



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MCPB  
4/11/02  
Item # 5

**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** April 5, 2002  
**TO:** Montgomery County Planning Board  
**VIA:** John Carter, Chief, Community-Based Planning Division *JAC*  
**FROM:** Judy Daniel, AICP for the Department of Park and Planning

**REVIEW:** Special Exception  
**APPLYING FOR:** Commercial Riding Stable  
**REVIEW BASIS:** Chapter 59, Zoning Ordinance; advisory to the Board of Appeals  
**APPLICANT:** Green Acres, LLC  
**CASE NUMBER:** S-2486

**ZONE:** Rural Density Transfer Zone  
**LOCATION:** 15501 Partnership Road  
**MASTER PLAN:** Preservation of Agricultural and Rural Open Space

**FILING DATE:** August 6, 2001  
**PLANNING BOARD:** April 11, 2002  
**PUBLIC HEARING:** April 24, 2002

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION: DEFERRAL/DENIAL** due to:

The application proposes a commercial riding facility that is too intense for the site, and lacks approval of certain important environmental criteria.

**PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION**

**Statement**

This is an application for an agricultural use in an agricultural zone. However, the scale and intensity of the agricultural use as proposed generates a range of impacts upon the surrounding area that cumulatively are too great a burden on the surrounding community. This is due to the size of the facility and the scope of activities intended. Therefore, the staff very reluctantly must recommend denial of the proposed riding stable.

**Neighborhood**

The surrounding area is agricultural and estate in character, reflecting farming and a number of other equestrian land uses. In the vicinity are two approved special exceptions.

Harkaway Farm (located at 16039 Partnership Road), is a commercial riding stable with an approved special exception for up to 15 horses on 20 acres. Ashgrove Farm (located at 16001 Partnership Road) has an approved special exception for a 40 student riding school on 98 acres. In addition, several nearby residents maintain personal riding stables. Overall the character of the surrounding area is mixed rural – cropland, pasture, equestrian facilities and pasture, and estate residences.

### **Site**

The proposed site is an 88.08-acre parcel in the RDT Zone on Partnership Road. The property is located on the east side of Partnership Road between River Road to the south and Route 107 to the north. It is bordered by Dry Seneca Creek and Montgomery County parkland to the east, Russell Branch to the north, and the Burruss Property (a working farm) to the south. The properties on the west side of Partnership are active farms or farm estates and pasture. The property has no structures, and was farmed with row crops until recently. An intermittent stream, tributary to Russell Branch, runs through the center of the property. The site is forested along the east and north edges, primarily bordering streams. The site topography is gently to moderately rolling with isolated steeper slopes.

### **Application**

Green Acres LLC represents applicants Fuad and Nancy El-Hibri, who are applying for a commercial riding stable. The applicants are equestrians and polo enthusiasts whose vision is for a professional quality horse facility devoted to various equine sports. They believe the facility will contribute to the local equestrian community by sponsoring horse shows, interscholastic events, pony club activities, equestrian related charity functions. The principle activities will be horse boarding, horse training, and instruction in various equestrian sports. Horse shows and polo matches are also proposed. The application has been revised in several ways to reflect concerns of the staff.

The structures for the facility will occupy approximately one-half of the property, preserving the remainder in pasture or woodland. The facility will consist of 7 equestrian related structures, 2 dwellings for on-site staff, and 5 outdoor equestrian facilities.

Employees - The application proposes to employ a maximum of 7 full-time and up to 10 part time staff. Additionally, event officials will be used on an as needed basis for special events. There will be a full-time resident manager, up to 4 other resident staff, 1 clerk, and up to 2 specialty trainers. The resident manager will live in one dwelling on the site and up to 4 other staff will share the other tenant house. Resident staff is necessary for this type of use to enhance security, respond to emergencies, and ensure regular maintenance and landscaping of the facilities and the horses. The proposed part-time employees will work on staggered schedules. These will include other trainers, stall cleaners, and maintenance staff.

Hours of operation - Proposed hours are 6am to 10pm Sunday through Thursday and 6am to 11 Friday and Saturday

Proposed Activities - Primary activities at the facility are to include horse boarding, training, and instruction in riding, dressage, and polo. No horse rental for pleasure riding or sports will be provided. Riding and equestrian sport lessons will be offered to children and adults. Horse training services for the specialized sports of dressage and polo will also be provided.

Boarding - The application proposes to board up to 100 stall-boarded horses. A limited number of horses are normally turned out during the day (or night in the summer), and spend the rest of their time in stalls when not participating in sport training or exercise riding. This is a change from the original request, which had proposed that some horses be field-boarded.

Shows: The application proposed up to 4 "rated" (larger) shows per year, and up to 12 local shows. This is a total of 16 special events per year for up to 80 or more. They will be held in the indoor and outdoor arenas. Three of the five outdoor facilities are to have lighting for night use.

Rated shows are held primarily on weekends, draw up to 200 people (participants and spectators), and last 1-3 days. The length of these shows depends on the type of show and the number of participants, but few horses remain overnight (as "guest" boarders) during a rated show. Local shows and riding clinics are stated to draw fewer than 80 participants and spectators and generally last one day.

Both types of shows normally run from 8:30am to 6:30pm. The applicant states that on-site parking is sufficient for all vehicle and trail parking for any show or event, and Arena "A" (the polo arena) would be used for auxiliary parking. No off-site parking of vehicles will be allowed.

Polo: The application also proposes an "arena" polo field. It states that this sport uses fewer horses and is not spectator oriented like traditional polo. Most matches are intra-club, although there are some "inter-club" matches. The application states that the polo matches are sparsely attended (generally family and friends only).

The "arena" polo matches will be played in a 180 x 360 square foot outdoor arena located below a natural "berm" that should screen noise from this activity from adjacent properties. Matches include two teams of three players each plus a referee and take 1-2 hours. However, although the application states that these matches are usually played during weekend days, and some early weekday evenings, this field is proposed to be lighted.

Other Activity: No social activities are proposed for the general public. Event attendance is to be limited to patrons and their guests. Food and refreshments related to activities will be provided for events, but no permanent commercial food preparation facilities are proposed. Food service will be on a special event basis in accord with applicable regulations.

### Operations Management Plans

*Feeding and Pasture Management* - The site plan indicates pasture space of approximately 41.88 acres divided into 9 fenced pasture areas of varied sizes for multiple horse turnout and isolation paddocks. The site plan indicates that approximately 2 acres of additional pasture area are to be created by cutting down a portion of the wooded area on the site.

The proposed 100 horses would have access to the pastures for limited exercise only. These horses are turned out in small groups for several hours each day or evening. The pastures will be used for free exercise, and rest from training and sport events. It also states that because these are very expensive animals, their owners insist that they have a safe environment. Ensuring this requires careful monitoring of the size of pastures, type of fencing, topography, pasturemates, accessibility of water.

However, because the grass available in these areas will receive heavy traffic, a strong pasture management plan is necessary, and the applicant has submitted a "Feeding and Pasture Management Plan" (see attachment for the full report). This report states that the horses in this facility will be sport horses, not pleasure horses. Therefore they are fed and exercised differently, and grass is not a significant food source for them. However, in order to maintain the quality of the grass in the pasture areas supplemental hay will be placed there. The pastures are to be monitored regularly, and any uneaten, trodden on hay will be removed and disposed of with the manure.

To maintain the pastures, they will be regularly dragged with tool to break up and evenly distribute manure. The pastures are to be rotated in the spring to protect delicate emerging grass, and fertilized and aerated as necessary. Horses will not be allowed in very soft areas after rain, both to protect the grass and the horses.

*Manure Management* - The applicant states that 100 horses generate enough manure to require removal from the site approximately every 5 days. Manure will be removed daily from the barns and other necessary areas on the site and placed in a roll-off container (like a dumpster) in a manure shed, located next to the barns. The plan calls for a space for 2 containers on the site - one being filled, and a space to place an empty one when it arrives. No manure will be stored on the ground. A contract has been arranged with a local farmer for manure removal.

*Insect and Rodent Control* - Insect, especially fly control, centers on limiting their possible feeding and breeding areas. To prevent this, all horses would be regularly sprayed with a repellent during the fly season. With the regular pasture dragging, and frequent manure removal, there will be less opportunity for fly breeding. Indoor areas likely to attract flies will have fly attractants or pest strips.

Primary rodent control will be achieved through the use of sealed containers for opened feed. Grains are delivered weekly, and barn cats will monitor residual rodents.

Lighting - Significant lighting is proposed for the polo and show arenas (A, B, D) but not the dressage arena. The applicant proposes that all arena lights will be turned off 10pm except Friday, when an 11pm turnoff is requested. After closing, there will be security lighting only.

However, the application does not limit use of lights on a seasonal basis, and does not indicate a limitation on which facility lights will be used at a time. The applicant states that the location of the lighted arenas has been chosen to minimize the amount of light visible from Partnership Road and neighboring properties.

The proposed exterior lighting for the property includes various types of fixtures to illuminate the proposed polo arena, the outdoor show arena, the outdoor warm-up area, vehicular parking areas and building service areas. The polo arena is illuminated using multiple fixtures mounted on 60-foot poles. The outdoor show arena and warm-up area are illuminated using full cut-off shoebox type fixtures on 40-foot poles.

The service areas and portions of the vehicular parking facilities are illuminated with wall mounted fixtures with varying mounting heights between 12-18 feet. In most cases, the parking facilities are illuminated indirectly by spillover light from the tall pole mounted fixtures used for the polo and show arenas. The parking area located immediately south of the polo arena is illuminated by fixtures mounted next to the polo field lights (on 60 foot tall poles) which are aimed directly towards the parking facility.

Facilities - The primary structures proposed for this use include:

Indoor Structures:

1. Main Barn/tackroom (20,400 sf)
2. Secondary Barn/tackroom (17,000 sf)
3. Indoor Arena I (37,500 sf)
4. Indoor Arena II (20,000 sf)
5. Office/Viewing area (1,200 sf)
- 6/7. 2 Tenant Houses (2,100 sf; 1,200 sf)
8. Farm Machinery Shed (2,500 sf)
9. Shavings Storage Shed (1,200 sf)

Outdoor Facilities:

- A. Polo Arena (180x360) [lighted]
- B. Show Arena (100x200) [lighted]
- C. Dressage Arena (150 x 80)
- D. Warm-up Arena (150x100) [lighted]
- E. Round Training Pen (60' radius)

The application states that the polo arena (A) has been located in a valley behind a natural "berm", and that the higher elevation of the adjacent woodlands and extensive setback (approximately 1,100 feet from the roadway) screen the arenas and barns from off-site views.

The two barns are designed to accommodate the up to 100 stall-boarded horses. The complex will also include a farm office with a meeting room and indoor viewing areas for patrons to observe lessons, shows and other activities. One tenant house will provide housing for the property manager, and the other will provide living quarters for up to 4 student-instructors, located for security purposes in proximity to the main barn. In addition, small "run-in sheds" (that provide temporary shelter from storms for horses in the pasture areas) are to be located in the pastures.

Riding Trail - A bridle trail/walking path is proposed along the perimeter of the property and circling near the primary facilities. It is to be located within the wooded areas and along the edges of the pastures. The trail was designed to follow existing "deer paths" and will not exceed 12 feet in width in the woods. The applicant states that the design of the meandering trail is planned to avoid the removal of any significant trees.

In addition, the applicant states that the facility is to be landscaped in accord with a plan designed to blend the complex of structures into the area's rural character. Trees are to line the entrance drive and the edges of the structures and arenas.

The application states that the outdoor arenas will have surfaces suitable for the disciplines for which they will be used, with the safety of the rider and horse foremost, and will be maintained in accord with standard equestrian practices to control dust. The indoor arena is to have a timed overhead mist system to control dust. The outdoor arena will be watered from a truck. A sand and rubber mixture will be used on the outdoor arenas, as this requires less moisture to keep dust under control.

Parking: The site plan indicates three primary parking areas that will accommodate for 32 cars and 17 horse trailers (7 by Arena "D" and 10 by the Polo Arena "A"), although the statement of operations indicates parking for 7 horse trailers. Two are at the center of the activity area and one adjoining the polo ring. Auxiliary parking is proposed to be located within the polo arena. No off-site parking is to be allowed. All parking areas are to be surfaced with crushed stone. The only paved surface is to be the driveway extending from Partnership Road to the parking area across from Building 8 (the farm machinery shed), although this differentiation is not indicated on the submitted site plan.

Traffic - The applicant's traffic consultant states that the surrounding roads are adequate to support the anticipated traffic for the use.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **Zoning**

The riding stable use is allowed by special exception in the RDT Zone. The application meets all development requirements for this zone.

### **Master Plan**

The proposed use does not conflict, and in fact is the type of use envisioned for the RDT Zone within the Master Plan for the Preservation of Agricultural and Rural Open Space.

### **Traffic**

Master Plan Roadways and Bikeways - In the vicinity of the proposed special exception, Partnership Road, CA-3, is classified as a county arterial with a recommended 80-foot right-of-way. North of the site, Partnership Road intersects Whites Ferry Road (MD 107) also classified as a county arterial. South of the site, Partnership Road crosses Sugarland Road, classified as an Exceptional Rustic Road before intersecting with River Road A-29, a County Arterial. No bikeways are planned in the vicinity of the site. Consistent with the rural character, no sidewalks exist along any of the roads in the area.

Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) - A traffic study was undertaken in the summer of 2001 to evaluate the cumulative traffic impacts of the various equestrian activities proposed as part of the Green Acres LLC Special Exception Petition. The study evaluated both the impact on the operation of local intersections, and average daily traffic volumes (ADT) as well as the traffic aspects of compatibility with the neighborhood.

The special exception proposal involves relocation of activities and events currently taking place at other sites to the subject property. It was, therefore, possible within the context of the traffic study to count the traffic generated by the current activities at the separate sites and combine the data to obtain a good estimate of the amount of vehicular activity that will be associated with the special exception as defined in the Statement of Operation provided by the applicant for the riding facility and polo activities.

The traffic consultant was unable to obtain a count for either type of show. Data provided by the Potomac Valley Dressage Association, however, indicates average competitor attendance is 58 persons. The traffic study conclusions are based upon the information provided in the Statement of Operations. The conditions of approval listed above are also based on the operations statement and the conclusions reached in the traffic study. Staff has added four trips per day to the volumes calculated in the traffic study to provide for trips associated with the manure management plan, and feed delivery program not discussed in the Statement of Operations, but since included in the special exception proposal. These two additional elements create four additional daily trips made outside of the weekday peak hour.

Based on the counts taken, it is anticipated that the highest average trip generation during the peak hour of the weekday morning peak period (7:00 to 9:00 a.m.) for the combined riding facility and polo would be 9 trips. The highest average trip generation during the peak hour of the weekday evening peak period (4:00 to 6:00 p.m.) for the combined riding facility and polo would be 44 trips. A traffic study would not normally be required under Transportation Planning policies because the peak hour trip generation falls below the 50-trip threshold established in the LATR Guidelines.

The morning weekday peak hour trips generated by Green Acres LLC represent approximately 5 percent of the traffic volume on partnership road. The evening weekday peak hour trips generated by Green Acres LLC represent approximately 24 percent of the traffic volume on Partnership Road.

Policy Area Review / Staging Ceiling Analysis - No staging ceiling capacity has been established for the Rural Policy Area.

Given the information submitted and analyzed, approval of the traffic element of the application is recommended with the conditions included in the transportation staff report. The majority of these conditions restate the primary elements in the statement of operations, but two conditions go beyond the statement of operations.

1. There may be no more than 2 polo matches per weekend (Friday, Saturday and Sunday) for no more than 35 participants and spectators per match (Matches refer to organized inter-club events which some spectators may attend. Matches do not include any instructional activities.)

2. Polo activities may not be held on the same weekend as any show.

## **Environmental**

After review of the submitted application, the staff does not recommend approval of the environmental elements of this use because the submittal is deficient and incomplete. Inadequate elements discussed below include:

Forest Conservation - This application is subject to the Forest Conservation Law. The Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) has been submitted and approved. However, a preliminary Forest Conservation Plan (FCP) has not been approved because the applicant and the staff have differing interpretations on the intent of the Forest Conservation Law.

The applicant has taken a position that although some of the property will be in a commercial use, the portion of the property remaining in pasture and woodland remains purely agricultural and thus the 66.8 acres encompassing pasture and woodland of the 88.1 acres of the property should remain classified as an agricultural use. This would mean that only the remaining 21.3 acres (the area where the active facilities of the use are located) would be subject to the forest conservation law. The submitted site plan indicates clearing 2.12 acres of existing forest to create additional pasture areas. Under this interpretation, the applicant would have no reforestation requirements even with the proposed clearing of the 2.12 acres.

The M-NCPPC Environmental and Legal staff believe that because the use is commercial in nature (not purely agricultural production), the forest conservation calculations must take into account the entire 88.1 acres of the property. Under this interpretation, the applicant will be responsible for 4.24 acres of reforestation, entirely due to the proposed clearing of 2.12 acres. The staff has requested that the 2.12 acres of forest be saved and included in the conservation easements.

There are approximately 18 acres of forest on-site, the majority of which lie with the priority area of the stream valley buffer. All forest and stream buffers must be placed in Category I Conservation Easements. Additional planting may be required based on calculations from the forest conservation plan, but that cannot be determined in the absence of an approved preliminary FCP.

In addition, should a preliminary FCP be approved, the final FCP must be submitted and approved by the environmental staff prior to the release of sediment and erosion control permit or building permit, as appropriate.

