#### Montgomery Planning

### DREAMY SKIES DOG RANCH AND TRAINING CONDITIONAL USE NO. CU202401 FOREST CONSERVATION PLAN



#### Description

Request for Conditional Use approval to operate an Animal Boarding and Care facility in the AR Zone.

No. CU202401

Completed: 09-22-2023

MCPB Item No. 10 October 12, 2023

2425 Reedie Drive Floor 14 Wheaton, MD 20902

Montgomeryplanning.org

### **Planning Staff**

MAB PB

Mark Beall, Zoning Planner IV, <u>Mark.Beall@montgomeryplanning.org</u>, (301) 495-1330 Patrick Butler, Chief, <u>Patrick.Butler@montgomeryplanning.org</u>, (301) 495-4561

LOCATION/ADDRESS

26330 Mullinix Mill Road, Mt. Airy MD 21771

#### MASTER PLAN

2006 Damascus Master Plan

#### ZONE

AR

#### **PROPERTY SIZE**

4.42 Acres

#### APPLICANT

Dreamy Skies Dog Ranch and Training

#### ACCEPTANCE DATE

July 10, 2023

#### **REVIEW BASIS**

Chapter 22A & 59

#### HEARING EXAMINER PUBLIC HEARING

November 3, 2023



- Staff recommends approval of the Conditional Use with conditions and requests permission to transmit comments to the Hearing Examiner.
- The Subject Site has an existing house. The Proposal would allow the conversion of the basement of the house and detached garage to an Animal Boarding and Care facility.
- Staff has not received any public correspondence as of the date of this Staff Report.
- No Preliminary Plan is required as part of this Application.

#### TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONDITIONS	3
CONDITIONAL USE NO.CU202401	3
SECTION 2: NEIGHBORHOOD & SITE DESCRIPTION	3
VICINITY PROPERTY DESCRIPTION	3
SECTION 3: PROJECT DESCRIPTION	5
Proposal	5
SECTION 4: COMMUNITY CORRESPONDENCE	
SECTION 5: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS	
CONDITIONAL USE NO. CU202401 Variance request Forest conservation	
SECTION 6: CONCLUSION	
Attachments	21

#### SECTION 1: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONDITIONS

#### **CONDITIONAL USE NO.CU202401**

Staff recommends approval of Dreamy Skies Dog Ranch and Training, Conditional Use No. CU202401, for an Animal Boarding and Care, subject to the following conditions:

- 1. The use is limited to Animal Boarding and Care.
- 2. No more than 14 dogs are to be onsite at any one time.
- 3. No more than 6 dogs are to be outside at any one time.
- 4. A maximum of three non-resident employees may be onsite and any one time.
- 5. No dogs are to be outside between the hours of 9:00 pm and 7:00 am each day.

#### **SECTION 2: NEIGHBORHOOD & SITE DESCRIPTION**

#### VICINITY/NEIGHBORHOOD

The Subject Property outlined in Figure 1 in the red dashed line is located at 26330 Mullinix Mill Road, Mt. Airy, 21771 ("Subject Property" or "Property). The Property is located in the 2006 *Damascus Master Plan* area.

As shown in Figure 1 below, Staff defined a neighborhood for purposes of analyzing this Conditional Use and its possible impacts on the character of the surrounding area. Staff determined the neighborhood based on properties that would be most impacted by the Conditional Use. The neighborhood as defined is comprised of low-density residential development and agricultural uses. The defined neighborhood is all zoned Agricultural Reserve (AR).



*Figure 1: Vicinity Map with Staff-defined neighborhood highlighted in solid yellow.* 

There are no existing Conditional Uses or Special Exceptions located in the neighborhood.

#### **PROPERTY DESCRIPTION**

The Subject Property (outlined in red, dashed line) consists of 4.42 acres identified as Parcels N605, P588, P583 and P601. The Property will have access from the existing driveway for 26330 Mullinix Mill Road.

The Property has a single family detached dwelling unit with a detached accessory garage and a barn located in the AR zone. The Property is approximately 1,100 feet deep and approximately 300 feet wide at the front and 40 feet wide in the rear. The Property gradually slopes from the higher side along the north property line to the lower side along the south property line. The Property has no significant environmental features.



Figure 2 – Subject Property

#### **SECTION 3: PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

#### PROPOSAL

The Applicant proposes to convert the basement of an existing single family dwelling unit and an existing detached garage into Animal Boarding and Care. The Applicant will retain the remainder of the house as a full-time residence. The proposed work includes installation of a parking lot and associated screening, fencing, landscaping, and widening of the existing driveway for Fire Department Access. Clients will arrive onsite sparingly during the day and at staggered assigned appointment times to limit activity and parking. The Applicant is proposing a maximum of 14 dogs onsite at any one time, no more than 6 dogs being outside at any time, and no more than 3 non-resident employees at any one time. The Applicant is requesting four variances from the Hearing Examiner for setbacks from the existing house, the existing detached garage, the proposed dog run, and the noise fence/wall. The variance request is described in Section 5: Analysis and Findings, subsection Variance Requests. The

septic will be upgraded to manage the continuing residential use as well as the Animal Boarding and Care use.



Figure 3: Existing Site Conditions



Figure 4: Proposed Site Plan



#### Figure 5: Proposed Landscape Plan

#### SECTION 4: COMMUNITY CORRESPONDENCE

As of the date of this report, Staff has not received any correspondence from the community. The Applicant has satisfied the application signage requirements.

#### SECTION 5: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

**CONDITIONAL USE NO. CU202401** 

#### **Use Standards**

1. Per Section 59.3.5.1.B.2.b.i, where an Animal Boarding and Care is allowed as a Conditional Use, it may be permitted by the Hearing Examiner under Section 7.3.1, Conditional Use, and the following standards:

### a. The minimum lot area is 2 acres or the minimum lot area required for a detached house building type in the zone, whichever is greater.

