

To the Charles County Commissioners:

My name is Laura Paulk and I live on Huckleberry Drive in Bryantown.

I spoke before the Planning Commission at the public hearings in June and November regarding the nuisance created by an equestrian facility to which my property is adjacent. In summary, a large commercial stable called South Breeze Equestrian Center was built 24 feet (not the required 100 feet) away from my property. At any given time, there were at least 40 horses boarded on 5 acres of land. Although the owners have moved and the horses have been relocated, the illegally built structure remains. In fact, it is currently listed for sale by a local real estate company. My concern is that once sold, the new owners will repeat the same activities of the prior owners and, if this bill is passed, they will have even more opportunity to make my life a nuisance. Me and my neighbors will again be subject to tons of manure to see, smell and watch flood our yards when it rains. Among other things, we could be subject to monthly equestrian competitions and the people, cars and trash those bring.

In reading the current draft of the bill, I find some of the language to be conflicting, vague and requires clarification. For instance, under Chapter 297, Page 25 of the existing draft Para B reads in part: ALL ACTIVITIES SHALL BE A MINIMUM OF 150 FEET FROM THE NEAREST BOUNDARY LINE OF AN ADJACENT PARCEL.... However earlier on Page 5 under General Provisions structures can be within 6 feet of property line? This loophole needs to be closed. For both instances, I would change the distance to 150 feet and change the word "activities" (on page 25) to buildings and/or structures.

One of the publicly submitted comments for this evening's hearing was submitted by Ms. Bowling, the chair of the rural task force, who would now like to remove the recommended 150' setback. If you agree with this, I believe you are undermining the roll of the Planning Commission which gave this issue great consideration and thought. I believe the Planning Commission did not establish a minimum acreage because of the 150' setback and if you eliminate the 150' setback then the bill should be sent back to the Planning Commission. Furthermore, changes to this draft bill SHOULD NOT BE based on a non-public conversation Ms. Bowling had with another task force member. I would also like to ask publicly if she has direct interest in the passage of this bill.

Also, in her Nov 12 memo to the Planning Commission, Ms. Bowling states that "The work that has been done by the Task Force and PGM to create opportunities for our citizens to experience and enjoy our agricultural resources while providing a source of revenue for farmers trying to preserve their farms should not atone for a single, although significant, PRIOR ISSUE."

What proponents of the bill are failing to see and the reason why the Huckleberry drive homeowners

have remained so vocal is that for us --- THIS IS NOT A PRIOR ISSUE!!! THIS IS ONGOING; IT REMAINS UNRESOLVED. I do not want to fight agritourism, I just want what was wrongly done to us made right again and to date the county has done ZERO to correct this wrongdoing.

And that is why we are here tonight voicing our concerns because we fear this bill will enable the new owners of the former SBEC to continue to rob us of the enjoyment of our property.

Finally I would like to thank the members of Planning Commission for listening to our concerns and respectfully acknowledging them.

Thank you



Laura Paulk

February 2, 2021