Hydrology - The site is located in the Lower Dry Seneca tributary of the Dry Seneca Creek watershed. The *Countywide Stream Protection Strategy (CSPS)* assesses the Lower Dry Seneca tributary as having good stream conditions and excellent habitat conditions, labeling it as an Agricultural Watershed Management Area.

This is a Use I-P watershed, so the two major streams and running along the perimeter of the property and the tributary stream running through the property should require minimum buffers of 100-feet on each side of the stream. The applicant has agreed to the appropriate buffer along the larger streams. However, the applicant continues to disagree with the staff requirement for the tributary stream, seemingly to allow room for additional pasture. Given the nature of the use (agriculture in an agricultural zone), the staff did agree to reduce the



standard 100-foot buffer to a 50-foot buffer along this stream. However, the applicant will agree to no more than a 25-foot buffer.

Stream Crossings - The applicant proposes four stream crossings on the property (as shown on the site plans). However, to ensure the continued high quality of stream conditions within the Lower Dry Seneca tributary, the staff has recommended that the applicant reduce the number of crossings to two. In addition, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), who is the permitting authority for stream crossings, has also recommended that the applicant reduce the number of crossings to two. To date, the applicant has not complied with the recommendation.

Wetland Delineation - The Army Corps of Engineers (COE) has requested that the applicant arrange for a jurisdictional delineation of the wetlands on-site. The applicant has chosen to not meet with the COE as they believe that "any possible wetlands on site will fall within the prescribed stream buffers and therefore will not be disturbed except as may be required by the construction of the stream crossings." The M-NCPPC staff notes that the chance of wetland disturbance due to the proposed stream crossings is exactly why the COE wishes a jurisdictional delineation completed.

Trail Alignment - The applicant has worked with the staff on the alignment of the proposed horse exercise trail to reduce the impact on the forest as a whole and to individual trees. The staff believes that the trail width should only be eight feet wide within the forested areas, but for various reasons related to the nature of horses, the applicant requested twelve feet of width in wooded areas. After several discussions, the staff has agreed to allow a twelve-foot wide trail in the wooded areas with the understanding that this width includes the limits of disturbance (LOD). To reiterate, the trail and LOD of the trail may not exceed twelve feet in width in the wooded areas.

Pasture, Pest and Manure Management Plans - While the submitted management plans appear to be sufficient, no notice of an approved soil and water conservation plan has been received by the staff. However, the staff does particularly support the proposed non-chemical rodent management plan.

Number of Horses - The staff contacted the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Cooperative Extension Montgomery County office regarding the number of pasture acres required for horses. The USDA guidelines (whose requirements are reflected in the zoning ordinance criteria) would allow no more than 80 horses on the approximately 40 acres of open pasture reflected on the submitted site plan (if the 2.12 acres of forest are not cleared). Thus the staff would support boarding no more than 80 horses.

Stormwater Management Plan - Although the applicant has recently (last week) finally submitted a stormwater management plan to the Department of Permitting Services (DPS), they have not had time to review it. The staff had recommended that the applicant submit the stormwater management concept plan to DPS in order to be able to better determine the placement of facilities on-site. In the absence of an approved stormwater management plan, the final location of the requested facilities cannot be determined.

Well and Septic

No public water or sewer serves this property. The applicant has applied to the Department of Permitting Services, Well and Septic Division for two water-supply systems (wells) for household use only (the manager's house and staff's house). However, the permits expired January 2002. Thus, the applicant will need to reapply for the household wells. No applications have been submitted at this time for water-supply systems for the use in the barns, sheds or fields for the horses or visitors. If water usage on the property exceeds 10,000 gallons per day the applicant will need to submit applications to the State's Groundwater Appropriations Program for approval.

In regards to septic, staff at the Well and Septic Division stated that the site does not percolate and thus sand mounds have been approved for two household septic systems instead of the normal septic fields. No mention is made in the Statement of Operations or on the plans of restroom facilities for visitors.

Conditions of Approval - Because of the multiple issues discussed above, the staff does not recommend approval of the environmental element of this application. However, if the Board of Appeals should choose to approve the site plan for this use prior to staff review of absent documents, the following conditions are recommended by time of subdivision review:

1. Approval of Final Forest Conservation Plans prior to release of sediment and erosion control or Building permit, as appropriate.
2. Stream buffer of 50 feet along Russell Branch and its perennial tributary.
3. Applicant to comply with requirements of the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) regarding stream crossings.
4. Wetlands delineation to be conducted in accordance with the Army Corps of Engineers requirements.
5. Trail width not to exceed twelve feet in width, inclusive of the limits of disturbance, and final trail alignment to be field located with M-NCPPC Environmental Technical staff.
6. Comply with the Soil Conservation District's requirements for feeding and pasture management, manure management and fly, insect and rodent control.
7. No more than 80 horses to be boarded.
8. Comply with Department of Permitting Services requirements for stormwater management.
9. Applicant to comply with requirements of the Well and Septic Division in regards to well and septic permits (prior to release of building permit) and should be appropriate for the approved number of tenants, visitors and

horses.

### **Subdivision**

This proposed use will need to go through the subdivision process after special exception approval. All TDRs on this property have been sold except for 3. Two will be used for building the tenant dwellings. The applicant had requested an exemption from subdivision since the use is agricultural in nature. However, the staff believes that while the use is agricultural in nature - it is a commercial use that generates traffic, noise, activity, and two dwelling units and must go through subdivision.

### **Landscaping and Lighting**

The staff recommends approval of the submitted landscaping plans for this use. However, in general, the proposed lighting design results in excessive spillover light that affects over one third (+/- 35 acres) of the property. There are currently no IESNA (Illuminating Engineering Society of North America) standards for polo fields. The applicant has used the IESNA standards for field hockey for the design of the polo arena. The lighting design criteria is compared as follows:

<b><i>Polo Arena</i></b>	<b>Average Footcandles</b>	<b>Max/Min.</b>
<b>Ratio</b>		
IESNA Standard (Field Hockey)	20	3:1
Proposed Criteria	20.9	5:1
<b><i>Show and Warm-up Arenas</i></b>	<b>Average Footcandles</b>	<b>Max/Min.</b>
<b>Ratio</b>		
IESNA Standard (Rodeo/Animal Shows)	30	4:1
Proposed Criteria (Show Arena)	12.7	2.5:1
Proposed Criteria (Warm-up Arena)	11.1	2.2:1
<b><i>Parking</i></b>	<b>Average Footcandles</b>	<b>Max/Min.</b>
<b>Ratio</b>		
IESNA Standard (Parking)	2	3:1
Proposed Criteria	3.3	15.1:1

The staff believes that in order to minimize the impact created by the excessive spill-over light (associated especially with the polo arena light) the application should be redesigned to reduce the spill-over and redirect it onto the arenas. The redesign should maintain the 20-footcandle average maximum to minimum uniformity ratio of 3:1 in keeping with the IESNA standards.

The applicant should also eliminate the fixtures on the tall poles used to illuminate parking areas. The staff believes that conventional lighting should be used in the parking areas - using 14 foot, pole-mounted, full cut off fixtures. All parking areas should maintain a maximum to minimum uniformity ratio of

15:1, a 2-footcandle average light level and a 0.5-footcandle maximum light level at the edge of each parking facility.

The staff recommends that lighting for all service areas should wall mounted, full cut off fixtures with flat lenses directing light downward rather than perpendicular as proposed by the applicant. Directing the light downward to illuminate the ground will minimize excessive light spillover. The lighting should also maintain a maximum to minimum uniformity ratio of 15:1 and a 2-footcandle average light level. While the times of operation are addressed elsewhere, the staff would recommend approval of the lighting plan with the following conditions:

1. Polo Arena - Reduce the excessive spill-over light created by the polo arena lights and redirect the majority of the light on the arena. Reduce the average footcandles to 20 and maintain a maximum to minimum uniformity ratio of 3:1.
2. Parking Areas - Eliminate the fixtures on the tall poles for use in illuminating parking areas. Redesign the lighting for all parking areas using 14 foot, pole-mounted, full cut off fixtures. Maintain a maximum to minimum uniformity ratio of 15:1, a 2 footcandle average light level and a 0.5 footcandle maximum light level at the edge of the parking facility.
3. Service Areas - Redesign the lighting for all service areas with wall mounted, flat lens, full cut off fixtures. Maintain a maximum to minimum uniformity ratio of 15:1 and a 2 footcandle average light level.

### **Compliance with Specific and General Special Exception Provisions**

The proposed use does not meet the criteria for a riding stable in the RDT Zone, as noted in the attached review.

### **Inherent/Non-Inherent**

The major inherent characteristics of this type of use are manure management, pasture management, traffic, dust control, and insect/rodent control. Major non-inherent characteristics are light and noise. All stables have the inherent characteristics, that must be properly managed, but not all stables have lighted arenas, night activities, and horse shows.

The staff believes that the submitted Pasture Management Plan seems to adequately address most aspects of the manure, pasture, insect and rodent control. However, although the staff has received a letter of support for the project from the Regional Soil Conservation Service Board, we have not received any notice of approval of a soil and water conservation plan (which includes an evaluation of the pasture and manure management plans) from the Soil Conservation Service. This is a particular requirement for this use, and our staff is not trained in this area of expertise, so we cannot properly

evaluate the submitted plans. If the conditions related to traffic are imposed, this element is adequately addressed.

However, lighting for the arenas - and the times they are to be used - cause concern. The staff does not believe that it is fair to the surrounding area to allow unregulated use of arena lights until 11 pm on Fridays and Saturdays, and 10 pm the rest of the week. This is particularly problematic for the polo arena. Therefore, if the use is to be approved, the staff recommends three additional conditions related to the lighting:

1. All lighting would have to be turned off by 8pm on Sunday-Thursday, and by 10 pm on Friday and Saturday.
2. Only one set of arena lights may be used at any one time.
3. Lighting levels must be reduced as recommended in this report.

### **Other Operations Elements**

The staff believes the requested number of employees to be acceptable, and with the previously discussed limits on site lighting, the hours of operation are acceptable. This will mean that the later hours (after 9pm on Sunday-Thursday and after 10pm on Friday and Saturday) can be used for activities in the two indoor arenas only. The proposed parking plan is also acceptable.

In addition, the level of proposed activity, particularly the 12 shows for up to 80 people in attendance, and up to 4 large shows for up to 200 in attendance, will impose burdens on the surrounding community. In order to limit that burden, the staff would recommend that no more than one show be allowed in any month.

### **Citizen Concerns**

The applicant has hosted neighborhood meeting to tell residents in the area about this proposal. The staff has heard from several area residents and rural area community groups who are opposed to the size and scope of this proposal. However, to date the staff has received no letters in opposition to the proposal. However, we anticipate that there will be citizens in opposition to the proposal at the hearing.

In addition, the staff has received 15 letters in support of the proposed use. However, only one of these letters is from someone who lives in the immediate neighborhood. They are primarily from other equestrian enthusiasts testifying to the need for a facility of this type in the county. Staff has also received letters from the Chairman of the Agricultural Advisory Committee, the President of the Montgomery County Farm Bureau and the Chairman of the District Board of the Soil Conservation District in support of the proposed use. All these letters are attached to the staff report.

### **CONCLUSION**

This application poses a philosophically difficult decision for the staff. The Rural Team has a deep commitment to protecting and enhancing and expanding agricultural uses in the RDT Zone, and the Agricultural Reserve as a whole. Encouraging agricultural, and

recreational agricultural uses is important for the future in the rural areas. Working land, land being utilized for crops or livestock, or horses is far more likely to stay open and rural than land that is fallow. Unused land is inevitably susceptible to development pressure. The Agricultural Reserve will be meaningless if it becomes merely a collection of large estate lots.

Therefore, the staff would very much like to see a commercial riding stable approved for this property. It not only supports an important part of our agricultural economy (as evidenced by the letters of support attached to the recommendation), but it provides income for the farmers who grow the hay and grain that feed the horses - not mention a good livelihood for the barn cats who will be gainfully employed keeping rodents at bay.

However, the scale of the stable facility proposed is one of the largest and most complex ever to request this type of special exception. As with other problematic applications, it is not the use that creates the problem, but the scale and complexity of the use. The proposed site is a very rural location so the level of activity and its attendant traffic, lighting, and environmental concerns must be carefully considered. These issues, as outlined in the report, create an application that the staff cannot support.

As noted above there are still major outstanding issues related to the environmental requirements. The staff believes that this use must comply with the Forest Conservation Law, the correct stream buffers, the number of stream crossings, an approved soil and water conservation plan, the requested wetlands information for the COE, and a reduction in the number of horses to be boarded to 80. This is because while the zoning criteria can technically be interpreted to indicate sufficient acreage for the proposed 100 horses to be boarded, the staff believes that a correct interpretation of the intent of the horses per acre rule, must relate to the acreage available for grazing, not the gross acres.

Finally, the staff has an overall concern about the scope of the application and the number of conditions that would be necessary in order to recommend approval. When the staff originally met with the applicants, our notes indicated a facility for no more than 60 horses, which included potentially 50 stall boarded and 30 field boarders (varying over time). The staff notes also indicated a facility with no lighting. Polo was to be played just in the daylight and primarily on weekends. Also, horse shows would be limited to an 8-month season. Finally full-time staff would be limited to a resident manager and 2 instructors, with no more than 4 part-time employees for cleaning and maintenance.

The submitted application is significantly different from this expectation in several ways. There are 40 more horses than originally discussed, a major lighting component for three facilities, no limit on year around horse shows, and more staff than anticipated.

Therefore, despite the strong support of the staff for this type of use in this zone, given the range of outstanding and unresolved issues, and the multiple areas of continuing disagreement between the staff and the applicant - the staff recommends DENIAL/DEFERRAL of the use. The staff would like to recommend approval of a revised application, but at a minimum, the following modifications to the application should be made:

1. Reduction of the maximum number of horses to be boarded to no more than

80.

2. Lighting Plan modified to:
  - a. Preclude any use of arena lights after 8pm Sunday - Thursday, 10pm Friday and Saturday.
  - b. Allow only one arena to use lights at any one time.
  - c. Reflect changes proposed by the M-NCPPC staff to reduce overall site lighting levels.
3. Agreement to abide by all conditions proposed by the Transportation staff noted in their report.
4. Agreement to accept all conditions proposed by the Environmental Planning staff, as noted in this report.
5. Special events associated with the equestrian facility limited to:
  - a. No more than four "rated shows" per year with an attendance of no than 200 (participants and spectators).
  - b. No more than twelve "local" shows per year with an attendance of no more than 80 participants and spectators.
  - c. No more than one show of any size be allowed in any month.
  - d. Polo activities may not be held on the same day as any show.
  - e. No more than two polo matches per weekend (Friday, Saturday and Sunday). No more than 35 participants and spectators per match. Matches do not include any instructional activities.
  - f. All parking associated with the equestrian facility and any sponsored activity shall be accommodated on site.
  - g. Traffic control must be provided for any event for 100 or more persons.
6. Hours of operation limited to 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. except Friday nights when the hours may be extended to 11:00 p.m.
7. Site plan revised to indicate paved vs. gravel sections of entrance drive.

## Special Exception Criteria

### Section 59-C-9.3. Land Uses

All riding stables in agricultural zones must meet the following criteria found in footnote #17 of section 59-C-9.3 of the Zoning Ordinance.

1. Minimum for up to 2 horses is two acres, and 3-10 horses is five acres. More than 10 horses requires additional ½ acre per horse.

*The proposed use would have insufficient acreage of open pasture. The pasture acreage on the site plan proposed will only allow 80 horses.*

2. All with more than 10 horses must have a soil/water conservation plan.

*The staff has not received notice of an approved soil/water conservation plan from the Soil Conservation Service.*

### Sec. 59-G-1.2. Conditions for granting.

#### 59-G-1.21. General conditions.

- (a) A special exception may be granted when the board, the hearing examiner, or the district council, as the case may be, finds from a preponderance of the evidence of record that the proposed use:
  - (1) Is a permissible special exception in the zone.  
*The use is so allowed.*
  - (2) Complies with the standards and requirements set forth for the use in division 59-G-2.  
*The use does not comply with these standards.*
  - (3) Will be consistent with the general plan for the physical development of the district, including any master plan or portion thereof adopted by the Commission.  
*The proposed use is consistent with all applicable master plans.*
  - (4) Will be in harmony with the general character of the neighborhood considering population density, design, scale and bulk of any proposed new structures, intensity and character of activity, traffic and parking conditions and number of similar uses.  
*Due to the intensity of the activity it will generate, the use as proposed is not in harmony with the neighborhood considering these criteria.*
  - (5) Will not be detrimental to the use, peaceful enjoyment, economic value or development of surrounding properties or the general neighborhood; and will cause no objectionable noise, vibrations, fumes, odors, dust,



glare or physical activity.

*The lighting levels proposed are excessive and will have a detrimental impact on the surrounding area.*

- (6) Will not, when evaluated in conjunction with existing and approved special exceptions in the neighboring one-family residential area, increase the number, intensity or scope of special exception uses sufficiently to affect the area adversely or alter its predominantly residential nature. Special exception uses in accord with the recommendations of a master or sector plan are deemed not to alter the nature of an area.