The AR zone requires a minimum of a 40,000 square feet lot for a detached house building type so this application must have a minimum of 2 acres for this use. The Property is 4.4 acres.

### b. Exterior areas used to exercise, walk, or keep animals must be set back a minimum of 200 feet from any lot line and screened under Division 6.5.

Due to the size and shape of The Property, the 200-foot setbacks limit is not met. The Applicant will be seeking a variance from the Hearing Examiner for this requirement. See Variance Section below in the Staff Report.

#### c. All exterior exercise areas and runs must be fenced.

The outdoor dog areas for exercise and training will be fenced in with a combination of chain link and board-on-board fencing per the Conditional Use Plan.

#### d. Animals are prohibited from being outdoors between 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.

The Applicant will keep boarded animals either in the basement of the house or in the detached garage during this time.

#### e. Animals must only be walked or exercised in on-site outdoor areas.

The Applicant proposes to allow the dogs to exercise and play only in the designated outdoor areas shown on the Conditional Use Plan.

#### f. The sound level at the nearest property line must satisfy Chapter 31B.

The Applicant has submitted an acoustical study estimating noise from a maximum of 6 dogs outside at a given time. Chapter 31B limits sound at the nearest property line to 65 dBa in the daytime and 55 dBa during nighttime. The submitted acoustical study shows that daytime sound at the Property line will not exceed 65 dBa when the dogs are outside, and nighttime noise will not exceed 55 dBa when the dogs are inside.

### g. All buildings and accessory structures must be set back a minimum of 75 feet from any lot line.

Due to the size and shape of The Property, the 200-foot setbacks limit wis not met. The Applicant will be seeking a variance from the Hearing Examiner for this requirement. See Variance Section below in the Staff Report.

#### h. All litter and animal waste must be contained and controlled on the site.

Cleaning of dog areas will occur daily. All animal waste will be cleaned immediately and placed in appropriate disposal systems. The Applicant will utilize multiple residential type trash bins to store the waste towards the rear of the property. The trash bins will be wheeled out and returned before and after the regular trash pick-up.

# *i.* Any accessory operation, such as the sale of pet food and supplies, must be in the statement of operations and must be limited as an accessory activity to a maximum of 20% of sales.

The Applicant will commit to producing accessory sales under 20% of the facilities gross sales. Pet owners are responsible for providing their dog's food from home. Only on the rare occasion an owner forgets to bring food will the facility sell food to the dog owners.

# *j.* The Hearing Examiner may regulate hours of operation. The Hearing Examiner may also regulate the number of animals that may be boarded, exercised, walked, or kept in runs or similar areas, and how the animals are boarded, exercised, walked or kept.

The facility will operate 24 hours a day for 7 days a week. Arrivals and departures will be by appointment only and will occur between 9:00 am and 7:00 pm. The facility may include overnight boarding for up to 14 dogs. No more than 6 dogs will be outside at one time.

## *k.* If the proposed use is located in an area that uses well water and septic facilities, the applicant must prove that the use will not have any negative effect on groundwater or septic systems.

Pet waste will be removed immediately and will be disposed of in residential trash bins and will not affect the groundwater or septic systems.

#### *I.* The applicant must submit the following:

(1) Acoustical engineering studies that demonstrate that the proposed use will meet required noise levels. The studies must show the worst case scenario sound level (for example, full occupancy). The statement of operations must be sufficiently detailed to allow determination of how often the worst case scenario sound level occurs.

The Applicant did submit an acoustical engineering study concluding that the use, at its maximum capacity of 14 dogs for day care or overnight boarding, while

limited to only 6 dogs outside at one time, would be within the residential noise limits of the Montgomery County Code.

#### (2) Detailed floor plans that show all the interior areas, including runs and kennels.

The Applicant submitted floor plans of the basement of the house to be used for the kennel and the large garage for the training center.

### (3) Site plans that show the layout of all exterior areas used to exercise, walk, or keep animals.

The Conditional Use site plan shows the outdoor exercise areas, residence's basement and the heated garage that will be used for shelter during inclement weather.

#### **CONDITIONAL USE FINDINGS**

- 1. Per Section 59.7.3.1.E., to approve a conditional use application, the Hearing Examiner must find that the proposed development:
  - a) satisfies any applicable previous approval on the subject site or, if not, that the previous approval must be amended.

The Property does not have any previous approvals; therefore, this Section does not apply.

## b) satisfies the requirements of the zone, use standards under Article 59-3, and to the extent the Hearing Examiner finds necessary to ensure compatibility, meets applicable general requirements under Article 59-6;

i. Use Standards for Animal Boarding and Care, Section 59.3.5.1.B

The proposed Animal Boarding and Care use satisfies the use standard in Section 59.3.4.8.B.2 as stated above.

#### ii. Development Standards

The Property is in the AR zone, which allows Animal Boarding and Care as a Conditional Use. The project complies with all the standard method development standards of the AR zone, as shown on the Development Standards Table below.

