

For Immediate Release

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Montgomery Countryside Alliance Releases First Ever Candidate Questionnaire on Agricultural Reserve, Transportation

[Montgomery Countryside Alliance](#) (MCA), the 501c3 nonprofit organization founded in 2001 to promote and protect Montgomery County's 106,000 acre, 30 year old Agricultural Reserve, has just released [its first candidate's questionnaire](#). The questionnaire was sent to all candidates for County Council and County Executive, and consists of 7 open ended questions, allowing each candidate to express their vision for the Ag Reserve, ag education and county wide transit and zoning. Candidates were given a week and a half to submit their responses electronically.

The questionnaire is an attempt to collect candidate views on a part of the County that is generally overlooked. Barbara Hoover, County resident and Conservation Montgomery board member observes, "The Agricultural Reserve makes up one-third of the county. Residents county-wide have a vested interest in how each candidate views the role of agriculture in our county and the economic engine that the Reserve represents. Additionally, residents have a vested interest in preserving the zoning that protects the Reserve from developers."

Candidates were asked to propose solutions to challenges faced by local farmers, but also to provide their ideas on bringing the benefits of the Reserve to all county residents. "I was particularly heartened to see the number of candidates with specific ideas of how to better utilize the Reserve and local farms as components of our public educational system," said Caroline Taylor, MCA's Executive Director.

MCA will make the candidate questionnaire a continuing initiative in forthcoming election years according to MCA Board President Oakley Johnson. "Montgomery County's nationally lauded Agricultural Reserve and our local food system have grown in importance to the residents of the County and the region. MCA conducted the candidate survey and has produced this guide to help voters decide how their elected officials intend to best protect and promote Montgomery County's Reserve and its irreplaceable resources."

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