*Not applicable. The proposed use is not in a residential location.*

- (7) Will not adversely affect the health, safety, security, morals or general welfare of residents, visitors or workers in the area;

*The use will not have such adverse affect on the area or its' residents.*

- (8) Will be served by adequate public services and facilities. If the use requires approval of a preliminary plan of subdivision in accordance with Chapter 50, "Subdivision of Land," the adequacy of public facilities will be determined by the Planning Board at the time of subdivision approval. In that case, the Board of Appeals must include such Planning Board approval as a condition of the grant of the special exception.

*The staff believes that this use will be adequately served with public services and facilities, but that will be considered at time of subdivision..*

#### **Specific Conditions**

#### **Sec. 59-G-2.49. Riding stable.**

The following provisions apply to a riding stable in any zone where allowed by special exception:

- (a) The minimum lot area for one or 2 horses is 2 acres.  
(b) If 3 to 10 horses are kept, the minimum lot area is 5 acres. If more than 10 horses are kept, the minimum lot area of 5 acres must be increased by one-half acre per horse.

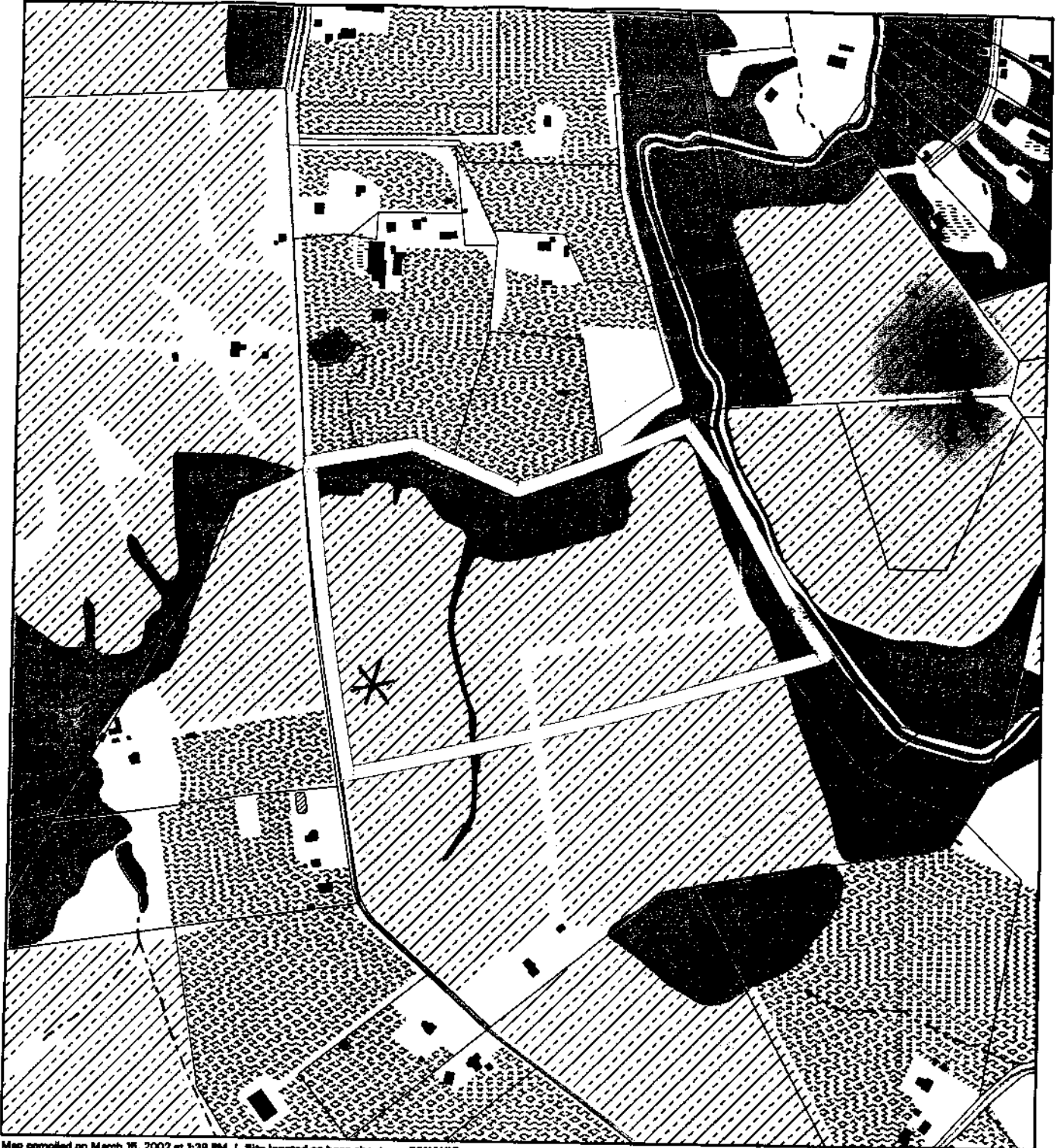
*By a straight reading of this clause, the use would only require 50 acres for a 100 horse operation. However, the staff believes that this clause is intended to relate to available open pasture rather than just gross acreage, and should be interpreted to be 1/2 acre of open pasture per horse. The staff calculates that approximately 40 acres of the proposed site are available for open pasture, less than the 50 open acres interpretation. Using the open pasture interpretation, this would allow 80 horses on the property, and the staff recommends reducing the number of horses that may be boarded on the property to 80.*

- (c) No building may be located less than 50 feet from the nearest property line,

unless the Board or Hearing Examiner grants a waiver upon a finding that the reduced setback is compatible with adjacent land uses.

*The application meets this standard.*

- (d) In order to prevent adverse impact on adjoining uses, the board may limit:
- (1) The number of horses not belonging to the property owner that may be boarded.  
  
*The applicant proposes to board up to 100 horses. The staff recommends that should be reduced to no more than 80 horses on this property.*
  - (2) The number of horses that may be rented out for recreational riding or instruction.  
  
*Not applicable.*
  - (3) The number of horse shows that may be held in a one-year period.  
  
*The applicant proposes up to 4 events for up to 200 (participants and spectators) and 12 events for up to 80 (participants and spectators) per year. The staff recommends that there should be no more than one event of either size in any month.*
- (e) Any riding stable for more than 10 horses must coordinate with the soil conservation district in the development of a soil and water conservation plan.  
  
*The staff has not received notice of an approved soil and water conservation plan.*
- (f) In evaluating the compatibility of this special exception with surrounding land uses, the Board must consider that the impact of an agricultural special exception on surrounding land uses in the agricultural zones does not need to be controlled as stringently as the impact of a special exception in the residential zones.  
  
*If this use were limited to purely agricultural activities, it would certainly meet this condition. However, agricultural activities generally do not draw traffic and site activity to a significant extent. Some retail farms to generate activity seasonally, but primarily on weekends. This use as proposed, however, will generate activity daily, and considerable activity up to 16 times per year, and will significantly impact the light levels in the general vicinity. Therefore, while the agricultural elements of this plan can be less stringently considered, the community impact elements - activity frequency and lighting - must be as stringently considered as in a residential zone. The staff believes that the use is not compatible as currently proposed.*



Map compiled on March 15, 2002 at 1:38 PM | Site located on base sheet no - Z21HWY8

**NOTICE**

The planimetric, property, and topographic information shown on this map is based on copyrighted Map Products from the Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, and may not be copied or reproduced without written permission from M-NCPPC.

Property lines are compiled by adjusting the property lines to topography created from aerial photography and should not be interpreted as actual field surveys. Planimetric features were compiled from 1:14400 scale aerial photography using stereo photogrammetric methods.

This map is created from a variety of data sources, and may not reflect the most current conditions in any one location and may not be completely accurate or up to date. All map features are approximately within five feet of their true location. This map may not be the same as a map of the same area plotted at an earlier time as the data is continuously updated. Use of this map, other than for general planning purposes is not recommended. - Copyright 1998

Key Map



N



1 : 9600

**GENERAL NOTES**

1. ALL CONSTRUCTION SHALL BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LATEST EDITIONS OF THE MARYLAND CONSTRUCTION CODES AND REGULATIONS.

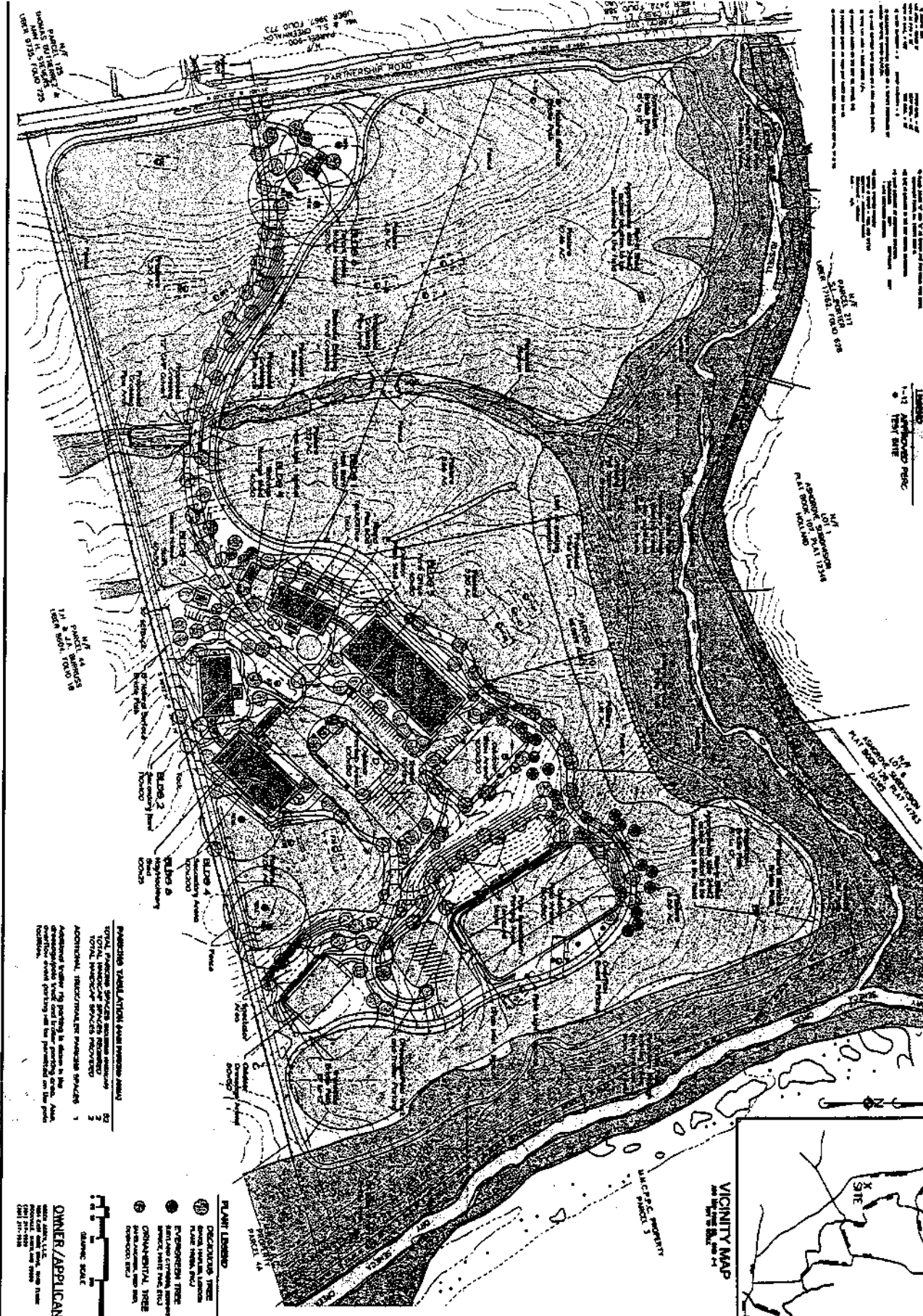
2. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING ALL NECESSARY PERMITS AND APPROVALS FROM THE APPROPRIATE AGENCIES.

3. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL MAINTAIN ACCESS TO ALL ADJACENT PROPERTIES AT ALL TIMES.

4. ALL UTILITIES SHALL BE PROTECTED AND DEEPENED AS NECESSARY.

5. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL MAINTAIN PROPER DRAINAGE AND EROSION CONTROL MEASURES THROUGHOUT CONSTRUCTION.

6. ALL MATERIALS AND WORKMANSHIP SHALL BE SUBJECT TO INSPECTION AND APPROVAL BY THE APPROPRIATE AGENCIES.



**PROPOSED YARD ACTION (based on previous plans)**

TOTAL PROPOSED SPACES REQUIRED	52
TOTAL PROPOSED SPACES PROVIDED	52
ADDITIONAL SPACES PROVIDED	1

Additional yard AS parking is shown in the drawing. Additional yard and building parking are shown in the drawing. All other parking will be provided on the plan.

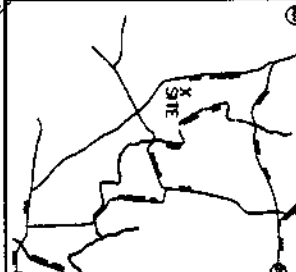
**PLANT LEGEND**

○	DISCERNIBLE TREE
●	SMALL TREE (10' MAX)
○	EVAPORATIVE TREE
○	SMALL TREE (10' MAX)
○	ORNAMENTAL TREE
○	SHRUB (10' MAX)
○	PERENNIAL PLANT

**OWNER/APPLICANT**

DATE: 3/13/02

SCALE: AS SHOWN



**CAS ENGINEERING**  
 10000 Rockville Pike, Suite 400, Rockville, MD 20850  
 Phone: (301) 977-9999 Fax: (301) 977-9999

**WARWICK ASSOCIATES, INC.**  
 10000 Rockville Pike, Suite 400, Rockville, MD 20850  
 Phone: (301) 977-9999 Fax: (301) 977-9999

**TRAFFIC ENGINEERING ASSOCIATES**  
 2000 Rockville Pike, Suite 400, Rockville, MD 20850  
 Phone: (301) 977-9999 Fax: (301) 977-9999

**GREEN ACRES FARM**  
 FOLEYSVILLE (200) SECTION DISTRICT  
 MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

**REVISED SPECIAL EXCEPTION**  
**SITE PLAN AND LANDSCAPE PLAN**  
 CASE NUMBER: S 2488-2002

DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY	DATE
01/08			3/13/02
02/08			
03/08			
04/08			
05/08			
06/08			
07/08			
08/08			
09/08			
10/08			
11/08			
12/08			
SCALE: 1" = 100'			

# **GREEN ACRES FARM**

## **FEEDING AND PASTURE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

This Feeding and Pasture Management Plan has been prepared in connection with Special Exception Application No. S-2468 by Julie Atherton- Nelson who has consulted with Montgomery County Office of the Maryland Cooperative Extension Service Soil Conservation and Water Quality.

The available pasture turn out space consists of approximately 44 acres. The proposed maximum number of resident high performance horses is 100. These animals will have access to the pastures for limited exercise only. The Applicant and operator understand the forage available in these areas will receive heavy traffic and have devised the following plan consistent with the applicant's commitment to good soil and pasture management practices.

### **REQUIRED NUTRIENTS FOR HIGH PERFORMANCE HORSES**

There is a difference between high performance horses and pleasure horses. The horses to be stabled at Green Acres Farm are considered high performance horses in what is commonly understood as "intense work". Both Polo and upper level Eventing horses fall into this category. Intense work includes extended periods of galloping and jumping. Accordingly, management has devised a feeding program based not only on size and body type, but on exercise and workload as well.

Horses in the "intense work" category receive a higher level of concentrates (i.e. Grains) to forage (i.e. Hay and grass) at almost a 2:1 ratio. The only other equines that need this type of feeding program are foals under one year of age. This explains why we are not using the grass as significant forage in the pastures areas as part of our feeding program.

Management will, of course, be supplementing hay in the pastures areas to best maintain the natural growth, as well as keeping the non-working horses occupied.

### **EXERCISE REQUIREMENTS FOR HIGH PERFORMANCE HORSES**

The various sized pastures areas will be used for free exercise of those high performance horses, which are otherwise idle for that period. The proposed facility has been designed to have numerous areas for riding, lunging and games. The daily riding, lunging and training will compose most of the high performance horses daily exercise requirements, with pastures used for those horses not exercising on that particular day.

Free exercise can have a great deal of potential danger to high performance horses. Most of these horses are serious investments as well as offering their owner's pleasure and escape. Managements job is to be sure they have the safest environment possible, to include size of pastures, fencing, topography, pastures mates, accessibility to water and all types of weather conditions and footing. This is why, when you get to these levels of performance, most owners and managers agree that exercise controlled by humans is far safer than exercise with the horse left to his own devices.

## MAINTENANCE OF PASTURES

The pastures will receive regular dragging with a fine tooth harrow to break up and more evenly distribute manure which is already minimized because all of the horses are stall boarded. This keeps horses from developing the typical "rough" area, and will help keep grass more evenly maintained. All the fenced areas will also be regularly mowed to help keep potential weeds in check during the growing season. This gives the grasses the best chance to continue developing. Very small areas, otherwise known as "sacrifice areas", will have the manure hand picked and disposed of with the stall cleanings.

Pasture use will be rotated in the spring months as new growth starts to appear. Regular dragging and mowing will keep weeds at bay and help initiate new growth. As grass growth slows in the summer, it will need longer re-growth periods as well as continued mowing and dragging. In the fall we will have each area soil tested to determine how much lime and fertilizer the pastures need. This time of year is also ideal for reseeding thin spots and aerating. As late winter approaches we will lime and reseed based on the fall soil tests.