Permitted/ Required (59.4.2.1.F)	Animal Boarding & Care (59.3.5.1.B)	Existing/Proposed*	Variance Requested
40,000 sf	2 Acres	192,535 sf (4.42 acres)	
125 ft.		266 ft.	
25 ft. (50 ft)		398 ft.	
10%		2.2%	
50 ft.	75 ft.	188.4 ft.	
20 ft.	75 ft.	55.8 ft. **	19.2 ft.
40 ft.		177.2 ft.	
35 ft.	75 ft.	865.8 ft.	
50 ft.	50 ft.	Under 50 ft.	
50 ft.	75 ft.	253 ft.	
15 ft.	75 ft.	68.7 ft.	6.3 ft.
15 ft.	75 ft.	787.6 ft.	
2 Spaces for the dwelling unit= 2 space3	1.00/employee plus 3 spaces= 6 spaces	8 spaces	
	Permitted/         Required         (59.4.2.1.F)         A0,000 sf         125 ft.         25 ft. (50 ft)         10%         10%         50 ft.         20 ft.         35 ft.         50 ft.         50 ft.         50 ft.         15 ft.         15 ft.         2 Spaces for the dwelling unit= 2 space3	Permitted/ Required (59.4.2.1.F)Animal Boarding & Care (59.3.5.1.B)40,000 sf2 Acres125 ft.1125 ft.125 ft. (50 ft)110%7.150 ft.75 ft.20 ft.75 ft.35 ft.50 ft.50 ft.50 ft.50 ft.50 ft.50 ft.50 ft.15 ft.75 ft.50 ft.75 ft.50 ft.50 ft.50 ft.50 ft.50 ft.50 ft.50 ft.100/employee15 ft.100/employee15 ft.100/employee <td>Permitted/ Required (59.4.2.1.F)Animal Boarding &amp; Care (59.3.5.1.B)Existing/Proposed*40,000 sf2 Acres192,535 sf (4.42 acres)125 ft.2 Acres2 Ge ft.125 ft.1 Sa St (4.42 acres)25 ft. (50 ft)2 Ge ft.10%2.2%10%2.2%50 ft.75 ft.20 ft.75 ft.20 ft.75 ft.35 ft.75 ft.35 ft.75 ft.50 ft.100/engloge15 ft.75 ft.15 ft.75 ft.15 ft.75 ft.20 ft.75 ft.20 ft.101der 50 ft.35 ft.50 ft.15 ft.75 ft.15 ft.75 ft.15 ft.75 ft.15 ft.75 ft.25 ft.8ar ft.15 ft.75 ft.35 ft.8ar ft.15 ft.75 ft.15 ft.8ar ft.15 ft.9a ft.15 ft.</td>	Permitted/ Required (59.4.2.1.F)Animal Boarding & Care (59.3.5.1.B)Existing/Proposed*40,000 sf2 Acres192,535 sf (4.42 acres)125 ft.2 Acres2 Ge ft.125 ft.1 Sa St (4.42 acres)25 ft. (50 ft)2 Ge ft.10%2.2%10%2.2%50 ft.75 ft.20 ft.75 ft.20 ft.75 ft.35 ft.75 ft.35 ft.75 ft.50 ft.100/engloge15 ft.75 ft.15 ft.75 ft.15 ft.75 ft.20 ft.75 ft.20 ft.101der 50 ft.35 ft.50 ft.15 ft.75 ft.15 ft.75 ft.15 ft.75 ft.15 ft.75 ft.25 ft.8ar ft.15 ft.75 ft.35 ft.8ar ft.15 ft.75 ft.15 ft.8ar ft.15 ft.9a ft.15 ft.

#### Table 1: Standard Development and Parking Standards (AR)

\*The primary structure is existing. Only proposing site work

\*\*Requesting a variance from the Hearing Examiner. See Variance Request below.

#### iii. General Requirements-

#### (1) Access

Current ingress/egress to the Subject Property is provided via an existing driveway entrance from Mullinix Mill Road. The Applicant will provide minor alterations to the driveway, widening the entrance to an approximate width of 20 feet to maintain consistency with County standards for residential driveway design.

#### (2) Parking

Dreamy Skies Dog Ranch and Training, Conditional Use No.CU202401

For uses that require **3 or more parking spaces in a residential detached zone**, include standards from Section 6.2.5.K, Facilities for Conditional Uses in Residential Detached Zones.

The parking is not in the rear of the Property, so a rear parking standard does not apply. The minimum side setback for parking must equal two times the setback required for a detached house. The Property is zoned AR which has a 20 ft. side setback so the parking must be at least 40 ft. from the side lot line. The Applicant is proposing 62.3 ft. from the parking to the left side lot line. There is an existing gravel driveway and parking spaces to remain which are closer than 40 feet to the left side lot line. Because this is existing and will not be modified, then this area will fall under the legacy provision.

#### (3) Lighting

The Applicant is not proposing any new lighting for the proposed Conditional Use. They will be utilizing the existing residential lighting, and the existing lighting is sufficient for the use proposed.

#### (4) Screening

Alternative compliance is requested for the landscape requirements along the north, south and west property from the required Option A and Option B in Section 59.6.5.3.C.7. The project proposes a six-foot minimum board on board fence as depicted on the landscape plan sheet L-2.1. The fence is proposed to be set one foot from the property line and will not be transparent. Large evergreen screening trees and canopy trees are proposed along the property and inside the fence for a width of a minimum of eight feet to help minimize any visual impacts to surrounding properties. The large trees meet or exceed the screening requirements and intent of the code. With the proposed trees and presence of dogs, no shrubs are not proposed.

An additional alternative compliance is requested along the screening area B to the west on plan sheet L-3.1 of the Landscape Plans. There are existing large evergreen trees currently along the line of the proposed fence and dog area. Proposed vegetation cannot be installed; however, the existing vegetation meets or exceeds the intent of the code.

#### (5) Signage

The Applicant is not proposing any signage currently. The Applicant knows they will have to amend the Conditional Use at a later date if they wish to install signage.

#### c) substantially conforms with the recommendations of the applicable master plan;

#### 2006 Damascus Master Plan

The Subject Property is located in the Rural Area of the 2006 *Damascus Master Plan's* Proposed Land Use and Density map (p. 12). While there is no specific recommendation for the Subject Property in the Master Plan, the Damascus Rural Area is identified as an area reserved for agricultural uses, with some low-density housing.

