER DEDICATED EASEMENTS,                               |
| 15 | THE MINIMUM LOT SIZE SHALL COMPLY WITH THE                                   |
| 16 | CLUSTER LOT SIZE REQUIREMENTS.   |
| 17 |  |
| 18 | (4) Such [[transfer]] RECONFIGURATIONS may not:                              |
| 19 | (a) Result in a net increase in the number of farm tenant house              |
| 20 | rights for the parcel being enlarged; or                                     |
| 21 | (b) Undermine the original agricultural, environmental or                    |
| 22 | historic preservation purpose for creating the preservation                  |
| 23 | parcel; or   |
| 24 | (c) Reduce the preservation parcel to less than 20 acres, [[and]]            |
| 25 | UNLESS OTHERWISE PERMITTED IN SECTION 104.0.G.1.C; OR                        |
| 26 | (D) ACHIEVE ANY ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT                           |
| 27 | RIGHTS.  |
| 28 |  |
| 29 | [[(4) Such transfer requires consent of all easement holders. All deed(s) of |
| 30 | easement shall be amended to reflect the land transfer.]]                    |
|    |  |

| 1  | (5) SUCH LAND RECONFIGURATIONS REQUIRE CONSENT OF ALL                                  |
|----|--|
| 2  | EASEMENT HOLDERS. ALL DEED(S) OF EASEMENT SHALL BE                                     |
| 3  | AMENDED TO REFLECT THE LAND RECONFIGURATION AND ALL OF                                 |
| 4  | THE PROPERTY SHALL REMAIN SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE                             |
| 5  | EASEMENT TO WHICH IT WAS SUBJECT PRIOR TO THE  |
| 6  | RECONFIGURATION.   |
| _  |  |
| 7  |  |
| 8  | 4. Requirements for Preservation Parcel Easements                                      |
| 9  | a. The easement agreement for each preservation parcel shall be approved by the        |
| 10 | County and executed by the property owner prior to recordation. The easement shall run |
| 11 | with the land, shall be in full force and effect in perpetuity, and shall describe and |
| 12 | identify the following:  |
| 13 | (1) The location and size of the preservation parcel.                                  |
| 14 | (2) Existing improvements on the preservation parcel.                                  |
| 15 | (3) A prohibition on future residential, commercial or industrial                      |
| 16 | development of the preservation parcel, other than the uses listed in                  |
| 17 | Section 106.1. The easement must specify the primary purpose of the                    |
| 18 | preservation parcel and prohibit the use of the preservation parcel for                |
| 19 | incompatible uses.   |
| 20 | (4) A prohibition on future subdivision of the preservation parcel, EXCEPT             |
| 21 | AS PERMITTED IN SECTION 105.0.G.1.c.   |
| 22 | (5) Provisions for maintenance of the preservation parcel.                             |
|    |  |
| 23 | (6) Responsibility for enforcement of the easement.                                    |
| 24 | (7) Provisions for succession in the event that one of the parties to an               |
| 25 | easement agreement ceases to exist.  |
| 26 |  |

# 27 Sec. 106.0 DEO (Density Exchange Option) Overlay District

| 1  | B. Criteria  |
|----|--|
| 2  | Residential density may be exchanged between properties which are eligible to be sending and receiving |
| 3  | parcels based on the criteria given below.   |
| 4  | 1. Sending Parcels   |
| 5  | Properties within the DEO Overlay District which meet the following criteria are eligible to be        |
| 6  | sending parcels:   |
| 7  | a. The underlying zoning shall be RC;  |
| 8  | b. The minimum preservation parcel easement area shall be 20 acres for all sending                     |
| 9  | parcels, EXCEPT AS PERMITTED IN SECTION 106.0.F.10.  |
| 10 | c. The sending area shall not be subject to a forest conservation easement, Agricultural Land          |
| 11 | Preservation Easement, gasline easement or other recorded easement that reduces or                     |
| 12 | removes its development rights. If a portion of a parcel is encumbered with such an                    |
| 13 | easement, the encumbered area shall be subtracted from the acreage of the sending parcel               |
| 14 | for density calculations. After the encumbered acreage is deducted, the sending parcel must            |
| 15 | still fulfill the size criteria specified in paragraph 1.b of this subsection. When calculating        |
| 16 | density sending rights, floodplain easements and driveway/access easements do not need to              |
| 17 | be deducted.   |
| 18 | d. A property consisting of one or more contiguous parcels or lots may be eligible to be a             |
| 19 | sending parcel if the parcels, when combined meet the size criteria specified in paragraph             |
| 20 | 1.b. All parcels that do not meet the size criteria specified in paragraph 1.b of this subsection      |
| 21 | must be combined at the time that the preservation easement agreement for the sending                  |
| 22 | parcel is recorded.  |
| 23 |  |
| 24 | F. Requirements for Use of the Density Exchange Option or Cluster Exchange Option                      |
| 25 |  |
| 26 | 10. SUBDIVISION OF PRESERVATION PARCEL AFTER RECORDATION   |
| 27 | A RECORDED PRESERVATION PARCEL BE MAY SUBDIVIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTIONS                           |
| 28 | 104.0.G.1.c AND 105.0.G.1.c.   |

| 1 | Section 2. Be it further enacted by the County Council of Howard County, Maryland, that |  |
|---|---|--|
| 2 | Sections 104.0 and 105.0 be renumbered accordingly,                                     |  |
| 3 |   |  |