Attention is paid to the condition of the ground following heavy rains and spring thaws, and horses will be kept out of very soft areas. This practice keeps erosion at bay, and prevents "pocking" (hooves sinking into turf) which destroys grass root systems. Turning high performance horses out in soft ground (with the ensuing slipping and sliding) is one of the main causes of serious injury to soft tissues in the horses legs, putting them out of work for weeks and even months.

Typically, high performance horses are turned out in small groups for several hours each day and evening when they are not in work. Due to the performance levels of most of our expected resident horses, we will concentrate turnout on an individual bases for shorter periods of time. The proposed pastures are large enough should we wish to put two horses out together, yet small enough to facilitate catching the single horse turned out privately. Hay and clean water will be available in all turn out areas. Both round and square bales will be used. Any uneaten, trodden on hay will be removed and disposed of with the manure.

During the heat of the summer months, some horses will be turned out during the night for longer periods. We have two pastures areas where we propose sheds for shelter in inclement weather at night. We will continue the limited and rotational nature of pastures use. Summer being the peak riding and training time, and as such all the high performance horses at their fittest.

### MANURE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Applicant's plan for Green Acres Farm is to keep the property in grass. A nutrient management plan will be developed once horses reside on the property. The Facility has been designed to facilitate hauling away all of the stall cleaning and smaller pastures cleanings at regular intervals. Typically, 100 high performance horses will generate enough manure to require the container to be removed and replaced approximately every 5 days. The current plan includes space for two containers. One space for a container to be filling, the other space for the new container to be placed when the full one is to be removed. There will be no manure stored on the ground. Alan Belt of Beallsville Valley Farm currently runs a county approved composting site nearby, and has agreed to handle manure removal. This practice is commonly employed at similar farm operations throughout the country.

### FLY AND RODENT CONTROL

Insect and fly control centers on limiting their possible feeding and breeding areas. All horses on the property are regular sprayed with a repellent during the fly season. The animals are kept indoors during daylight hours, which keep them out of the flies feeding area. With regular dragging of pastures, and frequent manure removal from the property, flies will have nowhere to breed, and the fly population will remain minimal. There will also be small areas indoors, where grains are kept, which will have fly attractants or strips.

Rodents are controlled through diligent attention to sealed containers for opened feed. Grains are delivered weekly, and the several barn cats keep a watchful eye out for rodents attempting to break into feedbags. Based on managements experience at Bascule Farm, Green Acres will employ an experienced person to deliver grain who will be instructed to stack grain bags with enough room around them to let the "mousers" patrol all sides. Bagged grain will be stored off the floor on pallets. This has been a very simple, effective way of controlling rodents.

### WATER USAGE

Horses typically consume anywhere from 5 to 20 gallons of water per 24 hour period. All high performance horses have access to water at all times through a system of buckets kept clean and filled in their stalls. General practice is to fill them or top them off up to 4 times per day.

Pastures generally have a large water tank to hold water. The size of the tank will depend on the actual use of the area. Typically, a 100-gallon tank will serve 4 horses for several days. It is more difficult to keep the tanks clean if they are much larger. Private turnout areas need only smaller water containers of up to 20 gallons.

The indoor arena will have a timed overhead mist system to control dust. The proposed footing will not require a great deal of moisture, as most footings become slippery when too wet. A typical overhead mist system in a 20,000 square foot arena will use less than 2/10<sup>th</sup>s of an inch. The system also has a valve to control slow refilling of the water tank.

Outdoor arena watering will most likely be with a water truck. When possible, the water truck will be filled with water from a cistern. A sand and rubber mixture will be used on the outdoor riding arenas, requiring less moisture to keep dust under control. The additive "Dust Down", which the county uses successfully on gravel roads in controlling dust, helps retain moisture thereby reducing the volume of water needed. This has proven to be very successful in riding arena applications.

## CONCLUSION

Based on my experience Green Acres Farm can physically accommodate the 100 horses that the applicant has proposed to be boarded at the farm. I am informed that under the standards in the Zoning Ordinance this 88-acre farm could accommodate 177 horses. As noted in this report, the capacity of any particular property to successfully accommodate a given number of horses depends on the number of stalls and other factors. For this farm we are providing a feeding plan that does not depend on pasture for nutrition, includes a rotation of pasture use and a grass replenishment plan that will maintain pastures, and a manure disposal plan that will accommodate the regular removal of manure and other waste. In preparation for this report I have visited other riding facilities in the county and am familiar with facilities in other locations that have a horse to pasture area ratio that is comparable or greater than that proposed. Based on all of this information, it is my opinion that Green Acres Farm can appropriately accommodate at least the 100 horses that are proposed.





**Montgomery Soil Conservation District**

18410 Muncaster Road - Derwood, MD 20855 - Phone (301) 590-2855

October 8, 2001

RECEIVED  
011598  
OCT 13 2001

Arthur Holmes, Chairman  
MNCPPC  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN  
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Re: Special Exception No. S-2486  
Green Acres Equestrian Center

Dear Chairman Holmes:

During the September 14, 2001 Montgomery County Soil Conservation District (MSCD) Board meeting we discussed the above referenced special exception. We understand this property is proposed to become a new horse boarding and riding operation. The purpose of this letter is to request the Planning Board's favorable support of this special exception. The MSCD staff representatives have been working on this property regarding the development of a Soil Conservation and Water Quality Plan.

In general, horse operations are valuable stakeholders within the local agricultural community. The owners of these operations derive their income from non-agricultural sources, which are then invested back into the agricultural economy through the purchase of land, goods and services. A recent Horse Study completed by the District (copy attached) estimated the horse industry contributes \$196 million into the local economy. These horse operations are good neighbors in the agricultural community and often promote the "country experience". Montgomery County needs to recognize the importance of horse operations by encouraging new ones as well as the expansion of existing operations. The contribution that horses provide to Montgomery County agriculture is tremendous.

Please read over the enclosed Horse Study. Its contents will give you a better appreciation for this growing segment of the agricultural industry. On behalf of the MSCD Board we request the Planning Board give its favorable support to this special exception.

Thank you for the attention given to this matter.

Sincerely,

George Lechliden, Chairman  
District Board of Supervisors

cc: Donald Spence, Chairman  
Montgomery County Board of Appeals  
Judy Daniel, Rural Area Team Leader  
MNCPPC

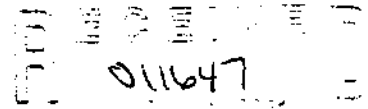
a:holmeslechliden (sept2001)

*All District services are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap.*

CONSERVATION - DEVELOPMENT - SELF-GOVERNMENT

MONTGOMERY COUNTY FARM BUREAU, INC.

3820 Purdum Drive  
Mount Airy, Maryland 21771  
(301) 831-0731  
October 12, 2001



Arthur Holmes, Chairman  
MNCPPC  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

OFFICE OF THE  
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL BOARD  
PARKLAND PLANNING BOARD

Re: Special Exception No. S-2486  
Green Acres Equestrian Center

Dear Chairman Holmes:

The Montgomery County Farm Bureau encourages the Planning Board to approve the Special Exception for the Green Acres Equestrian Center.

In my lifetime, I have personally experienced how horses were instrumental in plowing the fields before the mechanization of agriculture. Today, horses are as important to agriculture as they were back then. The ever increasing horse population represents a growing demand for other agricultural products. The growth in the County's hay industry is directly proportional to the growth in number of horses which now total over 14,000.

As public officials, we need to develop a better understanding of how horse related businesses can further contribute to the agricultural community and the agricultural industry of Montgomery County.

Please lend your support and approval.

Sincerely,

George Lechliden, President  
Montgomery County Farm Bureau

cc: Donald Spence, Chairman  
Montgomery County Board of Appeals

Judy Daniel, Rural Area Team Leader  
MNCPPC

a:holmeslechliden2 (sept2001)



AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
October 19, 2001

RECEIVED  
011653

Arthur Holmes, Chairman  
Montgomery County Planning Board  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PLANNING COMMISSION

Re: Special Exception Case No. S-2486  
Green Acres Equestrian Center

Dear Chairman Holmes:

On behalf of the Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC), please accept this letter as our position of support for the above referenced Special Exception.

Over the past 25 years, Montgomery County has experienced tremendous growth in horse related businesses which have greatly contributed to the expansion of our agricultural industry overall. Please refer to attached Fact Sheet on Montgomery County Agriculture. With these trends in mind, Montgomery County needs to establish a new policy recognizing that horses represent an important component for achieving the public policy objectives as outlined in the 1980 Functional Master Plan for the Preservation of Agriculture and Rural Open Space. As the Agricultural industry continues to change and adapt to forces in the marketplace, we will continue to see a growth in horse population and horse-related businesses. A new policy for County Government should expand on the integrity of our permit and approval process enabling horse operations to be approved as agricultural operations.

We appreciate the opportunity to present the views of the Agricultural Advisory Committee and we request your support in approving the Special Exception Case No. S-2486.

Sincerely,

*William Willard, JVC*

William Willard, Chairman  
Agricultural Advisory Committee

Attachment

cc: Judy Daniel, Rural Area Team Leader  
MNCPPC

a:holmes (sept2001)

# MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

## *Preserving Our Agricultural Heritage*

## Connecting Our Past... With Our Future

Montgomery County's agricultural reserve is an important environmental resource for future farm enterprises. A strong agricultural heritage provides a diverse business community and a strong economic base. Combining these strengths with the commitment for farmland preservation makes Montgomery County an attractive place to live and work.

Agricultural activities occupy about one-third of Montgomery County's land area. Over half of the 93,000-acre agriculture reserve is preserved through transfer of development rights or easement purchase initiatives. The County's diverse agricultural industry – 526 farms and 350 horticultural enterprises – produce more than \$350 million in economic contribution from farm products and operations. The majority of Montgomery County farms are family-run operations, many reaching back several generations, which employ more than 10,000 residents. The County has 526 farmers, of which 45 percent of them work full time in farming.

### **Horticulture**

During the past 25 years, the Horticultural Sector has grown dramatically. The 350 horticultural businesses employ more than 7,000 of the people working in agriculture. With gross sales of \$125 million annually, horticulture is one of the largest sector in agriculture and includes nurseries and landscaping companies, arborists, sod farms and lawn care firms, and green house businesses.

Twenty percent of the horticultural industry in Maryland is in the County and Montgomery County ranks second in the State in total number of horticultural firms.

### **Equine Industry**

Horses have become a major component of the agricultural industry numbering over 15,000 horses. Horses represent a tremendous opportunity for farmers in terms of the supplies, services and products needed to support the horse population which exceeds the population of cows. The growing hay industry in Montgomery County is directly proportional to the growing number of horses. High quality veterinarians that provide services to horses are now available for other livestock operations in the County.

### **Agriculture for the Future**

Montgomery County is committed to sustaining a viable agricultural industry. The Agriculture Reserve established in 1981 by the Preservation of Agriculture and Rural Open Space Functional Master Plan, provides 93,000 acres for farming. A variety of private organizations assist farmers to prosper in Montgomery County: Farm Bureau, Farm Tour Committee, Agricultural Promotion and Marketing Council, Agricultural Advisory Committee, Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board and Montgomery County Farmers Markets Association work together with the Cooperative Extension Service, Soil Conservation District, Department of Economic Development, and Farm Service Agency.

### **Farmland Preservation**

### **Acres Protected**

Montgomery County Agricultural Easement Program (AEP)	6,268
Montgomery County Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)	41,270
Maryland Environmental Trust (MET)	2,086
Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF)	2,074
Rural Legacy Program (RLP)	<u>1,571</u>
	53,269

### **Economic Contribution to County's Economy**

Over 182 County farms have annual sales of \$10,000 or more. The average farm size is 147 acres and 43 percent of the farms are greater than 50 acres in size.

Traditional Agriculture	\$ 28,563,000
Horticultural Industry	\$125,330,000
Equine Industry	\$196,155,646 Fixed Infrastructure and Annual Costs
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$350,048,646</b>

## Montgomery County Agricultural Industry

Total Land in Montgomery County	316,800 acres
Land in Farms	86,917 acres
Percent of Land in Farms	29.18 %
Number of Farms	526 farms
Number of Horticultural Business	350
Average Farm Size	147 acres
Total Cropland	60,510 acres
Harvested Crop Land	46,768 acres
Pasture Land	13,742 acres
Woodland	10,863 acres
Average Age of Operator	56.8 years
Percentage of Principal Occupation Farmers	45.0 %

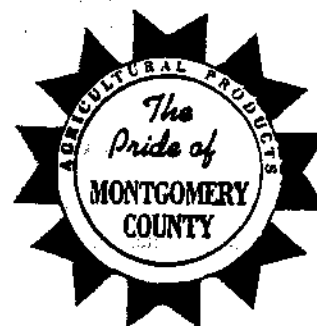
### Farms by Type of Enterprise

Crop or Livestock	Number of Farms	Amount Produced
Beef	270	6,613 Cows
Horse	250 est.	14,437 Horses
Dairy	12	1,930 Cows
Sheep	34	950 Sheep
Corn for Grain	58	1.1 Million Bushels 11,200 Acres
Corn for Silage	20	24,000 Tons 1,500 Acres
Wheat	46	408,000 Bushels 6,100 Acres
Soybeans	58	431,000 Bushels 13,600 Acres
Hay	223	43,400 Tons 12,060 Acres
Fruits, Vegetables, Flowers and Christmas Trees	37	3,000 Acres
Production Nurseries and Greenhouses	175	900 Acres 25 Acres
Sod	26	4,500 Acres
Landscape, Arborist, Lawn Care	150 businesses	

Statistics provided by United States, Department of Agriculture and University of Maryland Cooperative Extension Service - Census 1992/1997/2001  
 Prepared by: Montgomery County Department of Economic Development  
 Agricultural Services Division 301-590-2823

July 2001

agfactsheet (agfactsheet)





THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

8787 Georgia Avenue • Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

(301) 495-4605

Montgomery County Planning Board  
Office of the Chairman

November 13, 2001

Mr. George Lechliden, President  
Montgomery County Farm Bureau  
3820 Purdum Drive  
Mount Airy, MD 21771

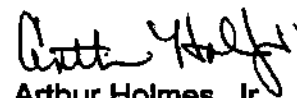
SUBJECT: Special Exception #S-2486  
Green Acres Equestrian Center

Dear Mr. Lechliden:

Thank you for your letter in support of the equestrian business and the Green Acres Equestrian Center special exception application. I appreciate your concerns, and the Planning Board shares the County's support of agriculture as an important element of the County's economic structure.

This item has recently been moved to the February 7, 2002 Planning Board agenda. We will be sure that you receive a copy of the staff report.

Sincerely,

  
Arthur Holmes, Jr.  
Chairman

AH:JD:ha: a:\judy1\lechliden.doc

**HONEY-ACRES FARM  
15220 Partnership Road  
Poolesville, Maryland 20837**

**RECEIVED**  
020120  
JAN 28 2002

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN  
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

January 21, 2002

Arthur Holmes Jr., Chairman  
The Montgomery County Planning Board  
The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

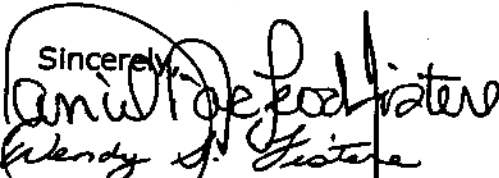

Dear Mr. Holmes:

We are writing to you to express our support for Case Number S-2486. We have resided at the above address on Partnership Road since August, 1971. Having moved originally to this location to continue a pre-existing Quarter Horse breeding operation, we soon expanded our farming activities to include cattle breeding and forage production, as well as a 'custom-farming' (equipment) operation, all of which continue to this day. We have most recently developed a commercial blueberry operation and have started a domestic/Asian pear orchard on our property. In order to preserve open space and expand our farming operation, my wife and I preserved our land through the Montgomery County Farm Easement Program in the early 1990's. In our experience, we can personally attest to the veritable explosion of equine-related activities in our area. Public interest in polo, pleasure riding, equestrian instruction, private horse ownership/boarding, Dressage, 3-Day eventing, Pony Club, hunt racing, horse showing, team penning, therapeutic riding, and other equine activities, have become tremendously popular in our area (and in the Washington Metropolitan area, as a whole). These equine activities contribute very positively to the overall economic health of our rural community, as they present multi-level employment/economic opportunities on a variety of tiers—from feed dealers, hay and straw producers, and veterinarians, to horse trainers, riding instructors, barn managers, farriers, and unskilled labor. The presence of a premiere equine facility, such as that proposed by Green Acres, will promote

the best that Upper Montgomery County can offer. It will also provide a source of healthy competition among already-established horse boarding and riding facilities in and around our location. This also stands to benefit the public, as Green Acres may offer standards of animal housing and care not yet available at other equine facilities.

We believe that the El-Hibri family has honestly and legally sought to establish a premiere horse facility that will support rural aesthetic values, while keeping sound, scientific environmental issues as well as fears/expectations of their wary neighbors, in mind. They have already offered to share a trail system with the community, and, although it is not required, they have gone "beyond the call of duty," so to speak, to inform the neighborhood of their plans and to try to assuage their fears. Ironically, it is most likely that their thoughtfulness and concern in these areas have resulted in challenges to their plans.

