

S.C.A. Newsletter – November 2010

Airstrip in the Agricultural Reserve

Private and commercial air fields or airstrips are not permitted in the Master Plan of the RDT zone. Airstrips associated with a farm are permitted through the Special Exception Process. Sugarloaf Citizens' Association (SCA) is strongly opposed to any airstrip that is not associated with farm use. To our knowledge, there are no farmers in the RDT zone doing their own crop dusting. Most farmers contract with a commercial firm since crop dusting is a very specialized and tightly regulated process.

Dr. Bob Gillespie, 22620 Peach Tree Road in Boyds, MD has been trying to get a private airstrip on his property since 2006. In the present appeal before the Office of Zoning and Administrative Hearings (Case No. S-2778), Dr. Gillespie clearly states that the use of the airstrip will be "strictly for recreational flying on a periodic basis." The fact that he owns a small farm which grows hay has nothing to do with his proposed use of his airstrip. SCA feels that Dr. Gillespie does not understand the intent of the Master Plan in only permitting airstrips by special exception when associated with a farm. SCA opposed the original appeal in 2006 and we oppose the present petition. In addition, many neighbors are also opposed due to safety and noise considerations. We also agree with their concerns and feel that this section of Peach Tree Road is definitely not suitable for an airstrip since there are many residences in this area.

SCA has stated its opposition to Case No. S-2778 and we plan on attending the hearing on **Friday, the 10th of December 2010, at 9:30 a.m.** The hearing will be in the Stella B. Werner Council Office Building, Second Floor, Davidson Memorial Hearing Room, at 100 Maryland Avenue, in Rockville, Maryland.

We urge our members to write individual letters in opposition to this airstrip.

Letters cannot be emailed without a signature.

If you plan to fax your signed letter, the number is (240) 777-6665.

If you mail a signed letter the full address is:

Katherine Freeman, Executive Director
Office of Zoning and Administrative Hearings
Stella B. Werner Council Office Building
100 Maryland Avenue, Room 200
Rockville, Maryland 20850