

Barnesville Oak Farms

Preliminary plan 120090110

Community comments received as of July 7, 2010

As of this writing, staff has received approximately 90 pieces of correspondence from community members and groups with comments on this proposal. These comments are summarized in the table below, and attached for reference. The column headers, described next, represent the most frequent comments, with the Notes column providing other points.

Column headers:

- Doesn't conform to AROS Plan: These writers consider this subdivision to conflict with the purpose of the Agriculture and Rural Open Space Master Plan
- Too much density:
- Put into Ag Easement: Writers recommend placing all or part of the property into an agricultural or conservation easement, or into the BLT program
- Impact on Rustic Roads: Writers are concerned about traffic, safety, and preserving the character of the rustic roads
- Views: Most often, writers seek to protect views of Sugarloaf Mountain, though views of the working landscape and the night sky are also identified
- Too much traffic: The increase in traffic on Peach Tree Road will negatively impact residents, bicyclists, farm equipment operators, and anyone trying to enter or exit from the businesses along the road
- Water: In the last several years, area residents have increasingly experienced dry wells, leading to these concerns about the further depletion of the Piedmont Sole Source Aquifer, which serves this area

- Forest: Writers seek to protect a greater amount of forest to retain habitat or improve water quality

Notes column:

Other repeated but less common points include:

- this proposal, together with the two neighboring clusters, creates a community or "New Town" nearly the size of the Town of Barnesville, but with no amenities
- creating conflicts between farmers and new residents who would be drawn to a suburban-looking subdivision
- the permanent loss of farmland
- the need to preserve local food production
- the calculation of density with tenant houses
- the loss of the integrity of the rural or historic areas
- likely pressure to widen Peach Tree Road or provide services
- loss of habitat and biodiversity
- the exceptional nature and incremental diminishment of the Ag Reserve
- fears of loss of property rights or farmers' rights.

Comment Received From	Doesn't Conform to AROS Plan	Too Much Density	Put Into Ag. Easement	Rustic Roads	Views	Too Much Traffic	Water	Forest	Other
<i>Civic and Community Groups</i>									
Petition with 228 signatures Sent in by Kirk Mettam (with note) Adjacent owner	X	X		X	X	X	X		Petition with 228 signatures in opposition of Barnesville Oaks; too big and too dense; irreversible; counter to the idea of a working agricultural landscape; larger than the Town of Barnesville; property owner cannot be reached to discuss. Petition dated July 209.
League of Women Voters Margaret Chasson	X		X						Wrong place for numerous homes; there are numerous alternatives to development including BLT easement; will create demand for services
Boyds Civic Association Merritt Ednie	X	X	X						Boyds Civic Association members oppose. Density would impact the integrity of the Ag Reserve; a bad precedent; Boyds encourages property owners to pursue conservation easements to preserve rural integrity
On behalf of neighbors Kirk Mettam Adjacent owner		X	X	X	X		X		Too large, two adjacent clusters, no community amenities support them; too much impact on one location out of 840 acres; visual impact to rustic roads; traffic hazards at new access points; impact on bicyclists and farm equipment operators (two accidents here in the last month); how tenant houses count toward density is unresolved—place the property into an environmental trust; if development proceeds, eliminate some homes or distribute elsewhere on the property; limit clusters to six to eight houses; place remainder into trust to eliminate questions of future subdivisions

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Montgomery Countryside Alliance Diana Conway, President	X	X							Reduce the number of lots; clustering is like RE-2 zoning; protect open spaces and the viability and vitality of agricultural uses; reduce the number of lots
Montgomery Countryside Alliance Caroline Taylor, Executive Director	X		X						Researching easement options for this property (unsuccessful in contacting owner); proposal overwhelms the community and its infrastructure; changes character of the area; density calculations and tenant house issue remains open; proposal is for full density (33 homes); limiting building lots would support the Master Plan; would like to work together to make this proposal in harmony with the RDT
Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chapter of Izaak Walton League of America James Hubbard	X		X	X					Chapter opposes. Peach Tree Road, a rustic road, will be degraded; with existing subdivisions, pressure to upgrade Peach Tree Road is likely; the purpose of the Master Plan is farming—this proposal is not farming; options include reducing the number of lots or placing the land in easement
Individuals									
David Reeves Comus	X	X	X	X	X				Suburban-style subdivision; eliminating farming; does not serve rural or agricultural preservation
Paula Jean Hallberg Silver Spring	X								Educate children about farms and food; not Smart Growth—pro-development
Ginger Dietsch	X	X		X		X		X	Conflicts; bicycles, farm use, increased traffic on rustic