We look forward to your approval of the agricultural development of the Green Acres project. The economic impact to our area will ensure the success of many local businesses, including those of the Montgomery County Farm Easement residents who now rely upon the local equestrian community for their livelihoods. The Green Acres plan successfully combines the publicly-mandated agricultural use of Montgomery County's rural land for equine activities, the adherence to necessarily strict and safe environmental standards, as well as the maintenance of rural aesthetics, in a legitimate effort to preserve open space in Montgomery County. We hope you, like us, will support the El-Hibri family in their efforts. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
  
  
Daniel M. Fistere (Owner/Operator Honey-Acres Farm)  
Wendy S. Fistere (Secretary/Treasurer FarmAtHome.com, Inc./  
B.S. Animal Science, College of Agriculture,  
University of Maryland, 1976.



Melissa R. Lessiak-Bills  
16911 Doctor Moore Court  
Poolesville, MD 20837

January 31, 2002

RECEIVED  
020241  
FEB 19 2002

Arthur Holmes, Jr, Chair  
Montgomery County Planning Board  
MNCPPC  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN  
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Mr Holmes:

I'm writing today to show my support of the proposed Green Acres Project. As a life long horse-person and 15-year resident of Montgomery County I feel that this type of establishment is just what the area needs. My daughter and I are active participants in local horse trials and are members of the Seneca Valley Pony Club.

My daily commute to Rockville takes me up and down Partnership road. Each day as I pass the site of the new facility, I get more and more excited for it's opening!

I recently viewed the detailed plans for the proposed barns, houses and arenas. They look fantastic! Much thought was put into not only the functional and aesthetic considerations of the farm, but the architects have also minimized the facility's effect on neighbors surrounding the property.

The surrounding land is just perfect for raising horses, and any horse owner would be proud to have their horse call it home!

More than five years ago, I chose a home in Poolesville specifically due to it's strong rural and equestrian ties. Our county is losing more and more of this precious commodity every day. I hope that my Grandchildren and Great- grandchildren will visit Green Acres and remember the great people that were able to make this vision a reality.

Sincerely,

Melissa Lessiak Bills

Melissa Lessiak-Bills

January 31, 2002

Donald H. Spence, Jr., Chair  
Montgomery County Board of Appeals  
100 Maryland Ave.  
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Mr. Spence,

I am writing in support of Case No. S-2486, the Green Acres Farm Equestrian Facility. I have been a resident in Montgomery County since 1987 and an avid equestrian for 33 years. I have seen the plans for the center and I think the proposed site is ideal for this facility. I currently live in Poolesville and am very familiar with the surrounding area. I feel the facility's layout and building style will be a good fit.

I have witnessed first hand the explosive growth in development in Montgomery County during my 14 years living "down county". I am strongly opposed to this kind of development encroaching on the remaining agricultural areas "up county". The county population has a strong participation in equestrian sports and for this reason I think more facilities are desperately needed. I am personally acquainted with the owners of Green Acres and can vouch for their knowledge and dedication to this venture. The county will truly benefit from approval of this proposal.

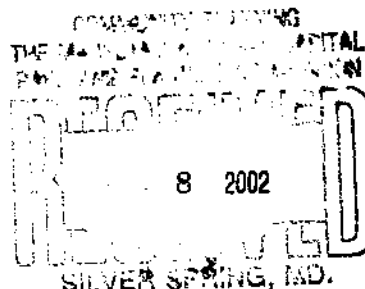
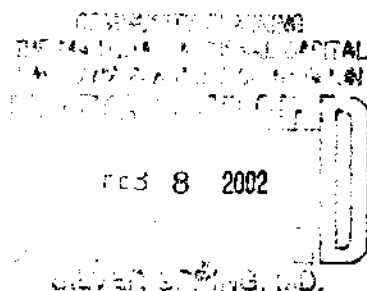
Sincerely,

*Susan M. Reiziss*

Susan M. Reiziss

18417 McKernon Way  
Poolesville, 20837-2505

cc: Judy Daniel  
Community Based Planning Division  
MNCPPC



February 7, 2001

Mr. Arthur Holmes, Jr.  
The Montgomery County Planning Board  
The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Md 20910

RECEIVED  
020195  
FEB 11 2002

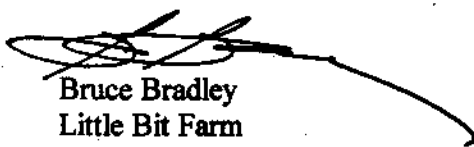
OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN  
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Dear Mr. Holmes:

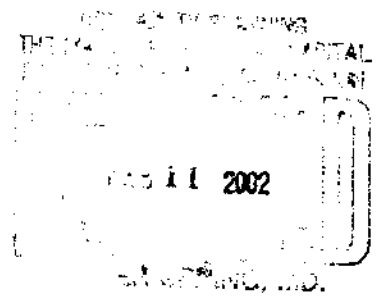
As a citizen of Montgomery County for over 25 years, I am interested in all aspects of the county including education, the environment, safety, superior representation, and recreation. As a parent, I fully support the many opportunities and activities offered by the county. In addition to our sons, we have two daughters. Both girls and my wife are enthusiastic equestrians. We have three horses, and they provide great pleasure with many side benefits for our daughters to include learning, exercise, responsibility, friendship, love for animals, and an activity that is uniquely shared by our daughters and their mother. Our daughters belong to the Pony Club, an instructional, demanding, and fun organization for young riders.

After careful review, I fully support the Green Acres Horse Farm proposal. (Case No. S-2486) We are friends and admirers of the El Hibri family. They are concerned, careful, responsible, and generous people. They love horses and care about family. They treasure the quality of life and respect the importance of environmental issues facing the county. They have taken the time, financial commitment, and effort to guarantee that Green Acres Horse Farm will be an extraordinary facility. As a family on a small farm, we feel confident that the area proposed for Green Acres is more than adequate for 100 stall-boarded horses for exercise and grazing. We feel that the county is in need of more quality equestrian facilities as long as all care is taken for the environment and the animals. Green Acres Farm is in a perfect location for riding enthusiasts from down and up county. The setting is ideal, and the proposed trails allow for an enjoyable, safe riding atmosphere. I have complete confidence that Green Acres Horse Farm, as proposed, will be a superior example of what an equestrian center should be and will be a facility of which all can be proud. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Bruce Bradley  
Little Bit Farm  
12301 Stoney Creek Rd.  
Potomac, MD 20954  
301-947-3090



February 7, 2001

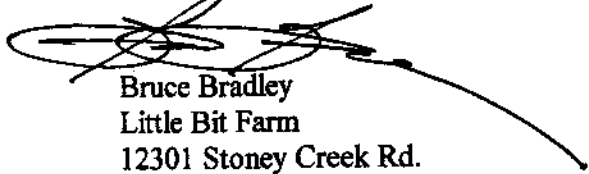
Mr. Arthur Holmes, Jr.  
The Montgomery County Planning Board  
The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Md 20910

Dear Mr. Holmes:

As a citizen of Montgomery County for over 25 years, I am interested in all aspects of the county including education, the environment, safety, superior representation, and recreation. As a parent, I fully support the many opportunities and activities offered by the county. In addition to our sons, we have two daughters. Both girls and my wife are enthusiastic equestrians. We have three horses, and they provide great pleasure with many side benefits for our daughters to include learning, exercise, responsibility, friendship, love for animals, and an activity that is uniquely shared by our daughters and their mother. Our daughters belong to the Pony Club, an instructional, demanding, and fun organization for young riders.

After careful review, I fully support the Green Acres Horse Farm proposal. (Case No. S-2486) We are friends and admirers of the El Hibri family. They are concerned, careful, responsible, and generous people. They love horses and care about family. They treasure the quality of life and respect the importance of environmental issues facing the county. They have taken the time, financial commitment, and effort to guarantee that Green Acres Horse Farm will be an extraordinary facility. As a family on a small farm, we feel confident that the area proposed for Green Acres is more than adequate for 100 stall-boarded horses for exercise and grazing. We feel that the county is in need of more quality equestrian facilities as long as all care is taken for the environment and the animals. Green Acres Farm is in a perfect location for riding enthusiasts from down and up county. The setting is ideal, and the proposed trails allow for an enjoyable, safe riding atmosphere. I have complete confidence that Green Acres Horse Farm, as proposed, will be a superior example of what an equestrian center should be and will be a facility of which all can be proud. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Bruce Bradley  
Little Bit Farm  
12301 Stoney Creek Rd.  
Potomac, MD 20954  
301-947-3090  
cc: Ms. Judy Daniel

RECEIVED  
FEB 11 2002  
SILVER SPRING, MD.



April 3, 2002

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Judy Daniel, Team Leader  
Rural Team  
Community Based Planning Division

VIA: Daniel K. Hardy, Supervisor *DKH*  
Transportation Planning

FROM: Janet E. Gregor, Planner/Coordinator *JEG*  
Transportation Planning

SUBJECT: Board of Appeals Petition S-2486  
Green Acres LLC  
Equestrian Facility  
15501 Partnership Road  
RDT Zone  
Rural Policy Area

---

This memorandum is Transportation Planning staff's adequate public facilities (APF) review of the subject petition.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Transportation Planning staff supports approval of the special exception with the incorporation of the following conditions:

1. Limit the constructed facilities associated with this special exception to no more than:

One main barn/tack room of approximately 20,400 square feet

One secondary barn/tack room of 17,000 square feet

One 37,500 square foot indoor arena

One 20,000 square foot indoor arena

Office/Viewing area of approximately 1, 200 square feet

Two tenant houses for staff use only totaling no more than 3,300 square feet

One 2,500 square foot farm machinery shed

One 1,200 square foot wood shavings shed

One 180 x 360 foot polo arena

One 100 x 200 foot show arena

One 150 x 100 warm-up arena

One 60- foot radius round training pen

One 150 x 80 foot dressage arena

Main parking area with space for 32 cars and 7 horse trailers

2. Permitted activities include: horseback riding, instruction in riding, jumping, dressage and horse training.
3. Limit the special events associated with the equestrian facility to no more than:  
  
Four "rated shows" per year with an attendance of no than 200 participants and spectators per show  
  
Twelve local shows per year with an attendance of no more than 80 participants and spectators per show  
  
Two polo matches per weekend (Friday, Saturday and Sunday) for no more than 35 participants and spectators per match (matches refer to organized inter club events which spectators routinely attend. Matches do not include any instructional activities.) Polo activities may not be held on the same weekend as any show.
4. The hours of operation shall be limited to 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. except Friday nights when the hours may be extended to 11:00 p.m.
5. No more than 80 horses may be boarded on the site at any one time.
6. All parking associated with the equestrian facility and any sponsored activity shall be accommodated on site.
7. Traffic control must be provided for any event for 100 or more persons.
8. Employees shall be limited to no more than 7 full-time people, five of whom will live on site, and 10 part-time people working on staggered schedules.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Existing Land Use**

The subject site is presently unimproved, consisting of open fields, streams, and forested areas. Limited areas are used for agricultural purposes.

Green Acres LLC proposes construction of an equestrian facility including barns, arenas, pastures, riding trails and associated structures. The entire existing 88.08-acre tract will be used for these purposes.

### **Site Location, Access and Circulation**

The site is located on the east side of Partnership Road between Whites Ferry Road (MD 107) and Darnestown Road (MD 28) to the north and River Road to the south. Access to the site is proposed via a new gravel driveway with ingress and egress on Partnership Road.

### **Master Plan Roadways and Bikeways**

The subject property is under the jurisdiction of the Agricultural and Rural Open Space Master Plan. In the vicinity of the proposed special exception, Partnership Road, CA-3, is classified as a county arterial with a recommended 80-foot right-of-way. North of the site, Partnership Road intersects Whites Ferry Road, CA-35, (MD 107) classified as a country arterial. South of the site, Partnership Road crosses Sugarland Road, E-8, classified as an exceptional rustic road before intersecting with River Road, CA-29, classified as a country arterial. No bikeways are planned in the vicinity of the site. Consistent with the rural character, no sidewalks exist along any of the roads in the area.

### **Local Area Transportation Review (LATR)**

A traffic study was undertaken in the summer of 2001 to evaluate the cumulative traffic impacts of the various equestrian activities proposed as part of the Green Acres LLC Special Exception Petition. The study evaluated both the impact on the operation of local intersections and average daily traffic volumes (ADT) as well as the traffic aspects of compatibility with the neighborhood.

The special exception proposal involves relocation of activities and events currently taking place at other sites to the subject property. It was, therefore, possible within the context of the traffic study to count the traffic generated by the current riding stable and polo activities at the separate sites and combine the data to obtain a good estimate of the amount of vehicular activity that will be associated with these aspects of the proposed special exception as defined in the Statement of Operation provided by



the applicant. The traffic consultant was, however, unable to obtain a count for either type of show. Data provided by the Potomac Valley Dressage Association indicates average competitor attendance is 58 persons. The traffic study conclusions are based upon the information provided in the Statement of Operations. The conditions of approval listed above are also based on the operations statement and the conclusions reached in the traffic study. Staff has added four trips per day to the volumes calculated in the traffic study to provide for trips associated with the manure management plan, and feed delivery program not discussed in the Statement of Operations, but since included in the special exception proposal. These two additional elements create four additional daily trips made outside of the weekday peak hour.

Based on the counts taken, it is anticipated that the highest average trip generation during the peak hour of the weekday morning peak period (7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.) for the combined riding facility and polo would be nine trips. The highest average trip generation during the peak hour of the weekday evening peak period (4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.) for the combined riding facility and polo would be 44 trips. A traffic study would not normally be required under Transportation Planning policies because the peak hour trip generation falls below the 50-trip threshold established in the LATR Guidelines.

Weekday morning peak hour trips generated by Green Acres LLC represent approximately five percent (5%) of the traffic volume on Partnership Road. The evening weekday peak hour trips generated by Green Acres LLC represent approximately 24 percent of the traffic volume on Partnership Road.

All local area intersections operate within the 1450 critical lane volume standard set for the Rural Policy Area and are projected to continue to operate within this standard with the addition of the traffic generated by Green Acres LLC.

It should be noted that staff was unable to analyze the impacts associated with the shows that will occur on weekends due to lack of information. The LATR Guideline criteria establish the weekday morning and evening peak hours as the basis for determining impact. Under the LATR criteria Green Acres LLC traffic is acceptable.

#### Policy Area Review / Staging Ceiling Analysis

No staging ceiling capacity has been established for the Rural Policy Area.

JG:cmd

Special Exception S-2486 Green Acres Riding Stable.doc

Susie Farris  
173 Crossbow Lane  
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

February 8, 2002

Arthur Holmes, Jr.  
Chairman  
Montgomery County Planning Board  
The Maryland National Capital Park and  
Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

RECEIVED  
020202  
FEB 12 2002

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN  
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Dear Mr. Holmes:

I am writing this letter in support of the proposed Green Acres Farm Project on Partnership Road in Poolesville, Maryland.

I am a life-long equestrienne who moved to Montgomery County from Northern Virginia in order to live in an area that is in closer proximity to a rural environment in which to pursue my riding activities. I am very active in the equestrian community and it has been my observation that there is a growing need for more boarding and training facilities to accommodate the thriving local horse industry.

It appears to me that Montgomery County has worked hard to achieve a balance between maintaining land for agricultural use against the demands for increased housing. This being said, I can think of no better project in this area than a facility for equestrian use that preserves the open space as well as complying with the agricultural use requirement.

I have seen the plans for the proposed project and I am very impressed with the attention to detail as well as the excellent designs which blend well with the area and will not detract from the local environment. Based upon my experience, the total area of the property is more than adequate to support the grazing and exercising requirements for the proposed number of horses. In addition, the owners are very environmentally conscious dedicated horse people and I am quite confident that they will maintain the property to the highest standards.

Mr. Arthur Holmes  
Page two  
February 8, 2002

In closing, horseback riding is a recreational activity that should be encouraged in Montgomery County. After all, it is part of the cultural heritage of the area. There are many people like myself who have chosen to live in this county because of the diversity of lifestyles which it provides.

Respectfully yours,

  
Susan L. Farris

cc: Judy Daniel  
The Maryland National Capital Park  
and Planning Commission

February 22, 2002

RECEIVED  
020276  
FEB 25 2002

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN  
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Board  
Arthur Holmes, Jr., Chair  
The Montgomery County Planning Board  
The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Mr. Holmes:

I am writing as both an experienced rider and an ardent environmentalist to support Green Acres--a horseback riding establishment to be located on Partnership Road in Montgomery County. This jewel of a facility will set the standard for riding facilities in the county, but more important to me as an environmentalist, it could usher in a new era of environmentally sensitive recreation in Montgomery County.

Horseback riding has deep roots in Montgomery County's past and deserves a prominent place in its future. Continuing that tradition, Green Acres will allow people--adults, children and families--to ride for exercise and recreation. The sport offers the opportunity to work with animals, exercise and develop demanding and precise skills. Green Acres will allow the pursuit of various kinds of riding--event, polo, dressage, and trail riding.

For me, it is compelling activity--well worth a round trip drive of over an hour several nights a week and weekends. Riding is the perfect way to balance a life spent in the office with outdoor exercise, great companions, and new challenges. Riding is also a great way to instill responsibility and confidence in youth--a splendid alternative to sedentary activities like watching TV.

But Green Acres is more than a handsome, state of the art riding facility. Unlike most riding stables, it has been designed with the environment in mind. It has been carefully laid out in consultation with country officials to protect it for future generations. The riding path has been set up to protect trees and streams on property while giving people--neighbors as well as clients--access and opportunities to enjoy the woods that will rim the property.

The environmental sensitivity shown is very important to me. I have spent my professional life as a lawyer and policy analyst for environmental organizations. It is my strong belief that counties must encourage land uses that are compatible with environmental goals like open vistas and healthy woodlands. Riding is such a land use, attractive because it is economically viable. If we do not pioneer and then encourage facilities like Green Acres, I fear we are doomed to a landscape of houses, houses, and nothing but houses.

