



Howard County
Agricultural Land Preservation Program

MEMORANDUM

Subject: Testimony for MALPF Easement Application, Spence Property

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

Through: Amy Gowan, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning *AG*

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: May 3, 2022

The Department of Planning and Zoning supports Council Resolution No. -2022. This resolution approves a Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) application for the purchase of an agricultural land preservation easement on property owned by Barbara Spence. Section 15.15.01.09 of the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) requires the County's governing body to approve agricultural land preservation easement applications to MALPF. The Howard County Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board recommended approval of the acquisition to the MALPF Board on July 26, 2021.

Council approval of this acquisition will preserve 14.4 acres of productive farmland in the County, adding to over 23,100 acres that have been preserved to date. Ms. Spence has a small horse breeding operation and 70% of the property comprises an active agricultural use. The farm is improved with a principal dwelling, a main barn, a greenhouse and two run-in sheds. The property contains 100% Classes I-III soils, which exceeds MALPF's requirement. According to the Soil Conservation District, there is a current Soil Conservation and Water Quality Plan that is fully implemented. MALPF's minimum acreage requirement is 50 acres unless the applicant property is adjacent to protected land. The Spence farm is adjacent to preserved land on three sides, with a significant amount nearby.

This preservation easement application complies with MALPF's eligibility criteria, therefore, staff supports Council Resolution No. -2022 and recommends Council approval. Thank you for your consideration.

cc: Jennifer Sager, Legislative Coordinator, Department of Administration
Morenike Oyenusi, Senior Assistant County Solicitor, Office of Law
Spence File