The Master Plan states that, "when evaluating compatibility with surrounding land uses, the impact of agriculturally related special exceptions in agricultural zones do not necessarily need to be controlled as stringently as the impact of a similar special exception in a residential zone" (p. 38). The Subject Property is in the Agricultural Reserve (AR) zone and the current Zoning Ordinance replaced Special Exceptions with the Conditional Use approval process since the adoption of the 2006 Master Plan.

Staff finds that the proposed use under consideration for a Conditional Use, "Animal Boarding and Care Facility", is consistent within the Rural Area of the Damascus Master Plan since the Use is similar in character and function to other animal-related agricultural uses, such as "Equestrian Facility", albeit smaller in scale, and to other agricultural-related uses that consist of animal husbandry, care, and boarding.

Furthermore, staff finds Master Plan consistency in the Applicant's intention to maintain the residence and residential setting, and to reside in the home while conducting the Conditional Use, thus retaining low-density residential housing in the Rural Area.

d) is harmonious with and will not alter the character of the surrounding neighborhood in a manner inconsistent with the plan; The proposal is harmonious with, and will not alter the character of, the surrounding neighborhood.

By utilizing the existing house and detached garage and providing additional landscaping, fencing, and screening, this application will not alter the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

e) will not, when evaluated in conjunction with existing and approved conditional uses in any neighboring Residential Detached zone, increase the number, intensity or scope of conditional uses sufficiently to affect the area adversely or alter the predominantly residential nature of the area; a conditional use application that substantially conforms with the recommendations of a master plan does not alter the nature of an area;

The neighborhood does not have any existing Conditional Uses/Special Exceptions. This application will not adversely affect the area of alter the residential character of the surrounding properties. The Conditional Use application conforms with the Master Plan by retaining the existing house and keeping with the residential character of the neighborhood.

- f) will be served by adequate public services and facilities including schools, police and fire protection, water, sanitary sewer, public roads, storm drainage, and other public facilities. If an approved adequate public facilities tesB t is currently valid and the impact of the conditional use is equal to or less than what was approved, a new adequate public facilities test is not required. If an adequate public facilities test is required and:
  - *i. if a preliminary subdivision plan is not filed concurrently or required subsequently, the Hearing Examiner must find that the proposed development will be served by adequate public services and facilities, including schools, police and fire protection, water, sanitary sewer, public roads, and storm drainage, or*
  - *ii. if a preliminary subdivision plan is filed concurrently or required subsequently, the Planning Board must find that the proposed development will be served by adequate public services and facilities including schools, police and fire protection, water, sanitary sewer, public roads, and storm drainage, and*

A Preliminary Plan of Subdivision is not required because the Applicant is not proposing any new construction that would require a Subdivision Review. Staff has determined that there are adequate public services and facilities to serve the proposed use as described below.

#### (1) Transportation

#### Master-Planned Roadways and Bikeway

The Subject Property is located on Mullinix Mill Road, now classified as *Rustic Road* by the 2023 *Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan*. Previously, Mullinix Mill did not contain a roadway designation under the 2021 *Complete Streets Design Guide* or 2018 *Master Plan of Highways and Transitways*. Similarly, the 2018 *Bicycle Master Plan* does not recommend any designated bike facilities along Mullinix Mill Road. No additional right-of-way dedication is required as the full right-of-way has been achieved.

#### Local Area Transportation Review

Anticipated organizational activities occur between 7:00 AM and 9:00 PM, both during and after peak-hour timeframes, Monday through Sunday. The proposed Conditional Use will continue to operate as a residential property, and the Applicant will remain on the premises outside of working hours. The Applicant also anticipates a maximum of three part-time employees on-site - for a total of four - including the Applicant. In some circumstances, up to one staff member (besides the Applicant) will remain on the Property overnight.

Client interactions are expected to be minimal, with arrival and departure times staggered throughout the day. Given the negligible weekday activities expected

to occur, the Applicant has provided a Transportation Exemption Statement ("TES").

Based on the trip generation table provided below, the Application generates fewer than 50 new person trips in the morning and evening peak hours. As a result, the Application is not subject to completing a Transportation Impact Study ("TIS").

Trip	AM Peak				PM Peak	
Generation		Hour			Hour	
	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Staff	3	0	3	0	2*	2
Total Trips		5				

\*Based on probable situations where a staff member may need to stay overnight Table 2: Trip Generation for the Proposed Conditional Use

#### (2) Schools

This application does not generate students, so there is no impact to schools.

#### (3) Other Public Facilities

Department of Permitting Services (DPS) Well & Septic staff have deemed the water service (well) is sufficient for the residential use and the Animal Boarding and Care use. The septic will be upgraded to manage the continuing residential use as well as the Animal Boarding and Care use. DPS Well & Septic have reviewed and approved the upgrades to the system. Other utilities, public facilities, and services, such as electric, telecommunications, police stations, firehouses and health services are currently operating within the standards set by the Growth and Infrastructure Policy in effect at the time that the Application was submitted.

- g) will not cause undue harm to the neighborhood as a result of a non-inherent adverse effect alone or the combination of an inherent and a non-inherent adverse effect in any of the following categories:
  - *i.* the use, peaceful enjoyment, economic value or development potential of abutting and confronting properties or the general neighborhood;
  - ii. traffic, noise, odors, dust, illumination, or a lack of parking; or
  - *iii.* the health, safety, or welfare of neighboring residents, residents, visitors, or employees.

The Zoning Ordinance defines inherent adverse effects as "adverse effects created by physical or operational characteristics of a conditional use necessarily associated

Dreamy Skies Dog Ranch and Training, Conditional Use No.CU202401

with a particular use, regardless of its physical size or scale of operations." Noninherent adverse effects, on the other hand, are those associated with a conditional use "not necessarily associated with the particular use or created by an unusual characteristic of the site" (59.1.4.2). Inherent adverse effects alone are not a sufficient basis to deny a conditional use application. Non-inherent adverse effects, either alone or in combination with inherent effects, are sufficient to deny an application.

