

GUIDE TO PRIMARY & SECONDARY SOURCES ON THE SUBURBANIZATION OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD

FINDING AID

Montgomery County Department of Economic Development (DED) Agricultural Services Division

18410 Muncaster Road

Derwood, MD 20850

Telephone: (301) 515-0753

Website: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/agservices/>

Name of archive/collection/records: None

Date Range of archive/collection/records: 1980-present

Language of archive/collection/records: English

Background Information: Prior to 1980 the organization was called Economic and Agricultural Development. From 1980 to 1994 the agency was called the Office of Economic Development. In 1995 the agency was once again renamed to the Department of Economic Development where the Division of Agricultural Services was created for agricultural preservation and enhancement in the County, including programs associated with Soil Conservation District and Cooperative Extension Service. The mission of the DED is to make Montgomery County a globally competitive and highly diversified knowledge-based economy that provides for the retention and growth of existing companies, stimulates new job creation, and enhances entrepreneurial opportunities. Activities include-co-sponsoring farmers' markets, an annual farm tour, and other activities which promote agricultural products and programs that offer technical assistance for farmers making business decisions

Summary and scope of archive/collection/records: The agency publishes an annual list of farmers' markets, a listing of farms that participate in the annual farm tour, a farm directory, the Biannual Certification for Agricultural Producers for the Fuel Energy Tax Relief program, a listing of farms that participate in various farmland preservation programs. The agency also provides administrative staff to the County Executive appointed County Council confirmed Agricultural Advisory Committee-AAC and the Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-APAB and is responsible for keeping all of the meeting announcements, agendas, meeting minutes and all related correspondence. The records begin in 1980 and continue the present date. Our agricultural preservation records involve the preservation of individual properties that illustrate what Agricultural Services is doing to prevent future suburbanization of the Montgomery County within the Agricultural Reserve that was created in 1980 and encompasses 1/3 of the County or 93,000 acres.

To better understand how these programs work, please refer to our webpage on agricultural preservation: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/agservices/agpreservation.html>. The agency compiles a cumulative analysis of the impact of agricultural preservation programs. (See the farmland preservation goal graph contained within the link above for Phase I of the Agricultural Land Preservation Program. This graph shows the relationship between protected farmland acres by easements verses the total farmland acres in the County from 1980 to the 2009).

Phase I goal was achieved in 2009 when a total of 70,000 acres were protected by easements. The AAC and APAB records show the specific actions taken by the groups to fulfill the legislative intent of their groups and to represent the interests and needs of farmers in the County. The agricultural preservation records involve property specific information regarding farms that are enrolled and encumbered by agricultural preservation easements and conservation easements. These encumbered farms are recorded in the land records of the County and the easements prevent future development, suburbanization, and provide future farmland for future food and fiber production. These preservation programs represent the largest rural economic development initiative offered by the County through the investment of \$59 million in public resources and \$115 million in private sector resources.

Special Collections: *None.*

Collections of Particular Interest to Suburbanization: The AAC and APAB records illustrate the agricultural issues and county agricultural policies the organizations must address in representing the interests of agriculture at the table of government. The agricultural preservation records contain the property eligibility criteria including farm size, farm operation, percentage of prime and productive soils, other records pertaining farm stewardship and farming practices. The records also show the terms and conditions associated with the easement settlement and total compensation for the easement. The information published on our web site would be the most useful for people to understand how the programs and services offered through Agricultural Services actually help prevent future suburbanization of the County.

Format of materials in archive/collection/records: Paper, Digital Records, Maps, Photographs

Suburbanization Subject Terms within archive/collection/records: Government; Land Development; Maps/Atlas/Street Maps; Residential Real Estate Development; Zoning Ordinances

Access and Use:

Monday-Friday: 9:00am to 5:00pm.

Note: The records are not open to the general public as the records contain information involving one or more of the nine exemptions from the Freedom of Information Act. The agency requires prior notice to schedule staff time to review the public records outlining the specific program or property of interest and the nature of the requested information.

Cost: Depends on the nature and volume of record retrieval, the actual staff time for document selection, retrieval, review, as well as actual staff time for copying and the costs of copying.

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