



Howard County

Agricultural Land Preservation Program

MEMORANDUM

Subject: Testimony for Berman Property Installment Purchase Agreement

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

Through: Marsha S. McLaughlin, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning

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

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

Date: March 18, 2015

The Department of Planning and Zoning, of which the Agricultural Land Preservation Program is a part, supports Council Bill No. -2015. This bill approves an Installment Purchase Agreement to acquire an agricultural preservation easement on property owned by Robert and Nancy Berman. 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 Berman property would preserve 50 acres of wooded land in the County, adding to the over 21,900 acres that have been preserved to date. The easement will cost \$1,210,400 to acquire. The funding comes from the portion of the transfer tax dedicated to the agricultural land preservation program. When the twice yearly interest payments that the IPA provides are factored in, the overall cost of the Berman easement will be \$1,453,190. This property is desirable due to its high Green Infrastructure score.

Having met all eligibility criteria for the acquisition of an agricultural preservation easement, staff supports Council Bill No. -2015 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
Ag Read File
Berman File