

Caroline County Department of Planning, Codes & Engineering



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Queen Anne's County Planning Commission
160 Coursevall Drive
Centreville, MD 21617

Dear Commission Members:

It is my understanding that you are reviewing Queen Anne's County's Transferable Development Rights Program for possible change and adoption. I have been asked to share with you our experiences in Caroline County regarding our TDR program.

Caroline County began review of their TDR regulations in March 2003 upon a request by the Caroline County Young Farmers Group who had concerns about allowing major subdivision in the farming communities of Caroline County.

Three years of dedicated hard work by a 12 member citizen group representing farmers from various parts of Caroline County reviewed the existing TDR regulations at that time and developed and proposed amendments to make the program more effective in directing growth to areas more suitable for development.

After many citizen group meetings, staff presentations to the farm bureau membership and Board of Directors, and public hearings with the Planning Commission and County Commissioners, on March 21, 2006 the County Commissioners unanimously approved the new TDR regulations that included TDR Receiving Areas to keep rural major subdivisions out of farming communities of Caroline County. I have attached a copy of the regulations for your information.

The new TDR regulations were made effective on April 1, 2006. Of course, the major concern of all involved is the fair market value of farmland due to the regulation change. In Caroline County many farms have been appraised through the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Easement Application process.

In FY07 (appraisal value date July 1, 2006) 41 farms were appraised; the average fair market value of those 41 farms was \$6,367 per acre. For FY08 (appraisal value date - July 1, 2007) 55 farms were appraised; the average fair market value of those 55 farms was \$6,550. When comparing those values to FY05 and FY06, prior to the TDR regulation change, there was an

increase in fair market value per acre. Average fair market value per acre for FY05 was \$3,698 and FY06 was \$4,312.

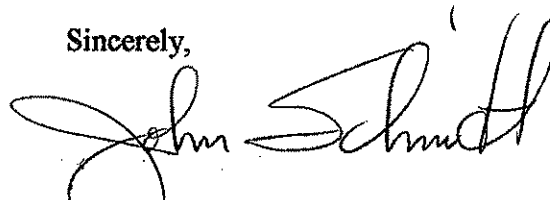
Statistically, 181 development rights have been approved to be lifted from the Sending Area, 82 have been placed in TDR Receiving Areas and 99 have been lifted to be held by certificate by landowners for future use. TDR values have ranged from \$13,000 to \$16,000 per development right.

Our TDR regulations are still a work in progress. It is hoped to include the use of TDRs by the towns for new annexations. Currently we are in discussions with the towns to achieve that goal. While the impetus and concerns for equity came from the farmers group, ultimately for the program to become truly equitable and achieve the state's goals of smart growth, the towns should be involved.

I wish you much luck and success with your endeavors in developing and adopting an effective TDR program for Queen Anne's County.

If you have any questions concerning our TDR program, please do not hesitate to contact Tammy Buckle, Assistant Director of Planning at 410-479-8106 and she will be glad to assist you.

Sincerely,



John Schmidt, Chairman
Caroline County Planning Commission

JS/TMB

Cc: County Commissioners