- *Section 3. Be it further enacted* by the County Council of Howard County, Maryland, that this *Act shall become effective 61 days after its enactment.*

- ,

### BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, having been approved by the Executive and returned to the Council, stands enacted on 2020.

Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator to the County Council

### BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, having been passed by the yeas and nays of two-thirds of the members of the Council notwithstanding the objections of the Executive, stands enacted on \_\_\_\_\_\_, 2020.

Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator to the County Council

### BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, having received neither the approval nor the disapproval of the Executive within ten days of its presentation, stands enacted on \_\_\_\_\_\_, 2020.

Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator to the County Council

#### BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, not having been considered on final reading within the time required by Charter, stands failed for want of consideration on \_\_\_\_\_\_, 2020.

Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator to the County Council

#### BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, having been disapproved by the Executive and having failed on passage upon consideration by the Council stands failed on \_\_\_\_\_\_, 2020.

Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator to the County Council

### BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, the withdrawal of which received a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Council, is withdrawn from further consideration on \_\_\_\_\_\_, 2020.

Diane Schwartz Jones, Administrator to the County Council

## Office of the County Auditor Auditor's Analysis

## Council Bill No. 58-2020

Introduced: October 5, 2020 Auditor: Owen Clark

## Fiscal Impact:

We anticipate an indirect fiscal impact from this legislation in the form of increased County transfer and recordation taxes from the sale of reconfigured preservation parcels, sized as small as 3 acres, with residential dwellings or development rights attached to them.

We verified with the Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) that the resulting 3-acre parcel would allow for one dwelling unit and could be sold. We believe the resulting smaller residential preservation parcels may be more easily sold as residential dwellings or developable land than the larger preservation parcels (which will have existed before this legislation).

### Purpose:

The purpose of this legislation is to amend the Howard County Zoning Regulations to allow adjoining preservation parcels that were created through the cluster subdivision or density exchange option regulations to be combined, assuming the reconfiguration better facilitates the purpose of the preservation parcel.

The main items addressed include:

- The ability to combine adjoining preservation parcels without the restriction that the reconfigured parcels each remain at least 20 acres in size.
- Prohibiting reconfigurations that create additional or new residential development rights.
- Requiring affected deeds of easement to be amended to reflect the land reconfiguration and all property to remain subject to pre-existing easement provisions.

## Other Comments:

The Department of Planning and Zoning issued a Technical Staff Report for Zoning Regulations Amendment (ZRA) 190 on May 21, 2020, indicating their general approval of this legislation's text. The report indicated that:

- It is in harmony with the General Plan, since it enhances flexibility for the agricultural community by relaxing restrictions on farm expansions on preservation parcels.
- It requires text amendments to ensure it applies to preservation parcels both created through the subdivision process and those created through the density sending option.

The Howard County Planning Board issued a recommendation for approval of ZRA-190 on July 23, 2020. A noted discussion point in the recommendation was how the ZRA may allow more flexibility to make use of existing preservation parcels.

Per the Administration:

- The agricultural easements that have been dedicated to the County will have to be approved by the Agricultural Planning Board prior to their reconfiguration.
- All preservation parcels would require the consensus of its easement holders prior to reconfiguration and still be governed by the requirements of the easement.
  - Other easement holders could include the Maryland Environmental Trust or a private entity. There are no federal agricultural easements in Howard County.
- An exact accounting of the affected parcels is not currently available since it is not known which of them are adjoining and have development rights.
  - However, DPZ identified a total of 659 parcels and 11,712 acres of preservation easements that represent "potentially impacted projects." *A listing of these parcels can be provided to the Council upon request.*
- There are two specific parcels that are associated with this ZRA. Please see the details of each proposed reconfiguration in **Attachment A**.