To determine the impact of adverse effects on the neighborhood in which a proposed conditional use is located, analysts have focused on seven characteristics: size, scale, scope, light, noise, traffic, and environment. In this case, those effects typically and necessarily associated with an Animal Boarding and Care are considered inherent effects, and those not usually associated with the use or created by site characteristics are considered noninherent effects. The physical and operational characteristics inherent with an Animal Boarding and Care are:

- temporary Construction noise
- vehicle trips
- dogs barking
- onsite lighting

The Animal Boarding and Care will not be detrimental to surrounding properties and staff has not identified any non-inherent adverse effects associated with the proposed use.

The Project includes new landscaping and screening to limit the visual impact of the proposed surface parking lot, and will not cause any objectionable noise, fumes or illumination or decrease the economic value of surrounding properties. Lighting will not change and will remain residential in character. Trips in and out of the site will be limited by staggered appointments only.

Therefore, the Proposed Use, provided all requirements and conditions of the use are satisfied, will have no adverse impacts on the health, safety, or welfare of neighboring residents, visitors, or employees.

## 1. Any structure to be constructed, reconstructed, or altered under a conditional use in a Residential Detached zone must be compatible with the character of the residential neighborhood.

By utilizing the existing house and detached garage and providing additional landscaping, fencing, and screening, this application will not alter the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

2. The fact that a proposed use satisfies all specific requirements to approve a conditional use does not create a presumption that the use is compatible with nearby properties and is not sufficient to require conditional use approval.

The use is compatible with the nearby properties and the staff recommends approval with conditions.

3. In evaluating the compatibility of an agricultural conditional use with surrounding Agricultural or Rural Residential zoned land, the Hearing Examiner must consider that the impact does not necessarily need to be controlled as stringently as if it were abutting a Residential zone.

This Section does not pertain to this application.

- 4. The following conditional uses may only be approved when the Hearing Examiner finds from a preponderance of the evidence of record that a need exists for the proposed use to serve the population in the general neighborhood, considering the present availability of identical or similar uses to that neighborhood:
  - a) Filling Station;
  - b) Light Vehicle Sales and Rental (Outdoor);
  - c) Swimming Pool (Community); and
  - d) the following Recreation and Entertainment Facility use: swimming pool, commercial.

This Section does not pertain to this application.

- 5. The following conditional uses may only be approved when the Hearing Examiner finds from a preponderance of the evidence of record that a need exists for the proposed use due to an insufficient number of similar uses presently serving existing population concentrations in the County, and the uses at the location proposed will not result in a multiplicity or saturation of similar uses in the same general neighborhood:
  - a) Funeral Home; Undertaker;
  - b) Hotel, Motel;
  - c) Shooting Range (Outdoor);
  - d) Drive-Thru
  - e) Landfill, Incinerator, or Transfer Station; and
  - f) a Public Use Helipad, Heliport or a Public Use Helistop.

This Section does not pertain to this application.

#### VARIANCE REQUESTS

The Applicant is requesting four variances as part of the Conditional Use application. The Zoning Ordinance allows an applicant to apply for a variance for anything within Chapter 59 which may include development standards or standards with a use. The Board of Appeals will typically hear and decide on variances in the county; however, the Board of Appeals may defer the variance hearing to the Hearing Examiner if they choose to do so when also considering a Conditional Use. In this case, the Board of Appeals has deferred the variance hearing and decision to the Hearing Examiner.

 Per Section 59.3.5.1.B.2.b.i.(g), an Animal Boarding and Care use requires the primary structure for the Conditional Use has a minimum side setback of 75 feet from the side lot line. The basement of the existing house will be the kennel for the Animal Boarding and Care use and therefore must meet the 75 feet setback. The existing house is 55.8 feet from the left side lot line; therefore, the applicant is requesting a variance of 19.2 feet from the required 75 feet side setback.

Staff supports this variance request, because the house is existing, and the Applicant is not proposing a new building with this application and the combined parcels are exceptionally narrow. Also, the noise study shows the Applicant can still meet the requirements of Chapter 31B.

2. Per Section 59.3.5.1.B.2.b.i.(g), an Animal Boarding and Care use requires the accessory structure for the Conditional Use have a minimum side setback of 75 feet from the side lot line. The existing detached garage is 68.7 feet from the left side lot line; therefore, the applicant is requesting a variance of 6.3 feet from the required 75 feet side setback.

Staff supports this variance request because the detached garage is existing, and the Applicant is not proposing a new building with this application and the combined parcels are exceptionally narrow, and the noise study shows the Applicant can still meet the requirements of Chapter 31B.

3. Per Section 59.3.5.1.B.2.b.i.(b), an Animal Boarding and Care use requires a minimum of 200 feet setback for an outdoor dog run or outdoor play area. The proposed outdoor dog play area is up to the property line on both the left and right sides, therefore the applicant is requesting a 200 feet variance from the required 200 feet setback.

The combined parcels are exceptionally narrow and the 200 feet requirement because the parcels are not 200 feet wide at the location of the dog run. The dog run cannot be relocated on the Property to meet the 200 feet requirement. The proposed location will be the least impactful on the surrounding properties, and the noise study shows the Applicant can still meet the requirements of Chapter 31B. Thus, Staff supports this variance request.

4. The Noise Study showed the applicant will need to install a 10 feet high sound wall/fence up to the property line in order to meet the noise requirements of Chapter 31B. Section 59.6.4.3.C.3.c.i exempts fences and walls 6.5 feet in height or less from setback requirements. The applicant is requesting a variance from the 6.5 feet height limit to 10 feet, therefore needing a variance of 3.5 feet.

