

Commissioners of  
St. Mary's County  
December 15, 2020

Request for Public Hearing on  
Commercial Wedding Use





# Two categories of temporary event in Zoning Ordinance :

## Indoor (Use 127)

- Animal shows – domestic / farm animals
- Art fairs and hand crafts shows



## Indoor (Use 127)

- Equipment and trade fairs
- Concerts, carnivals, fairs and similar
- Games, live entertainment, eating and drinking



# Two categories of temporary event in Zoning Ordinance :

## Outdoor (Use 128)

- Same uses as indoor, plus
- Rodeo, circus, livestock sales or auctions



## Outdoor (Use 128)

- Outdoor live entertainment may be for 6 consecutive days
- Other outdoor events may be for 14 consecutive days



# Commercial Weddings on a Farm are allowed as Temporary Uses

- Temporary use is incidental to the principal use
- Temporary uses are limited to 20 days per year
- Zoning permit required if the site is less than 50 acres



# Potential disturbances to a residence in a farming area

## Right to Farm

Residences cannot complain about normal  
agricultural activities and good husbandry  
practices



# Agricultural tourism / agritourism

- Allowed on working farms or vineyards as accessory uses incidental to the primary farm operation
- Uses that provide recreation, education, or involvement in farm operations





- Includes farm tours, hay rides, corn mazes, classes, picnic and party facilities
- Agritourism is a commercial, farm-related activity
- Supplements customary farm income
- No complaints to Land Use and Growth Management on agritourism operations



Uses permitted in the RPD by right “P”  
or through conditional use “C”

## Commercial use types

- Conference facility – Use 46 C
- Construction materials and equipment storage – Use 47 P
- Fairgrounds and flea markets – Use 50 P



## Commercial use types

- Maintenance and repair service – Use 58 P
- Outdoor recreational facility, includes motor sports – Use 68 P
- Minor indoor recreational fac. – Use 69 C
- Minor outdoor recreation facility, includes target shooting – Use 70 C



# Industrial use types

- Mining: gravel mines up to 5 acres – Use 82 P
- Production industry custom, includes carpentry, machine shops, small-scale sawmills – Use 83 P
- Production industry general, includes large-scale sawmills – Use 85 P



# Transportation, Communication, Utility Type uses

- Private airport, landing strip, heliport  
– Use 88 C
- Solid waste facility – Use 96 C



# Transportation, Communication, Utility

- Major utility, including public wastewater treatment plant – Use 97 C
- Minor utility, including recycling center – Use 98 P



Residents wanting to live in a rural area – RPD – should be aware of the possible uses that can come after them

- Non-residential uses require a public hearing – concept site plan or conditional use
- Residents on property within 200 feet are notified and can testify



# Weddings on farms

- Supplemental income to a farm
- Commercial, non-farm activity that takes place on a farm
- Do not have a direct connection with farming





# Commercial weddings are temporary events

- There is no notification to nearby residents and no public hearing
- There are no zoning standards
- Maximum 20 days per year

# For an unlimited number of weddings



- Can apply for a Conference Facility Conditional Use in RPD
- One of the standards: must not have an adverse impact on adjoining uses
- The use is not allowed in the Resource Conservation Area Critical Area Overlay



## CSMC discussion at the August 25 briefing:

- Add a Zoning Ordinance Use Category for Commercial Weddings
- Use would be allowed in growth areas as permitted or accessory (not in AICUZ)
- Allowed on farms with Conditional Use from Board of Appeals



## In growth areas for existing buildings:

- Zoning authorization
- Change of use analysis
- Not allowed in AICUZ

**May require** modifications for accessibility and restrooms

- Fire marshal review
- Site plan
- Commercial wedding use compatible with other commercial uses in growth areas



# Commercial Weddings On Farms

Are not

- Agricultural tourism or
- Accessory uses incidental to the primary farm operation

# Commercial Weddings on Farms Are

- Disruptive to nearby residences – weekend weddings

Therefore proposed ordinance for farms

- Is Conditional Use and
- Includes standards



- Public hearing with Board of Appeals
- Notification to properties within 1000 feet
- Noise suppression plan and noise modeling by an acoustical engineer or other qualified professional





- Cannot exceed 65 decibels daytime,
- 55 nighttime at property line
  
- Noise includes ceremony, parties, workers, vehicles
  
- Wedding vehicles must be off the property by 10:00 pm



- Current farm locations operating as temporary uses:
- 6 months to apply to TEC for Conditional Use and Concept site plan
- One year to obtain certificate of use and occupancy

# All Commercial Wedding Businesses

- Commercial weddings in growth areas or on farms would not be allowed as temporary uses
- Tents are allowed with safety inspections
- Private roads must meet private road standards
- 20 mph speed limit, must be posted