I understand that there is some concern about keeping 100 horses at Green Acres. There is no need to worry. Well managed, eighty acres of field are more than enough space for 100 horses. This is especially true since all of the horses at Green Acres will be stall boarded, that is, kept inside either days or nights as the seasons demand. Stall boarding allows the collection and easy disposal of manure and gives the farm flexibility to rotate and rest fields as needed.

The keys are the quality of management and the soundness of the management plan designed to protect the quality of the pasture grasses and the woodland to prevent erosion and run off. I can personally vouch for the competence of Julie Atherton as a manager. Having observed her for years as the manager of an 80-horse barn, there is no doubt that she has the skill to care for the horses, the pastures and the environment at Green Acres. Barn management is a demanding job that requires keeping an eye on everything-horses, employees, clients, and pasture—but it is a job that Julie has been doing superbly for decades. Green Acres could not be in better hands.

To conclude, a new riding facility designed and managed to be compatible with goals of open space, healthy woodland and clean water would set a wonderful precedent in Montgomery County. Green Acres has pioneered such a design and can show other facilities how to do it. I hope the necessary approvals will not be long in coming.

Thank you for considering my views.

Sincerely,

*Margaret Mellon*

Margaret Mellon J.D., Ph.D.

CC:  
Judy Daniel  
Community Based Planning Division  
The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

RECEIVED  
020282  
FEB 27 2002

Arthur Holmes, Jr., Chair  
Montgomery County Planning Board  
MNCPPC  
8787 Georgia Ave  
Silver Spring, Md. 20910

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN  
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

26 February 2002

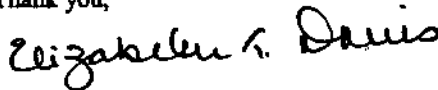
Dear Mr. Holmes:

I am writing in support of case S-2486, construction of Green Acres Farm, on Partnership Road in Poolesville. As a resident of lower Montgomery County, with all its over crowding, I cannot think of a happier addition to our County than another horse farm! Having walked the property under discussion, it seems natural to continue the equestrian tradition of this area. The acreage and prior land use are well suited to accommodate horses for both turn out and riding.

The owners of the proposed Green Acres Farm have developed a wonderful, attractive and functional plan for barns and other buildings. A plan which will be an asset to horses, riders, neighbors and Montgomery County. Much of the "country" heritage has been lost in Montgomery County, with new housing developments replacing the fields and farms of our County, this is a great opportunity to maintain, in fact enhance, that heritage. The principals involved in the development of Green Acres are wonderful, thorough, dedicated horse people with much to offer through this proposed project.

I hope you will support this project and enhance life in Montgomery County in the process.

Thank you,



Elizabeth T. Davis

4908 Earliston Drive  
Bethesda, Md. 20816

Francis R. Berry  
21618 Clarksburg Road  
Boys, MD 20841  
Home Phone 301 / 916-2862

March 03, 2002

Arthur Holmes, Jr., Chair  
The Montgomery County Planning Board  
M.N.C.P.P.C.  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

RECEIVED  
020318  
MAR 06 2002

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN  
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Dear Sir,

It is my understanding that your board is reviewing an appeal requested by the owners of "Green Acres Farm", Partnership Road, Poolesville. As a lifelong resident of this county and local farrier (horseshoer) for the past twenty-two years I'd like to express my opinion on this matter.

It seems to me that the proposed farm use of this property would be ideal for the area, Partnership Road in particular because there are other similar agricultural businesses along the same road. I have seen the plans for the facility and think that the farm would produce many benefits for the county in general. The farm, as proposed, could increase the property values for adjacent lots along with increases in professional services such as veterinary, farrier, training, feed supply, maintenance, etc. would all have a beneficial impact on our county's revenue flow without sacrificing the rural atmosphere we all enjoy.

Sincerely,

  
Frank Berry

**Margaret McNair  
6202 East Halbert Rd  
Bethesda, MD 20817  
301.229.9358**

Judy Daniel  
Community Based Planning Division  
MNCP&PC  
8787 Georgia Ave  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

March 8, 2002

Dear Mr. Holmes:

I am writing in support of case S-2486, construction of Green Acres Farm, on Partnership Road in Poolesville. My daughter started riding when she was 7 years old. After working our way through 3 other facilities, we arrived at Bascule with Julie Atherton. Kari is now 14. Riding is her passion. Riding has and will keep her out of potential trouble as she grows through her teen years.

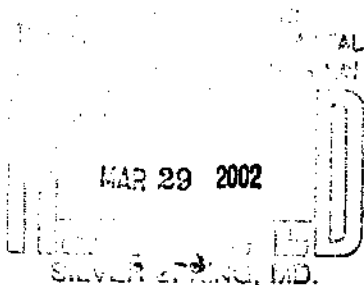
Julie has found a beautiful spot for her own farm. She will not be under the whims of the owners of a leased facility. The plans that were drawn up create a beautiful addition to the Partnership Road arrangement of farms. As a "down county" resident, without any riding facilities anywhere near me, I am anxious to preserve the availability of these facilities in the up county area. The loss of open space, riding trails, and farms due to all the new developments being built needs to be addressed. The construction of this facility, with barns, paddocks, and open fields will ensure that land will continue to be available for those of us without our own land for keeping horses. It is also critical that field boarding continues to be available. Many people that continue riding are unable to afford the expense of a stall in a barn. Field board allows them to pursue their enjoyment of owning and riding a horse.

The group of people planning this farm are all long time residents of Montgomery County. The plans they have presented are in keeping with the area. The additional tax revenue will only be an asset to the county. These are dedicated people. It would be a shame to lose them to another county in Maryland or Virginia.

I hope you will support this project and enhance life in Montgomery County in the process.

Thank you,

*Margaret McNair*







RECEIVED  
0367  
MAR 18 2002

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN  
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

March 8, 2002

CASE NUMBER: S - 2486

The Board of Appeals  
Donald H. Spence, Jr., Chair  
Montgomery County Board of Appeals  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, MD 20850

The Planning Board  
Arthur Holmes, Jr., Chair  
The Montgomery County Planning Board  
The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Sirs,

I am writing this letter, because I understand there is some question around the approval of allowing Julie Atherton-Nelson to develop the property on Partnership Road into the beautiful horse facility, Green Acres, that is planned and proposed.

*I am absolutely surprised that there is any question as to the need and high value of this type of high quality horse facility to the Montgomery County community.* I am sure you must be aware of how many horse people are in the County and how many people move to the County because they love riding, living and driving through the countryside amongst the beautiful farmland. It is so nice to live and ride among some of the top horse livestock breeding farms in the country! My own horse, Bella, was bred locally, and comes from top quality Thoroughbred stock – her uncle was an Olympic level sport horse.

The Green Acres location off of Partnership Road would be an easy 20-minute drive for me from my job at Acterna, (the billion dollar Communications company headquartered in Germantown formerly TTC), as well as from my house off of Montgomery Village Avenue. I've viewed the plans and am excited to see such a large amount of land and space for us to move into. The number of paddocks and the layout of the land would allow my horse (and all the others) to have so much open space for turn out and trail riding. Most other facilities have less space for the number of horses.

There are so few options for me to keep my horse at a high quality stable facility that offers quality horse training, horse care and access to the kinds of rings and indoor arenas that Julie/Green Acres is proposing. For the few high-quality horse boarding and training facilities that exist, there are actually waiting lists – for example, I needed to move my horse in October of 2001 and had a very difficult time even finding a facility that offers the “whole package”. The best location for me and many of my friends who also ride, is *in the Germantown, Potomac, Poolesville, Boyds area*, Bascule was the best, but each of the stables could only put me on a



20400 Observation Drive  
Germantown, Maryland  
20876-4023

Tel: 301 353 1550  
Tel: 800 638 2049  
Fax: 301 353 0734  
www.acterna.com

waiting list since *the demand for high quality horse boarding facilities is higher than the number of facilities available*. It was distressing not to have several choices and be able to make my own decision about where to move my horse – I had to rely on who would have room and take us.

Until two years ago when I moved to Montgomery County, I have always traveled to Montgomery County over the last 15 years to ride, to foxhunt with Potomac Hunt Club and NMMV Hunt Club, to trail ride with my friends, to board my horse, and to show in the local horse shows in and around Poolesville – at R&F Stable, at Tulip Pond Stable and others. What a great opportunity to have the Green Acres horse facility off of Partnership road and be able to trail ride with friends and trailer short distances to the competitions and hunting properties I go to weekly!! My dream is to eventually live on a farm in the Poolesville area and be able to be a part of the horse community – not just drive there to enjoy it. I would love for my children to take part in the agricultural aspects of raising livestock and learning about agriculture through 4-H participation – what a wholesome way to bring up kids.

I cannot imagine why there would be anything but overwhelming support for a facility like Green Acres. I would be extremely disappointed and surprised if Green Acres does not get approved, as I know it would become a wonderful addition to the horse community here in Montgomery County. I personally, as well as my friends, would spend a great deal of time there enjoying my passion in life – horses.

Please do not hesitate to call me if you need any further input, insight, and opinions or have questions regarding Green Acres.

*I extend my heartfelt thank you in advance for doing whatever you can to support Green Acres – as I am really counting on being able to continue boarding my horse at a high quality facility and with Julie Atherton-Nelson!!*

Marilyn Franklin

  
Senior Manager, Internet Programs  
Acterna Corporation

301-353-1550 ext 4397

MR. HOLMES,  
THANK YOU SO MUCH  
FOR ANYTHING YOU CAN DO  
TO HELP US!  
MARILYN

Heidi C. King  
120 Little Quarry Road  
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20878

Donald H. Spence, Jr., Chair  
Montgomery County Board of Appeals  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, MD 20850

Arthur Holmes, Jr., Chair  
The Montgomery County Planning Board  
The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

March 14, 2002

Dear Sir:

I am writing in regards to Case No. S-2486. I was delighted to hear of the proposal to create Green Acres Farm, an equestrian boarding and training facility for 100 horses on Partnership Road. As a horse owner and member of the Board of Directors of the Seneca Valley Pony Club, I welcome the addition of an appropriately sized, attractive facility designed and run by dedicated professionals who are also acutely sensitive to environmental concerns.

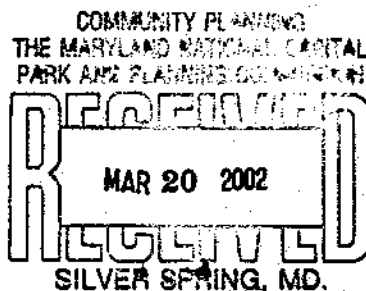
In my experience, a facility of this size will be economically viable, and provide the horseback riding community of Montgomery County with a high quality equestrian facility, more of which are needed in the county. Horseback riding is a sport that is attractive to families with children; as our county population has grown, so has the popularity of equestrian sports.

Green Acres Farm, as an equestrian training, boarding, breeding, and recreational riding facility, will preserve open space and help maintain the rural character of this traditionally agricultural part of our community. Sited along Partnership Road, a well-traveled commuter route between Route 107 and River Road, it would be used by people who are already currently driving into the western portion of the county to pursue equestrian activities.

I wholly support the creation of Green Acres Horse Farm, a thoughtfully planned, economically viable equestrian facility.

Sincerely,

  
Heidi C. King



Judy Daniel  
Community Based Planning Division  
The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

March 19, 2002

Dear Ms. Daniel:

We would like to voice our support for case S-2486, construction of Green Acres Farm in Poolesville. The location of this facility on Partnership Road is an ideal setting to help maintain the equestrian farm quality that has been the historical tradition of this area for so many years.

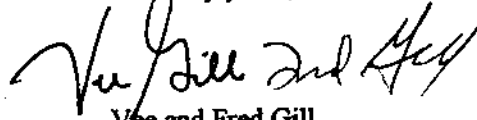
Our daughter and one of us (VG) starting riding at Sugarland Farm, just around the corner from the proposed facility, over 10 years ago and over the years have participated in equestrian activities with the Seneca Valley Pony Club at their field on Partnership Road. We also have been entertained by the Potomac Races held there every year. It is clear that horse-back riding has become an increasingly popular sport appealing to varied segments of our population. It provides a healthy outlet for our youth, and a way for parents and children to share a common commitment. We think that the County should encourage this sport, and be proud that it can provide the opportunity for equestrian activities that enhance rather than detract from the bucolic nature of Poolesville.

Having seen the plans for Green Acres Farm, we are impressed that the facility is being carefully designed to accommodate the necessary ground and water requirements for preservation of the area, and know that the final product will blend seamlessly into the local surroundings. Having known the owners of Green Acres for many years, we know them to be knowledgeable, expert, and humane in their care of horses and can vouch for their integrity in matters pertaining to the preservation of the environment and consideration of community concerns. They are horse people that provide the highest quality of care, not only for the horses but for the facilities necessary to optimize the horses well being. Their facility will be kept clean and aesthetically pleasing to the eye.

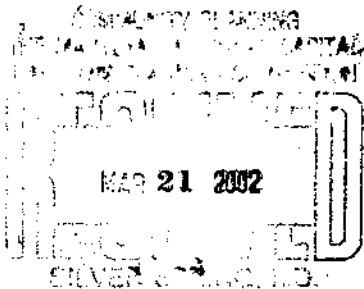
After viewing the proposed property, we are convinced that it can easily support 100 horses (stall-boarded). Since we are concerned for the safety and well-being of both horse and rider, we would not support the development of this facility if we felt otherwise. The approval of an equestrian center of this size is important to providing more affordable horse boarding and rider training for residents of Montgomery County. As horse owners and active riders, we are constantly asked about the affordability of owning horses, where there might be available stalls for boarding, and where to go for quality riding lessons. There is clearly a need for additional good facilities within reasonable reach of County residents.

We hope you will support this case and in so doing help Partnership Road and the surrounding area continue its horse-farm tradition.

Sincerely yours,



Vee and Fred Gill  
10816 Fox Hunt Lane  
Potomac, MD 20854



Arthur Holmes, Jr., Chair  
The Montgomery County Planning Board  
The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

RECEIVED  
0388  
MAR 21 2002

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN  
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION  
March 19, 2002

Dear Mr. Holmes:

We would like to voice our support for case S-2486, construction of Green Acres Farm in Poolesville. The location of this facility on Partnership Road is an ideal setting to help maintain the equestrian farm quality that has been the historical tradition of this area for so many years.

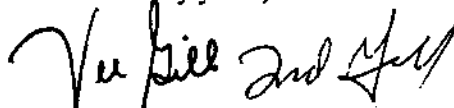
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Having seen the plans for Green Acres Farm, we are impressed that the facility is being carefully designed to accommodate the necessary ground and water requirements for preservation of the area, and know that the final product will blend seamlessly into the local surroundings. Having known the owners of Green Acres for many years, we know them to be knowledgeable, expert, and humane in their care of horses and can vouch for their integrity in matters pertaining to the preservation of the environment and consideration of community concerns. They are horse people that provide the highest quality of care, not only for the horses but for the facilities necessary to optimize the horses well being. Their facility will be kept clean and aesthetically pleasing to the eye.

After viewing the proposed property, we are convinced that it can easily support 100 horses (stall-boarded). Since we are concerned for the safety and well-being of both horse and rider, we would not support the development of this facility if we felt otherwise. The approval of an equestrian center of this size is important to providing more affordable horse boarding and rider training for residents of Montgomery County. As horse owners and active riders, we are constantly asked about the affordability of owning horses, where there might be available stalls for boarding, and where to go for quality riding lessons. There is clearly a need for additional good facilities within reasonable reach of County residents.

We hope you will support this case and in so doing help Partnership Road and the surrounding area continue its horse-farm tradition.

Sincerely yours,



Vee and Fred Gill  
10816 Fox Hunt Lane  
Potomac, MD 20854

RECEIVED  
0382  
MAR 20 2002

Donald H. Spence, Jr., Chairman  
Montgomery County Board of Appeals  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, Md. 20850

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN  
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

March 20, 2002

Dear Mr. Spence:

I am writing to support the construction of Green Acres Farm (case S-2486) on Partnership Road in Poolesville. I am a resident of Montgomery County and an avid rider. I can truly say there is a shortage of quality riding facilities in Montgomery County. For the past six years I have boarded both my horses with Julie Atherton and have found the care giving and riding instruction superior to any other in the county. I recently visited the Green Acres site and found the property well suited to boarding horses and riding.

It is my understand that there is some concern regarding the number of horses proposed per acre. The reality of land prices prohibit small scale operations from being economically viable. The 1/2 acre / horse ratio is indeed sufficient and allows for the success of this agricultural undertaking. Most importantly, Ms. Atherton has been operating this type of business locally for the past twelve years and would never compromise the care of the property or horses.

The plans for the proposed Green Acres Farm are exceptional. The county does not have any comparable facilities. It would be deeply appreciated if the county allowed some of the acreage to remain natural by retaining the fields and farms in lieu of replacing them with residential development.

Please support this project and allow Montgomery County to maintain its riding heritage.