The combined parcels are exceptionally narrow, so the applicant proposes to provide a tenfeet high wall/fence and is requesting a variance from the standard 6.5 feet heigh requirement. To help minimize impacts and allow better screening of the proposed use, Staff supports this variance request.

#### FOREST CONSERVATION

#### All Forest Conservation Law, Chapter 22A requirements are satisfied.

#### **Consistency with Environmental Guidelines**

The Property has no significant environmental features. The site contains no wetlands, streams, seeps, erodible soils, forests, or other significant environmental features.

#### **Forest Conservation**

The Application meets the requirements of Chapter 22A of the Montgomery County Forest Conservation Law. A Forest Conservation Exemption Plan was confirmed, Plan No 42023136E, on March 9, 2023.

The project is exempt from Article II of the Montgomery County Code, Chapter 22A (Forest Conservation Law), under Section 22A-5(q)(3) a special exception, or conditional use, application if the total disturbance area for the proposed special exception use, or conditional use, will not exceed 10,000 square feet, and clearing will not exceed a total of 5,000 square feet of forest or include any specimen or champion tree.

#### **SECTION 6: CONCLUSION**

The proposed conditional use complies with the findings required for approval of an Animal Boarding and Care, subject to the recommended conditions of approval. The proposed use is consistent with the goals and recommendations of the 2006 *Damascus Master Plan*, will not alter the residential character of the surrounding neighborhood, and will not result in any unacceptable noise, traffic, or

environmental impacts on surrounding properties. Staff recommends approval of the Conditional Use with conditions and transmittal of comments to the Hearing Examiner.

#### ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Proposed Conditional Use Plan Attachment B: Proposed Landscape Plan Attachment C: Noise Study



OPTION B SCREENING	ZONING REQUIREMENT	AREA A-1 (106.1 LF)	AREA A-3 (148.8 LF)	AR
DEPTH (MIN.)	12'	>12'	>12'	>1
CANOPY TREE (MIN. PER 100')	2	3	3	2
UNDERSTORY OR EVERGREEN (MIN. PER 100')	4	5	6	4
LARGE SHRUBS (MIN. PER 100')	8	*	*	*
MEDIUM SHRUBS (MIN. PER 100')	12	*	*	*
OPTION A SCREENING	ZONING REQUIREMENT	AREA A-2 (169.1 LF)	AREA B (211.9 LF)	AR
DEPTH (MIN.)	8'	>8'	>8'	>8
CANOPY TREE (MIN. PER 100')	2	4	*	3
UNDERSTORY OR EVERGREEN (MIN. PER 100')	2	4	7 EX. WHITE PINE	3
LARGE SHRUBS (MIN. PER 100')	6	*	*	*
MEDIUM SHRUBS (MIN. PER 100')	8	*	*	*
			*	
SMALL SHRUBS (MIN. PER 100')	8	*	1 *	1 1

\* ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE REQUESTED



A C-1 (80 LF)	AREA C-3 (124 LF)
2'	>12'
	3
	5
	*
	*
FENCE	
	I

## 6.4.3. GENERAL LANDSCAPING REQUIREMENTS

STANDARD	ZONING R
CANOPY TREE SPREAD (MIN.)	30'
CANOPY TREE MATURE HEIGHT (MIN.)	40-70'
CANOPY TREE SIZE AT TIME OF PLANTING (MIN.)	2" CAL. (

	LANDSCAPE PLANTING PLAN SCHEDULE							
					20-YR CANOPY	,		
KEY	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	SIZE	FORM	DIAMETER	SPACING	QUANTIT	COMMENTS
CANOPY <sup>-</sup>	TREES:							
AR	Acer rubrum	Red Maple	2'' cal.	B&B	48'	AS SHOWN	10	
QC	Quercus coccinea	Scarlet Oak	2'' cal.	B&B	26'	AS SHOWN	8	
EVERGRE	EN TREES:							
JV	Juniperus virginiana	Eastern Red Cedar	6-7'	B&B	10'	AS SHOWN	27	
GRASSES,	PERENNIALS AND GROUNDCOVERS:							
SOD	SOD - Tall Fescue/Kentucky Bluegrass		SOD	SOD		SQUARE YARDS	-	STABILIZATION

NOTE

ALL DISTURBED AREAS MUST BE TOPSOILED PER THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY "STANDARDS AND SPECIFICATIONS FOR TOPSOIL", PRIOR TO FINAL VEGETATIVE STABILIZATION.

### REQUIREMENT

OR 14' HEIGHT

![](_page_23_Picture_12.jpeg)

![](_page_23_Picture_13.jpeg)

![](_page_23_Figure_15.jpeg)

![](_page_23_Picture_16.jpeg)

![](_page_23_Figure_18.jpeg)

![](_page_23_Figure_20.jpeg)

OF CHAPTER 36A OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY CODE.

### Attachment C

![](_page_24_Picture_1.jpeg)

Phoenix Noise & Vibration, LLC 5216 Chairmans Court, Suite 107 Frederick, Maryland 21703 301.846.4227 (phone) 301.846.4355 (fax) www.phoenixnv.com

22 September 2022

Sean Patrick Hughes Attorney Miller, Miller, & Canby 200-B Monroe Street Rockville, Maryland 20850

Reference: Dreamy Skies Dog Training - 26330 Mullinix Mill Road Noise Impact Analysis Project No. MMC2001

Dear Mr. Hughes:

Phoenix Noise & Vibration has conducted an evaluation of future noise impact generated by dogs at Dreamy Skies Dog Training at 26330 Mullinix Mill Road in Montgomery County, Maryland. This evaluation included on-site noise measurements of dogs currently at Dreamy Skies Dog Training, computerized noise modeling of the site and surrounding properties, and barrier design necessary to mitigate dog noise to comply with Montgomery County noise limits. This analysis has been completed as Dreamy Skies Dog Training aims to increase the number of dogs that can be boarded at the facility.

