

**HOWARD COUNTY AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION BOARD (APB)
AND STATE AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD (APAB)**

March 24, 2025

(Recording)

Attendance:

Board Members: Cathy Hudson
Joe Dymek
Jamie Brown
Chris Rhodes
Leslie Bauer
Abby Gibbon

Staff: James Zoller, Executive Secretary/Agricultural Coordinator
Lauren Longo, Planning Specialist, (DPZ)
Joy Levy, Program Administrator, (ALPP)
Beth Burgess, Chief, Resource Conservation Division
Lisa Bagrosky, Senior Assistant County Solicitor, Office of Law
Emily Sizemore, Administrative Aide, Office of Agriculture

Guests: Eric Bushman, Josh Feldmark, Kathy Johnson, Ajay Kumar, Shivum Kumar, Eric Metcalf, Ken Moreland, Leah Nagy

Action Items

1. Approval of minutes from the January meeting

The board reviewed minutes from February 24th board meeting. Minutes were unanimously approved.

2. Advisory Comments, Final Review, Commercial Solar Facility (CSF), Carroll property; HO-96-04-E; 331 +/- acres (APB)

Final review for Carroll Property and advisory comments. The board reviewed the CSF representatives' updates and answers that were raised from the previous board meeting. Mr. Dymek motioned for Option 2 with a reduction of MW for the project to follow CSF Policy. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. Motion passed. Ms. Hudson requests that the scoresheet be passed along to the hearing examiner in addition to their recommendation and comments.

3. Request for Approval, One Unrestricted Lot, Taro Investment Corporation property; HO-14-04-E; 95 +/- acres (APB)

Ms. Levy reviewed the summary and staff analysis from the staff report for Taro Investment property. Ms. Levy presented the location options on maps that display of arial, slope and soil. Mr. Brown motions for approval. Seconded by Ms. Bauer. All in favor, motion passes.

4. Review and discuss, APB Commercial Solar Facility Policy (APB)

Ms. Hudson reviews with the board that the major reason for existence of APB is to give a farmers/farming aspect to the hearing examiner. Ms. Hudson requests that two criteria be added to CSF policy: 1) Business plan for the property to determine if CSF is ancillary to the property operation 2) owner/operator to present the business plan and be available to answer questions. Mr. Brow motions to approve adding the criteria. Mr. Dymek seconds. Motion passed.

Discussion Items

1. Programming Updates

Mr. Zoller shares an email from Ann Jones regarding federal funding for the board.

Mr. Zoller shares updates from the Office of Agriculture. Agriculture Resource Day being held on April 23rd from 11:30-2:30 PM at West Friendship Park. Community resources and vendors such as UMD Extension, Soil Conservation, Howard County Economic Development will have tables with resources for farmers. Office of Agriculture Ribbon Cutting on March 26th from 4-5 PM. There are no updates on budget.

Ms. Longo shares Harrison acquisition goes to council for April with a site visit in the coming week. Ms. Levy shared that there is a dedicated easement in the works.

2. Meeting Adjourned

Ms. Hudson opened the meeting to any public comment. Mr. Brown motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Dymek. Meeting adjourned at 8:18 PM.