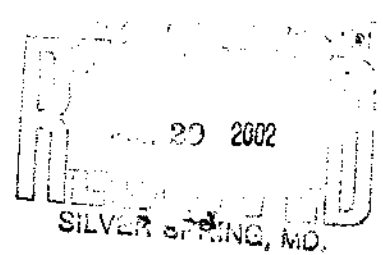
Sincerely,



Shauna Baribeau  
6306 Newburn Drive  
Bethesda, Md. 20816

cc:Francoise M. Carrier  
cc:Aurthur Holmes  
cc:Judy Daniel

March 22, 2002  
18800 Lake Placid Lane  
Germantown, MD 20874



Arthur Holmes, Jr., Chair  
The Montgomery County Planning Board  
The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Re: Case No. S-2486 (Green Acres Horse Farm)

Dear Mr. Holmes and Members of the Planning Board:

I am writing in support of the proposal for the construction and operation of the Green Acres Horse Farm. As a horse-owner, whose daughter is an active member of the Seneca Valley Pony Club, I would like to bring the following points to your attention:

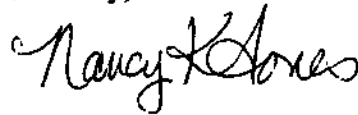
- ☛ From my experience at several equestrian facilities, it appears to me that there is more than sufficient grazing area available for the number of proposed boarder horses at Green Acres. The topography of the site is such that designated grazing areas are open field and thus fully available to support the horses.
- ☛ The Partnership Road area is well-suited for an equestrian facility, such as Green Acres, and there are several existing horse farms in the area. Further, the "home field" for Seneca Valley Pony Club, Bittersweet Field, is located on Partnership Road; its proximity to Green Acres would allow those Pony Club members who would board at Green Acres (and there would be several) easy access to Bittersweet for training, camps, and competitions.
- ☛ As an employee of Montgomery County, I know that the maintenance of the agricultural preserve is a high priority for the County and equestrian facilities are one of the few financially viable agricultural "businesses." Rejecting the Green Acres proposal would be in conflict with the ideals of preserving the County's agrarian history.
- ☛ I have come to know the owners of Green Acres well in the time that I have boarded my horses at Ms. Atherton's current facility. In addition to being dedicated horse people, they are also extremely supportive of the young people entering the sport. They teach not only the mechanics of the sport, but also promote good sportsmanship. The young riders are strongly schooled in the need to appropriately care for the animals and their environment and to accept those responsibilities as an integral part of horse ownership. As with other youth sports,

March 22, 2002  
Montgomery County Planning Board  
Page 2

the County should encourage and support children's involvement in equestrian activities as a healthy alternative to television, video games, and "just hanging out." In the same vein, the owners have also been great supporters of the Seneca Valley Pony Club, an affiliate of the United States Pony Club, and have provided training and facility use to Pony Club members. I am sure they will continue these practices at the Green Acres Horse Farm.

In sum, I strongly urge the Board to approve the application for Green Acres Horse Farm. Thank you for taking the time to consider my position.

Sincerely,



Nancy K. Jones

cc: ✓ Judy Daniel  
Community Based Planning Division  
The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910



Arthur Holmes, Jr., Chair  
The Montgomery County Planning Board  
The Maryland National Capitol Park and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Md. 20910

Dear Sir,

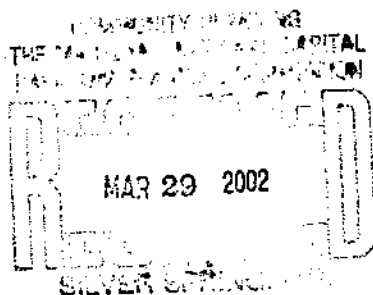
I'm writing you to support the proposed equestrian center on Partnership Road, Case No. S-2486. My wife and I are relatively new to riding, having ridden only about 5 years, and have owned horses only two years. Our venture into horse ownership was delayed longer than we would have liked because of the expense of owning horses. Larger operations make horse ownership more affordable, allowing families to pursue a sport together, which my wife and I do. The cost effectiveness of larger operations also make it feasible for parents to provide that opportunity to their children, if they have a desire to learn to ride. Based on my observations, the children that I see associated with riding are responsible, disciplined kids, that take great joy in riding and caring for their horses.

In addition to opening up riding to a portion of the population beyond the financial elite, larger operations also preserve open green space in the county. Owners and managers of equestrian operations understand the need to be good stewards of the land off of which they make their living. Misuse leads to a diminished resource, which in the end results in poorer grazing land and less healthy horses. Misuse of the land eventually cost them money in either additional expenses or lost customers. As a consequence, owners, managers, and riders tend to be very conscientious in maintaining the environment.

The benefits of approving a new equestrian center extend beyond maintaining open green space and affordable opportunities for riding and horse ownership. Riders and owners of horses contribute significantly to the local economy. The list of local Montgomery County businesses supported by riders and horse owners is long. It includes, trainers, farriers, vets, grooms, feed and bedding suppliers, horse breeders, and tack shops. The financial support riders and horse owners provide help maintain these agricultural businesses within the county.

I urge you to approve the proposed equestrian center on Partnership road with the requested limit of 100 horses. The application clearly shows that with the land use methods proposed, the property will support that number of horses with no detrimental effect on the environment. That number of horses will also allow an economy of scale that will keep riding and horse ownership available to a population beyond the financially elite.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.



*Edward Baker* 3/25/02  
Edward Baker

# Westleigh Citizens Association

Roger Stillwell, President  
11400 Cepaise Court North Potomac, MD 20878-2528  
Home: 301-279-2647 Office: 202-208-6974

Mr. Arthur Holmes Jr.  
Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board  
Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Re: Case No. S 2486 (Green Acres Horse Farm proposal)

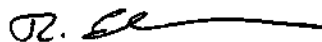
Dear Mr. Holmes:

This letter is written on behalf of the many residents of the Westleigh community who are active in equestrian sports in Montgomery County. Based on my family's decade of involvement in equestrian activities and horse ownership in the County, I believe that access to high quality and professionally run equestrian facilities are insufficient to meet the needs of the growing number of horse lovers in our community. For this reason, the Westleigh Citizens Association is pleased to support approval of Case No. S 2486, a proposal to create the Green Acres Horse Farm on Partnership Road in Poolesville.

In urging this action, be assured that I have personally viewed the proposed site and the plans for the Green Acres Horse Farm. I am confident that it is adequate to meet the grazing, handling and stall boarding needs of up to 100 horses. Your approval of this proposal will be an important contribution to slowing the loss of agricultural lands and protect our precious open spaces from further high density development. Additionally, the development of this new horse farm will enhance the proud equestrian heritage of the County, while also creating new jobs and learning opportunities for young riders.

As you and others review this proposal, I urge that the reputation of those who will be involved as owners and managers in this operation be taken into consideration. These are persons with the highest levels of integrity who share years of experience at the top levels of professional involvement in local equestrian sports. I have no doubt these individuals will guarantee that the proposed Green Acres Horse Farm will make all of us proud to welcome this new facility into the County.

Sincerely

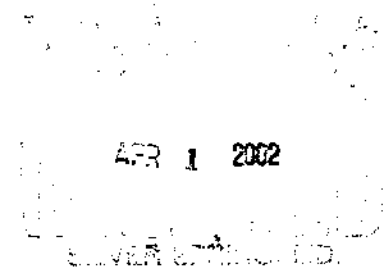


Roger Stillwell

MAR 23 2002

March 26, 2002

Judy Daniel  
Community Based Planning Division  
The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning  
Commission  
8787 Georgia Ave.  
Silver Spring, MD 20910



Re: Case No. S-2486

Dear Ms. Daniel:

I am writing to you today on behalf of the equestrian community of Montgomery County and to express my fervent support of the proposed equestrian center ("Green Acres") on Partnership Road in Poolesville.

There are several reasons why I am in support of this new facility. First, I believe that we are in dire need of more properties just like Green Acres. There really are so few affordable and well-equipped equestrian facilities in the County. Next, Green Acres really presents the most desirable use for an agricultural property such as this. The property will be easily accessible from a variety of points within and outside Montgomery County, which will enable Green Acres to serve a variety of horse owners from the greater Washington DC metro area as well. Green Acres will also help the County preserve an important part of its cultural heritage, the ownership and boarding of horses, in a manner that will be pleasing to the neighboring properties and that will also enable the property owners to make a living, which they are entitled to do. Last, but definitely not least, this facility will also preserve the joy of riding for many horse enthusiasts for years to come and will guarantee that the land will never be used for residential development, but rather, will be preserved for all to appreciate.

As I noted above, we do need more facilities like this in Montgomery County. While there are a variety of barns to choose from across the County, not one is as appropriately equipped for the training and maintenance of performance horses and as affordable as Green Acres will be. This facility is a necessity.

Next, the property itself is perfectly suited for equestrian use. There is ample open space, which would not only be preserved but also enhanced. The woods that surround the property will provide both a desirable natural environment for riding and a buffer for neighboring properties. Given the size of the property, the amount of land available for grazing and exercise will be more than adequate to support the needs of 100 stall-boarded horses.

This is also a highly desirable location for a facility like Green Acres. Equestrian centers belong on properties such as this where subdivision development is inappropriate and in fact discouraged. This facility will be easily accessible from a variety of routes inside Montgomery County from Potomac and the lower end of the County and from Western

regions of the County as well. These are the regions where a good number of horse owners and riders live and work.

This project really will facilitate the preservation of the land and open space for years to come and will help the County preserve its important agricultural heritage in which horses have played such a key role throughout the years.

In the end, I urge you to approve this property and their plans to maintain 100 stall-boarded horses on it. There is ample land to support both the number of proposed horses and this tasteful and much needed facility.

Warmest regards,



Cathlin Bowman

APR 1 2002

March 26, 2002

Arthur Holmes, Jr., Chair  
The Montgomery County Planning Board  
The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
8787 George Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Re: Case No. S-2486

Dear Mr. Holmes:

I am writing in support of the application of Green Acres Horse Farm to establish an equestrian center. The State of Maryland and the County of Montgomery have endeavored to protect the agricultural environment in western Montgomery County in the face of incredible pressure for high-density housing and suburban growth. This is a position I whole-heartedly support and that is why I also whole-heartedly support the type operation proposed by the owners of Green Acres.

I own and ride my own horse and I appreciate the contribution equestrian activities make to my own quality of life and the quality of life of my community. Supporting the ability of the horse-riding community to live and follow their avocation will help Montgomery County maintain its commitment to maintaining the agricultural preserve. Equestrian centers preserve open spaces while at the same time making the land economically productive.

Horse breeding and training has been an important economic activity in this part of the state for many years and can continue to do so as long as the county enables owners and operators of equestrian facilities to establish themselves. Currently this part of the county does not offer a lot of choice for the riding public. Those of us who care about our horses and who want to advance our own levels of training need to have a wider range of establishments from which to choose. I am very familiar with the Julie Atherton Nelson's skill and commitment in caring for horses and in providing support and training to her students. Her horses are always in good condition and her students compete successfully at events throughout the region.

I have seen the plans for Green Acres Horse Farm and I hope very much the proposal will be approved. The accommodations for horses are exemplary and the proposed range of riding and training experiences is exciting. I have looked at the plans for protecting the environment by including provisions for stream protection and the preservation of much of the natural growth and appearance of the property. I am a strong environmentalist myself, and I believe that a property run operation of this type can be much more appropriate than suburban development with paved driveways and highly-cultivated and manicured lawns.

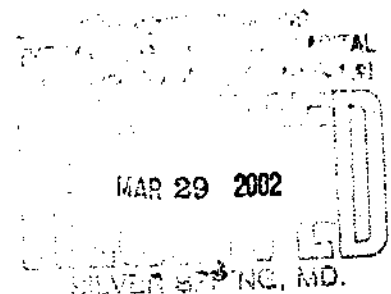
Thank you for taking my observations into consideration in your decision.

Sincerely,



M. Lee Sayrs

✓Cc: Judy Daniel



Heidi Hotz  
2303 Ladymeade Drive  
Silver Spring, MD 20906  
(301) 438-7893

March 27, 2002

Montgomery County, Board of Appeals  
Donald H. Spence, Jr., Chair  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, MD 20850

Montgomery County Planning Board  
Arthur Holmes, Jr., Chair  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

RE: CASE NO. S-2486 – Green Acres Farm

Dear Mr. Spence and Mr. Holmes,

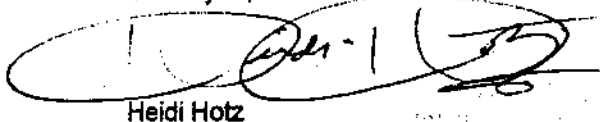
This letter is being sent in favor and support of the proposed equestrian center, Green Acres, to be located on Partnership Road between River Road and Route 107. I am an active and enthusiastic equestrian, belonging to the United States Dressage Federation and the Potomac Valley Dressage Association. I have owned, ridden and competed horses for the past 21 years, am a certified farrier and a licensed equine appraiser.

Based on my personal experience and observations, I can note the following opinions which support my recommendation for this property:

- First and foremost, equestrian centers of the caliber and quality that the owners of Green Acres operate are needed in Montgomery County. The promotion of quality training and care that these owners encourage is not only admirable but necessary if Montgomery county is to contribute to the development of conscientious and proficient equestrians. The owners of Green Acres instill both confidence and knowledge to their students through their top-quality instruction and guidance in equestrian sports. Not only are they developing athletes, they are instilling competence and skills that are applicable to everyday life and business. These attributes will benefit their students for the rest of their lives.
- Not only are the owners of Green Acres dedicated and accomplished horse people, they take a serious and proactive position on environmental concerns, ensuring that their operations are environmentally sound and healthy.
- I have seen the architectural drawings for the proposed equestrian center and am of the opinion that they will attractively yet subtly blend in with the surrounding vicinity. None of the center's proposed property will detract from the agricultural nature of the area. The size and nature of the property is more than adequate to handle the upkeep and requirements of 100 stall boarded horses.

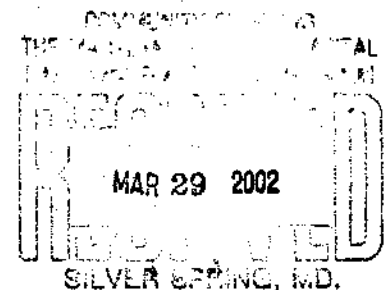
I encourage your support of this proposed property and enthusiastically look forward to the approval of the Green Acre Equestrian facility.

Thank you,



Heidi Hotz

cc: Judy Daniel, Community Based Planning Division  
Francoise M. Carrier, Esq, Administrative Hearing Examiner



April 3, 2002

(202) 828-8470  
tgutierrez@fcclaw.com

Arthur Holmes, Jr., Chairman  
Montgomery County Planning Board  
National Capital Park  
and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Re: Opposition to Request for Petition of Green Acres, L.L.C.  
For Special Exception  
Case No. S-2486

Dear Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Partnership Road Community Coalition for Responsible Land Use (the "Coalition"), LLC.<sup>1/</sup> We write to express the Coalition's strong opposition to the referenced Green Acres L.L.C. ("Green Acres") project. The bases for the Coalition's objection are set forth below. By way of providing perspective regarding the Coalition, the families who constitute the Coalition, all of whom live in the immediate vicinity of the proposed facility, and collectively surround the proposed project site from South and West, moved to Poolesville, Maryland in order to live in a rural setting, after familiarizing themselves with the applicable rules and regulations governing development in the area. Approval of the Green Acres development, as proposed, would make a mockery of those regulations, and of the rural nature of the Poolesville community. We are particularly disturbed that in this instance the petitioner has evidenced no genuine interest in working

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<sup>1/</sup> The Coalition is an informal, unassociated group. Members of the Coalition include the undersigned and his wife, Ann H. Stevens, both whom reside at 15410 Partnership Road, a location in the immediate vicinity of the contemplated project; Sara Lee Greenhalgh, residing at 15500 Partnership Road, which is located directly across from the proposed facility; and Thomas and Judith Burruss, residing at 15225 Partnership Road, a location immediately adjacent to the contemplated site. The Coalition is the community group most impacted by the proposed facility.

with the community or, apparently, with regulatory entities to propose facilities that are compatible with the community.

For the reasons set forth below, the Coalition submits that the requested special exception cannot properly be granted consistent with existing criteria governing proposals of this nature. The Coalition also demonstrates that the purported letters of support constitute nothing more than a scheme designed by the petitioner to facilitate grant of what governing law and regulation does not permit, and that the proposal should not be granted even with modifications.

**1. The Proposed Facility Does Not Comply with Longstanding Criteria Governing Action on Requests for Special Exceptions**

Under the Montgomery Zoning Ordinance there are nine factors to be considered in assessing whether Green Acres should be awarded its sought-after special exception. The first of these is whether or not the use proposed is one that is allowed by special exception in the zone. Questions exist with respect to whether this threshold standard is met, largely because of vagaries associated with the proposal. For example, is the facility proposed a riding stable which would appear to be a permissible use, or is it some form of multiple use facility (due to the private club-type polo arrangements that are not clearly spelled out by petitioner) that may require additional authority? Accordingly, at this time, we raise no issue on this particular matter, but reserve a right to do so when proper information is provided by the petitioner. We also submit that proper information on this matter must be presented before the proposal can be approved.

If the project passes the first hurdle, it must then comply with several additional criteria. One of these is that the proposed project must be consistent with the general plan for the physical development of the district, including a master plan or portion thereof. Here, the general plan is to preserve farm land and to protect open spaces and natural resources. The scale and nature of the proposed Green Acres operation is wholly inconsistent with this. Acres of what is currently farm land would be covered by a multitude of buildings. Additional acres would be converted from farmland to arenas. The existing topography, which includes substantial rolling hills rather than the gentle slopes alleged by petitioner, would have to undergo substantial excavation. In addition, the facility would have a wholly commercial nature in that request is being made to board 100 horses and to provide for both commercial horse boarding and private polo operations.