Results of this analysis determined that noise generated by dogs at Dreamy Skies Dog Training will exceed the Montgomery County residential maximum daytime allowable noise level of 65 dBA at neighboring residential property lines without any additional mitigation. Noise barriers enclosing the backyard of the facility will be necessary to comply with the Montgomery County Noise Law. Dogs will not be permitted outside the facility during nighttime hours; therefore, the nighttime noise limit does not apply.

To limit noise levels to 65 dBA in the backyard of Dreamy Skies Dog Training, a 10-foot-high barrier on the northern portion and 6-foot-high barrier on the southern portion where the current fence is located will be necessary.

![](_page_25_Picture_0.jpeg)

#### 1 MONTGOMERY COUNTY NOISE LAW

Noise generated by the facility will be evaluated according to the Montgomery County Noise Law. Chapter 31B of the Montgomery County Code, Montgomery County Noise Law, states maximum noise levels permitted when measured at various properties and the procedures for measuring noise levels to determine compliance. Chapter 31B-5, "Noise Level and Noise Disturbance Violations," provides maximum allowable noise levels for residential and non-residential receiving noise areas (shown in Table 1).

The Montgomery County Noise Law requires that noise levels be maintained at 65 and 55 dBA during daytime and nighttime hours, respectively, as measured at a receiving residential noise area, i.e., noise emitted from Dreamy Skies Dog Training may not exceed 65 and 55 dBA during daytime and nighttime hours, respectively, as measured at the adjacent residential properties.

	Maximum Allowable Noise Level (dBA)			
	Daytime	Nighttime		
Receiving Noise Area	Weekdays – 7 AM to 9 PM	Weekdays – 9 PM to 7 AM		
	Weekends – 9 AM to 9 PM	Weekends – 9 PM to 9 AM		
Non-Residential Noise Areas	67	62		
Residential Noise Areas	65	55		

Table 1: Maximum allowable noise levels (dBA) for receiving noise areas.

Dreamy Skies Dog Training will only allow dogs in outside spaces during daytime hours, such that only the daytime limit applies to noise from dogs on the property. As such, this analysis has been completed according to only the 65 dBA daytime limit.

#### **2** SITE CONDITIONS

Dreamy Skies Dog Training is located directly west of Mullinix Mill Road and approximately 500 feet west of Long Corner Road (see Figure 1). The property is adjacent to multiple residential properties; however, the land directly to the north and south is open field. The existing fenced-in kennel area is located behind the house at 26330 Mullinix Mill Road.

Figure 1: Dreamy Skies Dog Training and surroundings (26330 Mullinix Mill Road property shown in red, existing kennel area shown in blue). Aerial image from Google Earth, dated November 5, 2019.

![](_page_26_Picture_1.jpeg)

![](_page_27_Picture_0.jpeg)

#### **3** NOISE MEASUREMENTS

On March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Phoenix Noise & Vibration conducted an on-site survey, which included observations and noise measurements of barking dogs at Dreamy Skies Dog Training. Measurements were made using two Norsonic Type 140 Precision Integrating Sound Level Meters. The meters were calibrated prior to the survey traceable to National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). The meters meet the ANSI S1.4 standard for Type 1 sound level meters. Measurements were recorded over one-second intervals using a slow time constant.

The noise measurements made during this survey were taken at different distances from the three dogs that were present at the facility at the time. Noise measurements were taken of a barking pit bull, schnauzer, and approximately 40-pound mixed-breed.

Table 2 presents the A-weighted maximum noise level measured while each of the three dogs were barking individually. The presented values are the maximum level that occurred over a measurement duration of at least 30 seconds and the distance from the dog at which each measurement was taken.

Dog Breed	Distance (feet)	Maximum Noise Level (dBA)
Pit Bull	25	83
Mixed Breed (40 lbs.)	8	93
Schnauzer	10	77

Table 2: Maximum measured noise levels of dogs at Dreamy Skies Dog Training.

#### 4 COMPUTER MODELING

Dreamy Skies Dog Training and the surrounding residential properties were modeled using CadnaA, a three-dimensional noise software program capable of determining noise level impact from multiple noise sources across vertical and horizontal surfaces while accounting for complex factors such as topography, surface reflections, and significant structures.

A model was developed to simulate the facility, its surroundings, the future number of dogs to be boarded at the facility and their noise impact upon the surrounding residential properties. It is understood that no more than six dogs are to be in the backyard of the facility at a time.

#### 4.1 Noise Model Limitations

There are a multitude of noise output scenarios possible with a facility such as Dreamy Skies Dog Training which will house many dogs at a time and many types of dogs, especially when attempting to account for such detailed factors as how many dogs will actually be barking at once (whatever the occupancy), the various dog breeds, the type of bark (playful vs. aggressive), etc. Evaluating every scenario possible that could result from each of these factors is nearly impossible; therefore, certain assumptions must be made for the purpose of simplification and discussion on the potential noise impact from the facility.

![](_page_28_Picture_0.jpeg)

For this reason, the focus of this analysis is to provide typical "worst case" scenarios. The noise levels that will result from actual occupancy conditions may be slightly lower or higher than the modeled noise levels presented in this analysis. Likewise, the purpose of the noise model is to provide a reasonable general idea of the noise levels that can be expected from the modeled scenarios, not to precisely establish a decibel level that will not be exceeded at adjacent properties.