## Attachment A

Per the Administration, the parcels associated with CB58-2020/ZRA-190 are:

1) The McDaniel Property (Tax Map 34 Parcel 117)

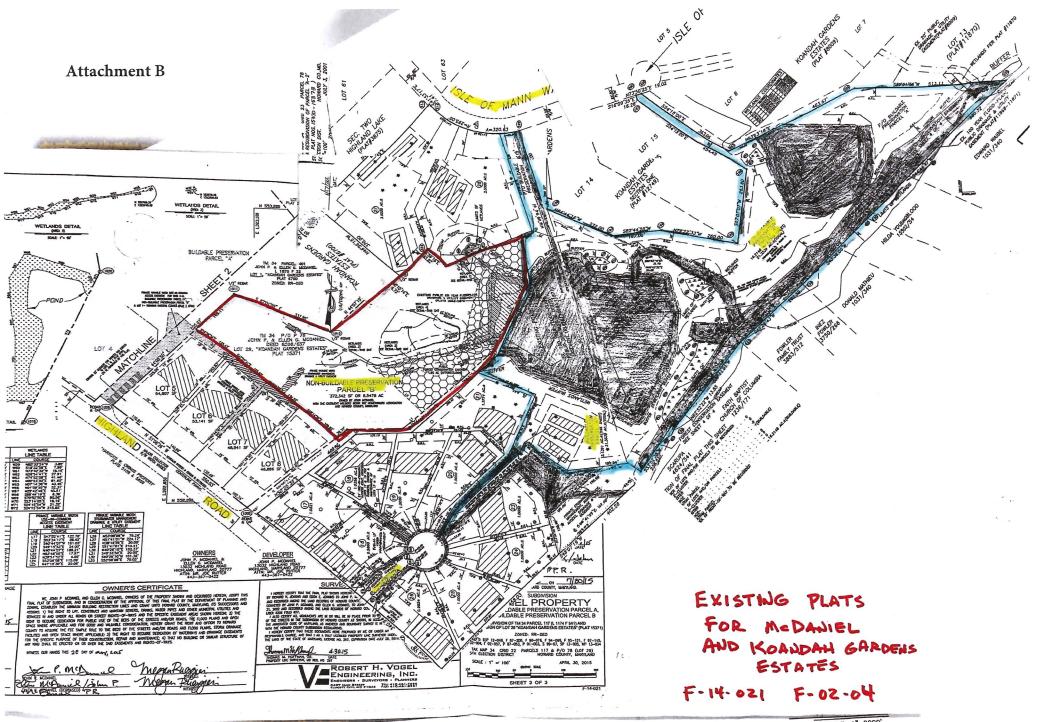
The images in Attachment B show the proposed reconfiguration as noted below.

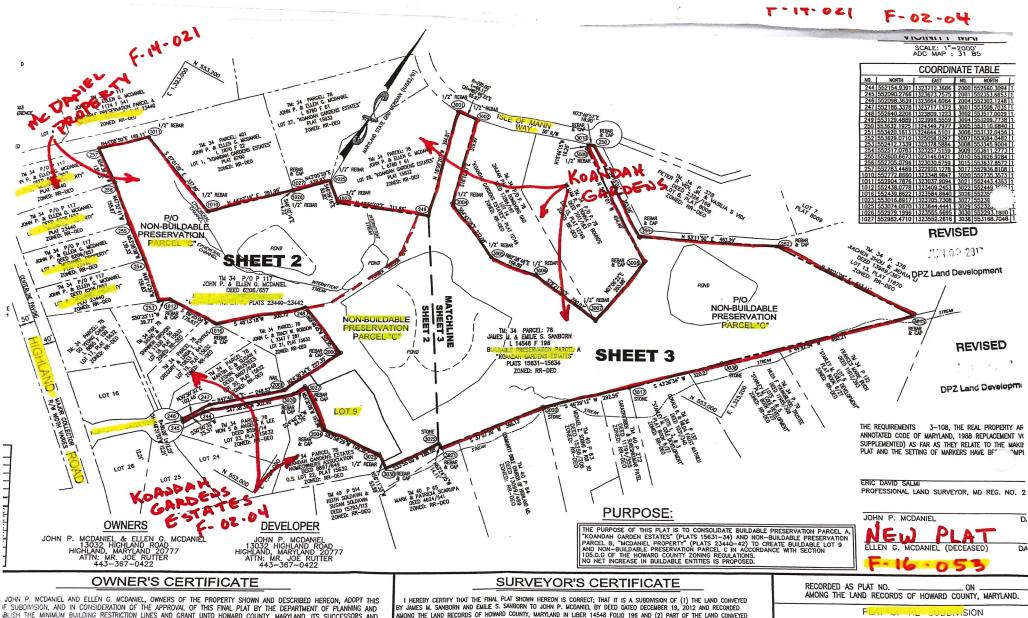
The two parcels to be combined are the McDaniel Property Non-Buildable Preservation Parcel B (F-14-021) and Koandah Estates Buildable Preservation Parcel A. The request is to combine these two parcels into one non-buildable parcel (Non-buildable Preservation Parcel C) except for 1.3 acres of the Koandah Estates Buildable Preservation Parcel A, which is proposed as a 1.3 acre buildable lot (Lot 9). Lot 9 would adjoin the property boundary of Koandah Estates Open Space Lot 22. This is where a new dwelling unit could be constructed. There are no existing structures on either preservation parcel.