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Dickerson (adjacent subdivision)									roads; loss of a very old forest; should decrease number of lots
Steven Swartz Darnestown									Oppose
Elisabeth Curtz Takoma Park			X	X	X	X		X	An important local food system; food security concerns; irreplaceable farmland; tranquility and peace
Danielle De Soto Barnesville	X			X	X			X	Incremental, almost imperceptible development; loss of acres and forest is final
Anne Corbeille Dickerson	X							X	Pride in Ag Reserve, one of the most beautiful counties in the country; forest will be lost forever
Perry Kapsch Poolesville	X	X						X	Think ahead; farmland is more value than housing—dwindling and irreplaceable; only create farm lots of 25 acres or more; housing doesn't provide economic benefits, but farms do; forest is the slowest growing crop in the county—replant any that is cut; farmland is an increasingly valuable asset
Denise Jacklin Poolesville		X		X					Clusters adversely affect rustic roads and the nature of the Ag Reserve
Anne Sturm Barnesville		X					X	X	Creates a new village; will developer dig new wells for all the affected homes?
Betsy Johnson Chevy Chase	X	X		X				X	We need agricultural land close to urban areas; overwhelming development
Grace Whitman Barnesville	X			X		X	X	X	Against the spirit of the Ag Reserve; impact on bicyclists

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Vicki Crawford Boyd's (neighbor across the street)	X	X	X		X				Creating another bedroom community; owners cannot be identified, cannot discuss Ag easements with them; neighbor approached the developers with a purchase and preservation plan (declined)
Pam Boe Dickerson	X					X	X		Value of the Ag Reserve is ever increasing; an unnamed landowner is a red flag; clustering means 5 or 6 homes, not a whole subdivision; loss of habitat; larger than the Town of Barnesville; could lead to needing road widening, water service; profit goes to one owner, planners, developers
Virginia Cook				X	X				Ag Reserve should remain a haven for farmers, forests and wildlife; increasing traffic would be unsafe for drivers and bicyclists
Betty Brody North Bethesda		X		X					Build up for housing; don't degrade Peach Tree Road or destroy land
Barbara Davidson Barnesville	X	X		X					Development will permanently destroy Peach Tree Road, this part of the Ag Reserve
Susan Lubbers Resident in the Ag. Reserve	X		X	X	X				Pride in Reserve, farms, trees, beauty; we have enough suburbs; protect food production; preserve through conservation easements and parks
Karen Berlage Rockville		X							Bike rider in Preserve; risk of becoming like Loudoun County
Christine Priznar Goshen	X	X		X	X		X		Suburbanization has created traffic problems, widened country roads, devastated forests and farm lands,

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									altered viewscapes, created noise and air pollution, impacted water resources and changed historic areas; land needed for farming; balance overcrowding with open space; retain serenity
Kate Anderson Potomac	X	X	X	X	X				Reduce carbon emissions; use a conservation easement; keep the Ag Reserve for our grandchildren
Holly Harrington Stables a horse nearby Gaithersburg	X	X		X	X	X			Proposal conflicts with the intent of the Ag Reserve; we should continue to serve as a model for handling land resources
Sylvia Bell Ashton				X	X			X	Allowing this tree clearing is contrary to county policies to help restore tree canopies
Steve Weaver Barnesville	X			X	X			X	Way of life is threatened; Leesburg example of uncontrolled development; preserve for everyone or the impact will be on everyone for the profit of a select few
Anne Ambler Silver Spring	X	X	X		X	X		X	Value of Ag Reserve for food production is high and increasing; estates and campuses have replaced corn and vegetables; suburban-style subdivisions are out of place here; loss of forest impacts clean air and water
Meg & John Menke Barnesville	X								In the Town of Barnesville, the 2000 census counted 65 housing units, two churches, a Post Office, Town Hall, and just outside the boundary, an elementary school and MARC station—the proposal, combine with the adjacent houses, is nearly as large without any of the amenities; proposal is exurbia; add community facilities

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									to the proposal that are open to all; add sidewalks; work with the existing community to create a rural village along Peach Tree Road; don't use the name Barnesville (it's taken)
Richard & Catherine Sutton (Dawsonville) Boyds	X		X	X	X	X			Put under a conservation easement; Integrity of the historic rural area would be lost, becomes a suburban village; irrevocable loss
Frank Ierardi Laytonsville	X								Ag Reserve is constantly under attack; the average citizen has to depend upon planning staff to keep it from being destroyed
John Bryn Olney	X		X			X		X	Suburban subdivisions create conflicts with farming; decrease the number of lots; place under easement
Joyce Davis Barnesville	X								The size of the cluster will not be in keeping with the Master Plan
Mark Foster Boards and rides horses in the Ag Reserve	X								Reserve is one of the greatest urban amenities in the eastern US; being slowly lost to sprawl; will look like any other suburban neighborhood soon; Reserve is close to a tipping point; there will never be more land like this
Kathryn Leedy Clarksburg	X			X	X				Too much impact on Peach Tree Road, Ag Reserve; our duty is to protect the Reserve
Patty Cooper Poolesville		X	X	X		X		X	Proposal creates an exurban village in disguise; retain the County's high standards
Linda Pepe Barnesville	X								Create a new layer of review to consider what this development will mean to the entire community;

