

**Comment presented by Caroline Taylor – before the Poolesville Commissioners  
2/3/20: Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) providing for  
commercial solar facilities in the AR**

What the ZTA does: opens the AR to commercial solar facilities of up to 2 mg (8-12 acres). The ZTA does not address loss of prime farm soils, forest/habitat loss, conflict with preservation easements, water quality protection, compliance with the master plan.

I am not here to argue against the advancement of renewable energy. I am here to fend for the Ag Reserve and the ongoing and critical role it will play in the resilience of our region.

Hans Riemer's ZTA, at minimum, preempts the work of the County's climate planning process that officially commenced in July 2019 and is nearing completion. It preempts the creation of a collaboratively established framework within which actions such as zoning changes would be undertaken.

Smart policies should wisely heed the guidance of the United Nation's Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change's report, released last year, by providing the overarching plan guided by food/fiber security purpose, basing its provisions and implementation on a science based framework that uplifts rural America – both its economic and ecological reliance into the future. Montgomery Countryside Alliance and partners, including Sugarloaf Citizens' Association, are doing our part in this regard with programs such as Re Leaf, Land Link, educational outreach and resources for new and expanding producers seeking to engage in regenerative and sustainable farming practices.

The daunting task before us is a marathon and not a sprint. And for our region we have hope in the form of a plan put in place 40 years ago that preserved a vital landscape for food/fiber production and the protection of the natural world which sustains us.