#### 4.2 Modeled Noise Levels

The modeled noise output from the dogs was calibrated using the on-site noise measurements. Please note that the dog noise sources used in the model were limited to the three dogs present at the kennel during the site visit (see Table 2) and that different dogs may produce slightly different noise levels (either higher or lower).

Enclosed Drawings 1 and 2 show the modeled noise output of barking dogs at Dreamy Skies Dog Training without any noise barriers. Drawing 1 shows the noise impact from six dogs barking in the middle of the backyard and Drawing 2 shows the noise impact from six dogs barking in the corner of the backyard. Note that the black dot indicating the location of the dogs on Drawings 1 and 2 is meant to show the general location of the six dogs and that the six dogs were spaced out around this black dot in the model.

Six dogs were placed in the backyard as this was stated to be a typical "worst case" condition. Only the noise from the pit bull was used in the models. While more than six dogs may be present at the facility, only six dogs will be outside at any one time.

Please note that the solid blue line in these drawings is the 65 dBA noise contour and that this line must not touch the property line of Dreamy Skies Dog Training according to the Montgomery County residential maximum daytime allowable noise level. Note that on Drawings 1 and 2, the 65 dBA noise contour encroaches onto the residential properties to the north and south.

#### 4.3 Mitigation Design

Since noise is expected to exceed 65 dBA as measured at the adjacent residential properties, noise mitigation provided by barriers was also analyzed using the CadnaA computer model. Barrier height was adjusted until the noise level from each modeled condition at all the property lines of Dreamy Skies Dog Training was below the Montgomery County residential maximum daytime allowable noise level of 65 dBA. Enclosed Drawings 3 and 4 show the mitigation of dog-barking noise provided by these barriers.

As shown on Drawings 3 and 4, with a 10-foot northern barrier and 6-foot barrier on the remaining sides, the 65 dBA contour does not go beyond the property lines of the facility; thus, barriers of these heights are necessary to comply with the Montgomery County residential maximum daytime allowable noise level (under the modeled scenarios).

Whatever the height of the noise barrier(s), they must be selected and/or constructed to function as a noise barrier and provide the noise reduction needed. If a wood fence style noise barrier is to be used, it must be constructed as shown in enclosed Detail S-002. If a vinyl fence style noise

![](_page_29_Picture_0.jpeg)

barrier is to be used, the recommended product is AIL Sound Walls.<sup>1</sup> Whichever style is chosen, the noise barriers must be built into the grade without gaps or openings along the bottom or between boards/vinyl panels.

#### **5** CONCLUSION

Noise generated by dogs to be boarded at Dreamy Skies Dog Training in the future will exceed the Montgomery County residential maximum daytime allowable noise level of 65 dBA at neighboring residential property lines without any additional noise mitigation. Noise barriers enclosing the backyard of the facility are necessary to comply with the Montgomery County Noise Law. To limit noise levels to 65 dBA from dogs in the backyard, a 10-foot-high barrier on the northern portion and 6-foot-high barrier for all other portions in the location of the current fence is necessary.

Please contact me directly if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Gener Corly

Eamon Curley Associate Engineer

Josh Curley

Josh Curley Senior Engineer

Encl: Section 6 – Noise Terminology
Drawing 1 – Dogs in Middle of Yard – No Barrier
Drawing 2 – Dogs in Corner of Yard – No Barrier
Drawing 3 – Dogs in Middle of Yard – 10 ft. Northern Barrier/6 ft. Southern Barrier
Drawing 4 – Dogs in Corner of Yard – 10 ft. Northern Barrier/6 ft. Southern Barrier
Detail S-002 – Noise Barrier – Double Sided Wood Fence

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> https://www.ailsoundwalls.com/products/

![](_page_30_Picture_0.jpeg)

#### **6** Noise Terminology

#### 6.1 dB vs. dBA

While the standard unit of measurement for sound is the decibel (dB), discussions of noise impacting the human ear use "dBA." The "A" refers to a frequency weighting network used to simulate the human ear's unequal sensitivity to different frequencies. The A-weighted noise level is therefore more representative of a human's perception of a noise environment than the unweighted overall noise level in dB and is currently used in most all environmental noise studies.

#### 6.2 Summing Noise Levels

Noise levels from multiple sources do not add arithmetically, i.e., when two noise sources generate 60 dB individually, they do not produce 120 dB when combined. Noise levels are measured using a logarithmic scale; therefore, they must be summed logarithmically. In the decibel scale, two identical, non-coherent noise sources having the same noise level produce a 3 dB increase above the condition of one source alone (i.e. two 80 dB lawnmowers running at the same time generates 83 dB).

Similarly, two different noise sources with a difference of 10 dB in their individual levels results in no measurable increase in noise when they are combined. Put another way, the quieter noise source does not increase the overall noise generated by the louder source; i.e. adding an 80 dB lawnmower into a noise environment where a 90 dB lawnmower is already running does not increase the noise level above 90 dB.

	1 Alt
LEGEND (GROUND LEVEL, 5 FEET)	A RETURN
80 < dBA < 85	A MARCA
80 dBA	Elen (
75 < dBA < 80	A CAR
	A A
	2 2 2 2 2
70  dBA	
EXISTING BUILDINGS	NORT

![](_page_31_Picture_1.jpeg)

LEGEND (GROUND LEVEL, 5 FEET)		
80 < dBA < 85		
75 < dBA < 80		and a los
75 dBA		
70 < dBA < 75		A A
70 dBA		13
65 < dBA < 70	NARRA AND IN NO.	
65 dBA	1/2	
EXISTING BUILDINGS		NORT

![](_page_32_Picture_1.jpeg)

![](_page_33_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_34_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_35_Figure_0.jpeg)

noise & vibration www.ph
--------------------------

	WCC	
FILE:	DATE:	
xDTL-S0021_2in_Noise_Barrier_Double.dwg	140717	

S-002