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									consider this development within the context of current developments and the goals of the AROS Plan
Amy Seely Dickerson	X		X		X				Family watches the moon rise over this farm from MD 109—new houses and lights will be in that view; find a middle ground, such as a conservation easement
Sharon & Harry Bauer Dickerson	X		X			X			At least 64 new cars on Peach Tree Road; subdivision undermines the Reserve
Laurence Patlen Rockville	X		X	X	X	X		X	Creating conflicts with farming; avoid exacerbating the clustered development that already exists; save trees and scenery
Cynthia Fain Gaithersburg	X	X		X	X	X			Excessive development already exists on Peach Tree Road; protect viewshed; we need to have this vital land forever
Holly Larisch Barnesville	X	X	X	X	X			X	Peach Tree Road exemplifies the rural and agricultural landscape; loss of land being actively farmed or available for farmland
Thomas Leedy Clarksburg	X								City people live in an environment where things are made while country people live in an environment where things are grown; cannot replace ag land—a national problem; a rural life and sustainable agriculture can be preserved here
Tina Brown Barnesville	X	X	X				X	X	Sole source aquifer with dropping water table—within last 10 years, well had to be replaced, but new well also runs dry; new development will exacerbate problem;

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									endangers the working agricultural community
Josh Goldman (student) Poolesville	X		X						Poolesville High School student in Global Ecology program, lives in the Ag Reserve; this development conflicts with Reserve; it creates a blob of big houses
Mary Anne Sonnenschein Leisure World, Silver Spring		X						X	Friends and relatives live near proposal; not environmentally sound development
Michael Smith & Holly Larisch Barnesville		X		X			X		This will create a New Town in the Ag Reserve; sprawl; will invite similar developments; not consistent with the goals of the Ag Reserve; infrastructure—water, roads—is inadequate; this kind of development is intended to be in Poolesville, not in the Reserve
Laura Ledgard Darnestown			X					X	Transfer density to areas that allow high rises; preserve the farmland and trees; build housing that's more affordable and can be used by an aging population; pay the owners not to build and to keep farming the land; no houses in the woods
Beverly Bosselmann Dickerson	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	The Ag Reserve is unique, protecting ag and history; put development where infrastructure exists; impacts on roads, water supply, surrounding farms, forest; limit this to half of the proposed lots
John Dorsey Comus		X							Loss of quality of life for profit; lower the number of lots
Carol Rae Hansen Equine Therapy Associates	X	X		X	X	X			TDR program is a national model—it preserves farming for future generations and clusters development where

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Potomac									there is infrastructure; incremental damage to the Ag Reserve. Pressure to develop from big money and law firms; pressure resulted in more traffic, more special exceptions, sand mounds, widening of rustic roads, damage to streams, plants and animals, zoning violations, missing viewshed protections, houses on prime farmland. Proposal does not preserve farmland.
Donna Tasso-Johnson Potomac	X	X	X	X	X	X			Clustering is too suburban; Ag Reserve is a treasure--protect it
Steven Findlay Barnesville	X	X		X					Intrusion of suburban style into rural environs; reject development or scale it back
Dale and Eleanor Kotler Dickerson	X		X	X	X			X	Conflict with farm equipment on rustic roads; this is a suburban subdivision, not in character; keep land in reserve for agricultural purposes
Karen Kraly Bethesda									Ag Reserve provides recreation, educational opportunities, family excursions, source of local food and an excellent example of land conservation
Chris Kendrick Dad's Gourmet, LLC Poolesville	X	X							Nearly the size of the Town of Barnesville; all existing dwellings on the property must be counted toward density; proposal is in conflict with the purpose of the Ag Reserve; beyond simple 1-per-25 math, this does not further the intents and purposes of the Master Plan
Margaret and James Coleman Barnesville	X	X						X	Property is a keystone for the Ag Reserve; adverse affect of the preservation of farmland

