



FREDERICK COUNTY BOARD OF APPEALS

AUGUST 22, 2024

TITLE: Pratt - Limited Agricultural Activity

CASE NUMBER: B-24-17 (B275892)

REQUEST: Requesting a special exception approval for a Limited Agricultural Activity in the Residential Districts in accordance with Sections 1-19-3.210 and 1-19-8.325 of the Frederick County Code to allow up to 15 chickens, 6 goats and 2 ducks with no roosters, on a residentially zoned property containing .91 acres.¹

PROJECT INFORMATION:

ADDRESS/LOCATION: 1514 Jefferson Pike, Knoxville, MD 21758
MAP/PARCEL: Tax Map 92, Parcel 0186
COMP. PLAN: Rural Community
ZONING: (R1) Low Density Residential
PLANNING REGION: Brunswick
WATER/SEWER: NPS/NPS

APPLICANT/REPRESENTATIVES:

APPLICANT: Nicole Prat
OWNER: Nicole Prat
ENGINEER: N/A
ARCHITECT: N/A
ATTORNEY: N/A

STAFF: Michael A. Paone, Zoning Planner

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the requested Special Exception for a Limited Agricultural Activity in the Residential Districts in accordance with Sections 1-19-3.210 and 1-19-8.325 of the Frederick County Code to allow up to 15 chickens, 6 goats and 2 ducks with no roosters, on a residentially zoned property containing .91 acres.

Attachments:

Attachment #1 – Property Site Plan
Attachment #2 – Picture of Coop/Run
Attachment #3 – Aerial Map
Attachment #4 – Zoning Map
Attachment #5 – Env. Features Map
Attachment #6 – Comp. Plan Map

¹ The term Applicant refers to both the Representative and the Property Owner(s).

Note: All code references herein are to the Frederick County Code, unless otherwise specified.

BACKGROUND

The Property is zoned Low Density Residential (R1) and contains a single-family residence on .91 acres.

Section 1-19-11.100 of the Frederick County Code defines *AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY, LIMITED* as “The keeping of farm animals in residential districts on lots with less than 3 acres. Apiaries are excluded from this definition.”

The Applicant is requesting special exception approval for a Limited Agricultural Activity in the Residential Districts in accordance with Section 1-19-3.210 and Section 1-19-8.325 of the Frederick County Code to allow up to 15 chickens, 6 goats and 2 ducks, with no roosters, on the Applicant’s residentially zoned property. The Applicant has submitted a site plan showing that the proposed pen area will meet the 50-foot setback requirement. (**Attachment #1**)

1-19-3.210 - General Criteria - Special Exception

- A. An application for a special exception may be made only by persons with a financial, contractual, or proprietary interest in the property for which a special exception is requested.

The Applicant states that she, Nicole Pratt, is owner of the Property.

- B. A grant of a special exception is basically a matter of development policy, rather than an appeal based on administrative error or on hardship in a particular case. The Board of Appeals should consider the relation of the proposed use to the existing and future development patterns. A special exception shall be granted when the Board finds that:

- (1) The proposed use is consistent with the purpose and intent of the Comprehensive Development Plan and of Chapter 1-19 of the Frederick County Code; and

The Applicant states that having chickens and other farm animals on lots similar to theirs is not uncommon in Frederick County. She and her family believe that an agricultural activity is consistent with the rural nature of the area and is consistent with the purpose and the intent of the Comprehensive Development Plan.

- (2) The nature and intensity of the operations involved in or conducted in connection with it and the size of the site in relation to it are such that the proposed use will be in harmony with the appropriate and orderly development of the neighborhood in which it is located; and

The Applicant states that the pens are of a size and in a location that will be in harmony with the neighborhood and with the surrounding community and should not have an impact on surrounding properties.

- (3) Operations in connection with the special exception at the proposed location shall not have an adverse effect such as noise, fumes, vibration, or other characteristics on neighboring properties above and beyond those inherently associated with the special exception at any other location within the zoning district; and

The Applicant states that the chicken coop and farm animal pens will be cleaned regularly, and will not create any noise, fumes or other matters beyond those

inherently associated with the special exception, that might adversely impact any adjacent neighbors.

- (4) Parking areas will comply with the off-street parking regulations of Chapter 1-19 of the County Code and will be screened from adjoining residential uses, and the entrance and exit drives shall be laid out so as to achieve maximum safety.

The Applicant states that the approval of the application will not require any additional parking spaces.

- (5) The road system providing access to the proposed use is adequate to serve the site for the intended use.