2) Two properties on Penn Shop Road – Harrison Property (Tax Map 6, Parcel 19) and Crowder Property (Tax Map 6, Parcel 86)

See Map below: In this scenario, all but the 3 acres surrounding the existing house (indicated by the red line) of the 37-acre parcel would be shifted to the 52-acre parcel. The result would be an 86 +/- acre farm and a 3-acre residential lot, still under the agricultural conservation easement.





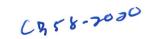


I SUBDIVISION, AND IN CONSIDERATION OF THE APPROVAL OF THIS FINAL PLAT BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUISH THE MINIMUM BUILDING RESTRICTION UNES AND GRANT UNTO HOWARD COUNTY, MARYLAND, ITS SUCCESSORS AND THE RIGHT TO LAY, CONSTRUCT AND MAINTAIN SEVERS, DRAINS, WATER PIPES AND OTHER MUNICIPAL UTILITIES AND AND UNDER ALL ROADS OR STREET RIGHTS-OF-WAYS AND THE SPECIFIC EASEMENT AREAS SHOWN HEREON; 2) THE JUIRE DEDICATION FOR PUBLIC USE OF THE BEDS OF THE STREETS AND/OR ROADS, THE FLOOD PLAINS AND OPEN I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE FINAL PLAI SHOWN HEREON IS CORRECT; THAT IT IS A SUBDIMISION OF (1) THE LIND CONFETED BY JANES M. SANBORN AND BUILLE S. SWORDN TO JOHN P. MCDANEL BY DEED DATED DECKMEER 19, 2012 AND RECORD AMONG THE LIND RECORDS OF HOWARD COUNTY, MARYLAND IN LIBER 14548 FOLID 196 AND (2) PART OF THE LIND CONFETED BY JOHN P. UCAMIEL AND ELLEN G. MCDANIEL TO JOHN P. MCDANIEL AND BLELLEN G. MCDANIEL, BY DEED DATED MAY 31, 2002 AND RECORDED AMONG THE LIAND RECORDS OF HOWARD COUNTY, MARYLAND IN LIBER 6206 FOLID 657. I ALSO CERTIFY ALL MONMENTS ARE IN OR WILL BE IN PLACE PRIOR TO THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE STREETS IN THE SUBDIMISION BY HOWARD COUNTY AS SHOWN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH

AND NON-RUILDARLE PRESERVATION PARCE

MCDANIEL PROPERTY

# ()



### Sayers, Margery

From: Sent: To: Subject: Jung, Deb Monday, October 19, 2020 1:34 PM Sayers, Margery FW: BILL No 58- 2020 (ZRA - 190)

Deb Jung Council Chair, District 4 3430 Court House Drive Ellicott City, MD 21043 410-313-2001

Sign up for my newsletter here.



From: Tracy Diamond <Tracy@tracydiamondteam.com> Sent: Monday, October 19, 2020 11:03 AM To: Jung, Deb <djung@howardcountymd.gov> Subject: BILL No 58- 2020 (ZRA - 190)

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hello Deb,

My name is Tracy Diamond and I support BILL No. 58-2020 (ZRA – 190). I have worked as a realtor in the Howard County real estate market for over 25 years. I am a lifelong Howard County resident and as a realtor, I focus on agricultural and rural properties. I currently have a client that owns 37.1 acres on Penn Shop Road which includes a brick rancher situated at the front of the property along the road. The client would like to sell this property. The neighboring property is owned by a family that would like to purchase as much of the acreage as possible to merge into their existing 50 acre farm. The 37 acre property naturally borders the neighbor for the entire depth of the property allowing more agricultural use than the current individual parcels allow.

Under the present law, 20 acres needs to remain with the brick rancher. Under the proposed ZRA the amount of land that needs to stay with the existing home is reduced to 3 acres.

The benefits to farming should be pretty clear. A farm of 89 acres is much more viable as an operating and functional agricultural property than a farm of 20 acres. A 20 acre property is almost impossible to farm and a 67 acre property less desirable than the proposed 89 acres. Under current regulations, each property functioning as a farm would have its own equipment for farming, storage for that equipment and possible livestock which significantly effects the amount of remining acreage for actual farming. Today's costs for

equipment and the physical size of this available modern equipment is greater which, to be cost effective, requires farmers to farm more land.

I am in support of ZRA – 190.

Respectfully,

Tracy Diamond, Realtor EXP Realty 410 984 2501

WWW.TRACYDIAMONDTEAM.COM