



# Charles County Planning Commission

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## Planning Commission Report to the County Commissioners

### Zoning Text Amendment, ZTA #24-182 (Bill 2024-16)

#### Required Widths of Aisles and Driveways for Agritourism and Ecotourism

##### Summary:

Section 297-447 of the Charles County Zoning Ordinance requires the Planning Commission to first consider proposed Zoning Text Amendments and then provide a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners for approval or denial of the proposed Zoning Text Amendment.

Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) #24-182, submitted by the Planning Division seeks to amend certain provisions of the Charles County Zoning Ordinance to allow for relief from Sections 297-337, which speaks to the required widths of aisles and driveways for Agritourism and Ecotourism projects.

The proposed amendments to Section 297-337 will provide relief for Agritourism and Ecotourism projects in that it will exempt smaller Agritourism and Ecotourism projects that provide fifty or fewer parking spaces from the requirement to widen their driveways to provide for two-way traffic. The requirements of Section 297-337 would still apply to Agritourism and Ecotourism projects that provide 51 or more parking spaces.

As summarized within the memorandum dated March 6, 2025, from Charles R. Rice, AICP, Planner Director, to the Charles County Commissioners, the Bill was revised after County staff met with representatives of the Charles County Farm Bureau to work through their concerns and recommended changes. Due to the substantive nature of the proposed changes, in comparison to the previous version recommended for approval by the Planning Commission on October 7, 2024, County staff asked the County Commissioners to reopen the record for Bill 2024-16 and send the revised Bill back to the Planning Commission for a new Public Hearing and Recommendation.

##### Public Hearing:

In keeping with that directive, on April 7, 2025, the Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on the revised iteration of Zoning Text Amendment, (ZTA) 24-182, regarding Required Widths of Aisles and Driveways for Agritourism and Ecotourism. There were no public speakers at the hearing but there were two written statements in support, provided by members of the public in advance of the hearing. The Planning Commission members posed questions to County staff regarding the removal of the previously proposed Section 297-339 amendments, and the safe design/location of future parking areas, which were answered to their satisfaction. At the conclusion of the Public Hearing, the record was closed, and the Planning Commission subsequently conducted their Work Session.

**Recommendation:**

On April 7, 2025, the Planning Commission conducted their Work Session and voted unanimously to recommend approval of the revised iteration of Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) #24-182, Required Widths of Aisles and Driveways for Agritourism and Ecotourism, as presented.

*Kevin Wedding*

[Kevin Wedding \(Apr 9, 2025 13:08 EDT\)](#)

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Kevin Wedding, Chair