A second consideration is whether the proposed project would be in harmony with the general character of the neighborhood, when one considers population density, design, scale, and the bulk of any proposed new structures. There is no genuine question but that the proposal would be entirely out of harmony with the neighborhood. As petitioner embellishes in its proposal, there are other riding stables in the vicinity. Yet, petitioner conveniently overlooks one critical difference: on the Partnership Road corridor, and in the adjoining areas, there are no strictly commercial facilities. Rather, certain of the neighbors provide stabling in conjunction with their residence. In fact, without exception, every horse facility in the area is also a residential facility, where the owner of the property resides on site, full time. Thus, the owners of these facilities must accept any inconvenience generated by those facilities, and have an extra incentive to minimize all of them. In stark contrast,



here petitioner has instead elected to build his residence several miles distant from the proposed project and to impose upon the neighbors all of the traffic, noise, congestion, and water problems associated with the contemplated mega-complex, while avoiding the same himself.

Petitioner also has the burden of demonstrating that the proposed facilities would not be detrimental to the use, peaceful enjoyment, economic value, or development of surrounding properties. This project fails on all of these counts. First, a mega-project such as this with 16 separate horse shows contemplated a year, with over 100 horses to be boarded on barely 40 acres of pasture land, with operations to extend until 11:00 p.m. on certain nights, and with multiple lighted outdoor rings as well as substantial indoor facilities, would unquestionably erode peaceful enjoyment. The 16 shows alone would likely take up over one-quarter of all weekend days in a year, and polo matches would take up considerably more. And there may be even more weekend events.<sup>2/</sup>

As far as economic value is concerned, the rural character of the neighborhood would be irrevocably harmed and the economic value of surrounding properties would be adjusted downward, considerably, to reflect all of the above. More importantly perhaps, in this time of drought the water usage that this facility would require would seriously erode the well water supplies that the neighbors currently rely upon. Even accepting petitioner's statement that daily water usage per house averages up to 20 gallons, that equates to at least 2000 gallons per day of extra usage. As you are no doubt aware, there is a single aquifer that covers the entire community, and any significant additional draw from it necessarily reduces that available to neighbors. Here petitioner has provided no useful information that shows that the water supply of neighbors would not be affected negatively.

The purported traffic analysis does nothing to demonstrate that the proposed facility is fit for this area. It includes no meaningful analysis of traffic (and noise) at any of the scheduled events, and virtually overlooks the fact that Partnership Road would be transformed into a computer/industrial thoroughfare on one out of every four weekends. Thus, the proposal fails to demonstrate how the facilities at issue would not degrade the peaceful enjoyment and economic value of surrounding areas.

There is a separate, additional requirement that the contemplated project cause no objectionable noise, vibrations, fumes, odors, dust, glare, irrespective of any adverse effects the use might have if established somewhere else. Once again, this facility fails on all counts. Loudspeakers are contemplated that would, virtually by definition, create unwanted and inappropriate noise. Fumes from 100 horses corralled on a relatively small pasture are beyond argument. The same applies to odors and dust. The glare of night facilities and the lights surrounding substantial construction would have the same effect. In this last regard, petitioner has failed to demonstrate that the direct glare of the lights has been minimized, and petitioner has not even substantively addressed indirect lighting issues in any way.

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<sup>2/</sup> In a transparent effort to demonstrate community involvement, petitioner claims that the facilities would also be used for interscholastic shows and for pony club events. Upon information and belief, no arrangements have been agreed upon with respect to either of these matters, and petitioner can be given no "credit" for such efforts. And if these wholly speculative endeavors were to take place, it only magnifies the congestion and inconvenience that would be generated by grant of the special exception.

In assessing whether a special exception is warranted, a determination must also be made regarding the number, intensity in scope of operations generally, and whether such would adversely affect or alter the residential nature of the area. This neighborhood is residential, with there being no pure commercial operations in the immediate vicinity. The lone exception would be the proposed facility. But the proposed facility is far more than simply non-residential. It is a brontosaurus. The number of proposed horses is extreme; the buildings (covering more than 2.4 acres) are excessive; the timing of operations (6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.) is arrogant; and the overall scope of infrastructure is so gargantuan as to destroy the existing character of the community. It would also require a multi-year construction effort, with all of the associated complications. And when construction is completed, there will be up to 17 employees there each day.

Another hurdle that must be overcome, one that cannot be overcome with respect to the proposed facility, is a showing that it would not adversely affect the health, safety, security and general welfare of the residents. Health will be negatively affected by the water issue discussed above, and by the fumes, odors and dust also discussed above. The general welfare will be eroded by the traffic that a huge commercial facility will generate, and the non-residential nature of it.

Lastly, consideration must be made as to whether the facility will be served by adequate public services and facilities including, among other things, water, sanitary sewer, public roads, storm drainage and other public facilities. The water issue is discussed above. Public roads are a separate issue, but it is unquestionable that traffic on public roads would be increased substantially by this contemplated facility.

## **II. There is No Reason to Grant the Special Exception**

Brief comment on the dozen or so (largely single page) letters of support provided for the Green Acres project appears to be appropriate. As is often the case with any letter-writing scheme of its type, the letters are most noteworthy for what they don't say, including the following. First of all, with the lone exception of a single writer who has positioned himself to receive certain commercial sales to Green Acres, none of the writers lives anywhere in the area affected by the proposal. (Ironically, one writer goes so far as to argue against development, then lends support to the proposal.) Second, the writings demonstrate generally a fundamental misunderstanding of the proposal. Some argue that it will help Julie Atherton by freeing her from "whims of owners" of property over which she operates. Apparently, the writers fail to understand that ownership and control of property resides with the El-Hibri family. Accordingly, Ms. Atherton would have no vested interest in the property and, as is often the case with managers of horse facilities, could be gone at anytime. In this regard, any strengths that Ms. Atherton could be seen as contributing to Green Acres must be viewed as flirting in nature.

At least certain of the writers appear to not understand the most fundamental nature of the facility proposed. For example, one writes about the virtue of field boarding, yet the proposal provides that there will be no field boarding of horses, other than the private polo horses of the owner. None of the letters in support, which are obviously copycat in nature, provides any discussion or analysis regarding the applicable guidelines that govern action on special exception requests such

as this. Equally important, there is no mention of any qualifications of any of the writers to comment knowingly on any of the matters at issue here.

The letters are also misleading to a considerable extent. For example, the Montgomery County Farm Bureau, Inc., writes as though it is a public institution (they go so far as to explain that "as public officials, we need..."), yet it is a private institution that apparently has some tie to petitioner. Certain of the writers improperly invoke their status with a local pony club as somehow lending extra credibility to their position. None of the writers holds any meaningful position in that organization. The writers apparently misunderstand the fact that this facility would be considerably smaller than Julie Atherton's existing facility, yet have additional horses. Many of them apparently believe that the petitioner has worked with the community and with the local government in fostering his proposal. Nothing could be less true. The petitioner has refused to even speak substantively with community groups that have raised questions about the proposal.. It is our understanding that petitioner has been less than communicative with staff at the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission. In addition, according to environmental consultants with the Army Corps of Engineers, there was a considerable delay in even providing a requested water delineation study.

Lastly, several of the writers parent the phrase "similar agricultural businesses," apparently without understanding that there are no similarly situated agricultural businesses in the vicinity.

### **III. Even Grant of the Special Exception with Meaningful Limitations Would not Serve the Public Interest, for Enforcement Would Be Logistically Impractical**

Normally, proposals that are inappropriately grandiose can be paired back to become acceptable. Here, however the extent of required reductions would be so extensive as to be unmanageable. The sheer magnitude of investment here would put extreme pressure on the users of the land to maximize usage. There would almost certainly be a "creeping" strategy whereby, step-by-step, any trimmed back proposal would be expanded over time. And, of course, given limited enforcement capabilities of the county and states, it would serve no public interest to approve a restricted plan that would virtually guarantee enforcement disputes.

For all the above reasons, the Coalition urges that requested exception not be granted.

Very truly yours,

Thomas Gutierrez, Chairman  
Partnership Road Community Coalition for  
Responsible Land Use

cc. W. Roberts, Esquire  
S. Orens, Esquire  
J. Daniels  
S. Cacciatore

**CAROL RAE HANSEN**  
14921 Sugarland Road  
Poolesville, MD 20837  
(301) 972-7833

Arthur Holmes, Jr., Chairman  
National Capitol Park and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Sir,

I am writing emphatically to request that you and your colleagues on the Commission recommend denial of the Green Acres Special Exception Application (S-2486). It is scheduled to come before the NCPPC on April 11. I make this request on a personal basis for myself and for my husband, Andrew Skitt Gilmour, as neighbors on Sugarland Road who would be adversely affected by such a huge commercial polo and horse boarding installation. As a board member and or spokeswoman for two non-profits in the area, the Sugarland Foreign Citizens in Association, and the Historic Medley District, I intend to submit extensive testimony on April 11 detailing numerous reasons why the Green Acres project does not meet the burden of proof required under Section 59-G-1.12, the General Conditions of the Montgomery Zoning Ordinance.

Let me say initially, however, that I and our community did not want to burden you, your colleagues, or the staff with a barrage of letters and testimony while we still had hopes that our differences with the El Hibres and the Green Acres group could be reconciled. Moreover, since properties are isolated and we are far from police and other public service officials, neighbors in the country try their best to resolve their differences among themselves, simply because we *have* to rely on our neighbors. However, over the past seven plus months, we have not achieved -- individually or collectively -- *any* movement by the El Hibres on any of the seven key issues that have convinced the community that such an operation would be a disaster for our area. This is despite personal and private conversations with the El Hibres and their project planners and attorneys, the intervention of friends and family, as well as professional colleagues. This is also despite a request by the El Hibres for all our names, addresses and telephone numbers, which was prefaced by an offer to fully disclose all relevant data and to answer all of our

questions. To date, despite many promises, none of the promised documents have been received by any member of the community. Indeed, the long-awaited revised proposal was dated March 13, approximately eight months after the first proposal surfaced, and it did not reach most of our member until after March 20.

As I know you will see from the other documents that reach you, the Community is united in rejecting this application. We have met five times in a large group setting, and almost all of the landowners have attended at least two of these sessions. I have attended another five or six smaller scale working sessions, and exchanged several dozen phone calls with the neighbors. We are prepared to show you in detail why at least six local non-profit bodies dealing with farmland preservation, the environment, citizen's concerns, and wildlife preservation are against this effort by Green Acres. In many private conversations with your staff many of our concerns were mirrored by those of the county officials with whom we spoke.

In short, this is the wrong project for such a small parcel of land, it is not in harmony with the neighborhood, it is in the wrong location, it threatens the water, land and air of the area, it robs the neighbors of the peaceful enjoyment of their property, it inappropriately and unfairly competes with existing businesses, it jeopardizes wildlife habitat, and it may well even be the wrong type of installation anywhere in the county. In short, we strongly recommend that the county deny this request, and we are prepared to explain why in great detail.

Sincerely,



Carol Rae Hansen, Ph.D.

April 1, 2002

Douglas C. and Pamela P. Marks  
15001 Berryville Road  
Darnestown, MD 20874

RECEIVED  
0457  
APR 02 2002

Mr. Donald H. Spence Jr., Chair  
Montgomery County Board of Appeals  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville MD 20850

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN  
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL  
AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Dear Mr. Spence:

We would like to voice our support of Case No. S-2486, the proposed equestrian center on Partnership Road, Poolesville, Maryland. As part of the equestrian community in Montgomery County, we feel the need for good, quality, well run facilities such as the owners of Green Acres Farm have proposed. Preserving and managing the land is all part of a well run and safe facility. We are convinced that as knowledgeable horseman the owners of Green Acres Farm have the expertise to create a first class operation on Partnership Road.

This rural location has various existing businesses such as feed stores, veterinary services, farriers and equipment shops that will benefit from an equestrian facility of this quality. A well-managed and safe environment for horse activities will greatly benefit the community as it preserves the open land and beauty of the countryside as well as provide educational activities for children and adults.

We hope that Montgomery County will support the proposed equestrian center on Partnership Road, as it will only enhance the recreational activity and way of life for this rural community as well as give access to a well ran riding facility to other Montgomery County residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice our opinion, we hope that Green Acres Farm will be allowed to continue the equestrian tradition of this area.

Sincerely,

Pam and Doug Marks

**DeSouza, Karina**

---

**From:** caroline taylor  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 03, 2002 4:25 PM  
**To:** MCP-Chairman  
**Subject:** S-2486 Greenacres Limited Partnership  
 Regarding Proposal for Equestrian Facility - S-2486:

RECEIVED  
 0469  
 APR 04 2002

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN  
 THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL  
 PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Dear Chairman Holmes and Member of the Planning Board,

I am writing on behalf of For A Rural Montgomery, F.A.R.M. , to convey our request for the Board's denial of the proposed facility referenced above. F.A.R.M. is dedicated to preservation of Montgomery County's nationally recognized Agricultural Reserve and its resources.

We have been frustrated in our attempts to garner information regarding the precise nature and scale of the facility. In addition, the entity who has proposed the facility currently operates Seneca Polo club on Hughes Road outside of Poolesville. Seneca Polo Club been unresponsive to concerns about that operation, including but not limited to the level of noise from their PA system and their nutrient management program.

We understand that crucial elements of the development of this facility have not been conducted or supplied to the Board including: wetlands delineation, forest conservation plans, numbers (traffic etc.) The lack of cooperation with governmental requests and community requests is extraordinary, to say the least. The stated hours of operation, especially with night lighting until 11:00 are unacceptable to the community.

Finally, based upon what information that has been provided, it seems clear that the project is out of scale with the community, its natural resources, its historic roadways and communities and the harmony of uses that must be maintained.

We hope that the Board will carefully regard the concerns of the Community and the requirement of environmental statute and deny this proposal.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Caroline V. Taylor  
 Executive Director  
 For A Rural Montgomery

4/4/2002



DeSouza, Karina

From: DOLORES MILMOE [dmilmoe@audubonnaturalist.org]  
Sent: Wednesday, April 03, 2002 3:43 PM  
To: MCP-Chairman  
Subject: S-2486 Greenacres Limited Partnership

RECEIVED  
0470  
APR 04 2002

Re: S-2486 Greenacres Limited Partnership

Office of the CHAIRMAN  
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL  
AREA AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Dear Chairman Holmes:

I am writing on behalf of the Audubon Naturalist Society in opposition to the Greenacres Limited Partnership proposal, S-2486, for an equestrian operation on Partnership Road, southeast of Poolesville. Audubon staff attended their presentation to the community this past summer and have been closely following the proposal along with several community groups. There are many areas of concern which we feel should be noted. Among them are the following.

1. The preliminary Forest Conservation Plan has not been approved.
2. State and MNCPPC staff have recommended only two stream crossings for proposed equestrian trails instead of the applicants' wish for four which they are still demanding.
3. Apparently the applicants have denied the need for the Army Corps of Engineers jurisdictional delineation of wetlands.
4. There has been no notice of approval for the Soil Conservation Plan.
5. They are requesting a total horse population of 100 when the available pasture would support only 80..
6. Their request for three lighted arenas which could operate until 11:00 pm is totally unreasonable and would have grave community impacts.

While we understand that equestrian uses in the Agricultural Reserve are to be generally welcomed, the scale and intensity of this proposal would have serious detrimental community and environmental impacts. We strongly urge you to deny this proposal.

Sincerely,

Dolores Milmo  
Maryland Conservation

Associate.

5501 Seminary Road  
Falls Church, VA 22041  
March 30, 2002

Arthur Holmes, Jr., Chair  
The Montgomery County Planning Board  
The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

RECEIVED  
APR 04 2002

Dear Sir:

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN  
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Reference: Case No. S-2486

I am writing in support of the proposed plans for the development of **Green Acres Farm**.

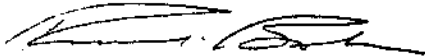
I am a resident of the Commonwealth of Virginia, but I have a personal interest in seeing the **Green Acres Farm** become a reality. For the past four years and currently, I am boarding three horses with Ms. Atherton at her current location. I come out to ride and check on the well-being of my horses at least five days a week. The cost of boarding my horses runs about \$2,000 per month for board, training and lessons. I love my horses and they add to the quality of my life. When I retire, I plan to spend more time with my horses.

I want my horses to have the best possible care and environment in which to live and work. The proposed Equestrian center on Partnership road in Poolesville will provide this for my horses and for me. I entrust my horses to the owners of **Green Acres Farm** because of their experience and dedication. In my experience they have maintained the highest of standards of all of the Equestrian centers in Maryland and Virginia. It is my conclusion that management of the **Green Acres Farm** property and management of training and boarding of horses on the property will be the same excellent quality that is currently being provided. I believe that the owners of the property will be able to provide the necessary balance for the grazing and exercise of the 100 stall boarded horses through effective, efficient management. I know that it will be the best possible situation for my horses and me based on past experience with the owners of this property.

A purpose built Equestrian center is important. A purpose built Equestrian center will attract teachers and competitions which will allow riders to help advance their riding skills. I currently transport my horses to other purpose built Equestrian centers for this training and competition.

What is good for my horses is good for the people who live around my horses. I look forward to a long and fruitful association with Ms. Atherton and Montgomery County.

I ask the board to approve the referenced proposal. Thank you.



Rosalie Baker

cc: Judy Daniel, Community Based Planning Division  
The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910