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Janeane Marks Rockville	X	X	X					X	Ag. Reserve enhances the quality of our lives and the lives of many in the County; instead of sprawl or encroachment, place into a conservation easement
Paul and Alice McIntosh Clarksburg		X	X	X	X	X			Bought a home on Peach Tree Road because of rural quality of life; serenity of the area; impact on views; concern about safety for cyclists and joggers on Peach Tree; cancel this proposal or reduce; apply an easement
Alyce Ortuzar Ashton	X	X	X	X				X	National security issue—Ag Reserve is our food supply; ag is an economic engine; County requires it for self-sufficiency; developments create needs for infrastructure and services; this should be a working farm and nothing else; allow farming only
Heather Powers Upper Montgomery County	X	X	X	X		X			Wants Smart Growth decisions; uphold the strict subdivision laws within the Ag Reserve
Ellie Trueman Dickerson	X								This is not agriculture, it is land banking; developers are intent on breaking the Ag Reserve; the Reserve is one of the County's best economic development tools
Matt Bowman Boys	X	X							Proposal is inconsistent with a commitment to agriculture and rural living
Jeremy Nathan Marks Maryland Absentee Voter Ontario, Canada	X	X	X		X	X		X	This region is a national treasure for its character; protect biodiversity and ecological health; an unnecessary loss of character; puts suburban development in conflict with farming; decrease number of lots; conservation easements

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Elizabeth Cookson Darnestown	X								Losing farms means losing food; President Jefferson wanted American to remain a rural country; his ideas should be respected
Hugh Gibson Silver Spring			X	X					A downcounty resident and conservation easement donor; clustering preserves agricultural land and open space, meets the objectives of the Ag Plan; place a perpetual easement over farm remainder to eliminate future subdivisions of them
James Fremont Silver Spring	X							X	This is a suburban style subdivision; developers chip away at the Ag Reserve
Marney Bruce Bethesda		X				X		X	Ag Reserve provides clean air, clean water, recreation, habitat, access to farms and fresh food; a model for the country; degrades the rustic area
Bob Beliveau Poolesville						X			Don't create upcounty suburban sprawl
Mark Haflich Brookeville									Support; appears to meet all County regulations governing subdivisions in the RDT
Wally Faye Takoma Park									Support; appears to meet all County regulations governing subdivisions in the RDT
Talal Nsouli, M.D. Bethesda									Support; appears to meet all County regulations governing subdivisions in the RDT
Jutta Strecker Potomac									Support; appears to meet all County regulations governing subdivisions in the RDT
Samir Nsouli									Support; appears to meet all County regulations

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Bethesda									governing subdivisions in the RDT
Saleh Nsouli Potomac									Support; appears to meet all County regulations governing subdivisions in the RDT
Mounir Nsouli Bethesda									Support; appears to meet all County regulations governing subdivisions in the RDT
Nur Nossuli Potomac									Support; appears to meet all County regulations governing subdivisions in the RDT
Ameed Nsouli Bethesda									Support; appears to meet all County regulations governing subdivisions in the RDT
Surd Nsouli Bethesda									Support; appears to meet all County regulations governing subdivisions in the RDT
Ben Allnutt Homestead Farm Poolesville									Support; preserves 85% of the land, 94% ag, 84% forest; protects vistas, intent of the RDT; preserves ag, respects property rights; compatible with community; will sustain the economic viability of farming operations. July 2008.
Mike & Nellie Hanagan Live on this property running the equestrian operation Dickerson									Support; preserves 85% of the land, 94% ag, 84% forest; protects vistas, intent of the RDT; preserves ag, respects property rights; compatible with community; will sustain the economic viability of farming operations. July 2008.
Howard Fowler Dickerson									Support; preserves 85% of the land, 94% ag, 84% forest; protects vistas, intent of the RDT; preserves ag, respects property rights; compatible with community; will sustain the economic viability of farming operations. July 2008.
C.J. Oswald									Support; preserves 85% of the land, 94% ag, 84% forest;

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Boyds									protects vistas, intent of the RDT; preserves ag, respects property rights; compatible with community; will sustain the economic viability of farming operations. July 2008.
James Chapman Boyds									Support; preserves 85% of the land, 94% ag, 84% forest; protects vistas, intent of the RDT; preserves ag, respects property rights; compatible with community; will sustain the economic viability of farming operations. July 2008.
H. Daniel Evans Beallsville									Support; preserves 85% of the land, 94% ag, 84% forest; protects vistas, intent of the RDT; preserves ag, respects property rights; compatible with community; will sustain the economic viability of farming operations. July 2008.
Carl Havelent Boyds									Support; preserves 85% of the land, 94% ag, 84% forest; protects vistas, intent of the RDT; preserves ag, respects property rights; compatible with community; will sustain the economic viability of farming operations. July 2008.
Robert Gaber Boyds									Support; preserves 85% of the land, 94% ag, 84% forest; protects vistas, intent of the RDT; preserves ag, respects property rights; compatible with community; will sustain the economic viability of farming operations. July 2008.
Charles Player, Jr. Main farmer on this property Barnesville									Over 97% of ag operations will continue, 93% of property will remain undeveloped; retaining contiguous farmland; residential lots buffered by trees; balance forest, environmental and historic resources; includes equestrian trail, voluntary forest bank; a permitted use;

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									protect property rights and farmers' rights; approve plan.