The Applicant states that the approval of this application will not cause there to be a need for any changes to the property's road access and will not affect traffic.

- C. In addition to the general requirements listed above, uses requiring a special exception shall be subject to the specific requirements for each use outlined in § [1-19-8.320](#) through [1-19-8.355](#) of the County Code.

The Applicant states that she understands and agrees to this requirement. See discussion of §1-19-8.325 below.

- D. A special exception approval may be granted in accordance with the general and specific requirements enumerated in this section. The Board of Appeals may, in addition to other requirements imposed under Chapter 1-19 and is hereby authorized to add to the specific requirements any additional conditions that it may deem necessary to protect adjacent properties, the general neighborhood, and its residents or workers. Violation of such additional conditions, when made a part of the terms under which the special exception permit is granted, is a violation of Chapter 1-19 and may be grounds for termination of the special exception.

The Applicant states that she understands and agrees to this requirement.

- E. The Board of Appeals shall not grant a special exception unless and until:

- (1) A written application for a special exception is submitted indicating the section of Chapter 1-19 of the County Code under which the special exception is sought and stating the grounds on which it is requested; and
- (2) A public hearing has been held; and the Board had made a finding of fact that the special exception requested meets the general and specific requirements outlined in this section.

The Applicant states that she understands these requirements and has made a written application stating the grounds upon which it is requested and is complying with the process. The BOA hearing is scheduled for August 22, 2024.

- F. The grant of special exception may include approval of customary incidental accessory uses as reviewed and approved by the Zoning Administrator.

The Applicant states that she understands and agrees to this requirement.

- G. No use or activity permitted as a special exception shall be enlarged or extended beyond the limits authorized in the grant of special exception. All enlargements, extensions, and changes in use shall require grants of special exception, as in the case of an original petition.

The Applicant states that she understands and agrees to this requirement.

- H. If a grant of special exception is denied, no new petition for the denied use on the same property shall be accepted by the Board of Appeals for 1 year after the date of denial of the petition.

The Applicant states that she understands and agrees to this requirement.

- I. A decision of the Board of Appeals granting a special exception will be void 5 years from date of approval by the Board of Appeals unless the use is established, a building permit is issued, construction has begun, or final site development plan approval has been received in accordance with the terms of the decision. Upon written request submitted to the Zoning Administrator no later than 1 month prior to the expiration date and for good cause shown by the applicant, a 1-time extension may be granted by the Zoning Administrator for a period not to exceed 6 months.

The Applicant states that she understands and agrees to this requirement.

1-19-8.325 Limited Agricultural Activity in The Residential Districts

A limited agricultural activity shall be permitted in the residential districts where the following provisions are met:

- A. The keeping of farm animals in conjunction with a single family residence, on lots less than 3 acres, shall be permitted in residential districts provided that no pens, stalls, or runs will be located closer than 50 feet of any lot line (see also § [1-19-8.240](#)).

The Applicant states that the chickens, goats and ducks will be located a minimum of 50 feet away from all property lines.

- B. All criteria in § [1-19-3.210](#) and all other provisions of Chapter 1-19 of the County Code shall be met.

The Applicant states that she understands and agrees to this requirement.

- C. The limited agricultural activity shall not cause any odor, dust, smoke, vibration, or unreasonable noise which can be detected at or beyond the property line.

The Applicant states that she understands this requirement and that the chicken coop and other farm animal pens will be located 50 feet, or more, from all property lines and will be cleaned regularly. The keeping of 15 chickens, 6 goats, 2 ducks and no roosters will not cause any odor, dust, smoke, vibration, or unreasonable noise which can be detected at or beyond the property line. (Attachment 1)

Based on the Application, and on the findings and conclusions in the staff report, Staff does not object to the approval of the requested Special Exception for a Limited Agricultural Activity in the Residential Districts consistent with Sections 1-19-3.210, 1-19-8.325, and 1-19-11.100 of the Frederick County Code to allow up to 15 chickens, 6 goats, 2 ducks, with no roosters, on a residentially zoned property containing .91 acres.

§ 1-19-3.210. SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS. A decision of the Board of Appeals granting a special exception will be void 5 years from the date of approval by the Board of Appeals unless the use is established, a building permit is issued, construction has begun, or final site development plan approval has been received in the accordance with the terms of the decision. Upon written request submitted to the Zoning Administrator no later than 1 month prior to the expiration date and for good cause shown by the Applicant, a time extension may be granted by the Zoning Administrator for a period not to exceed 6 months.

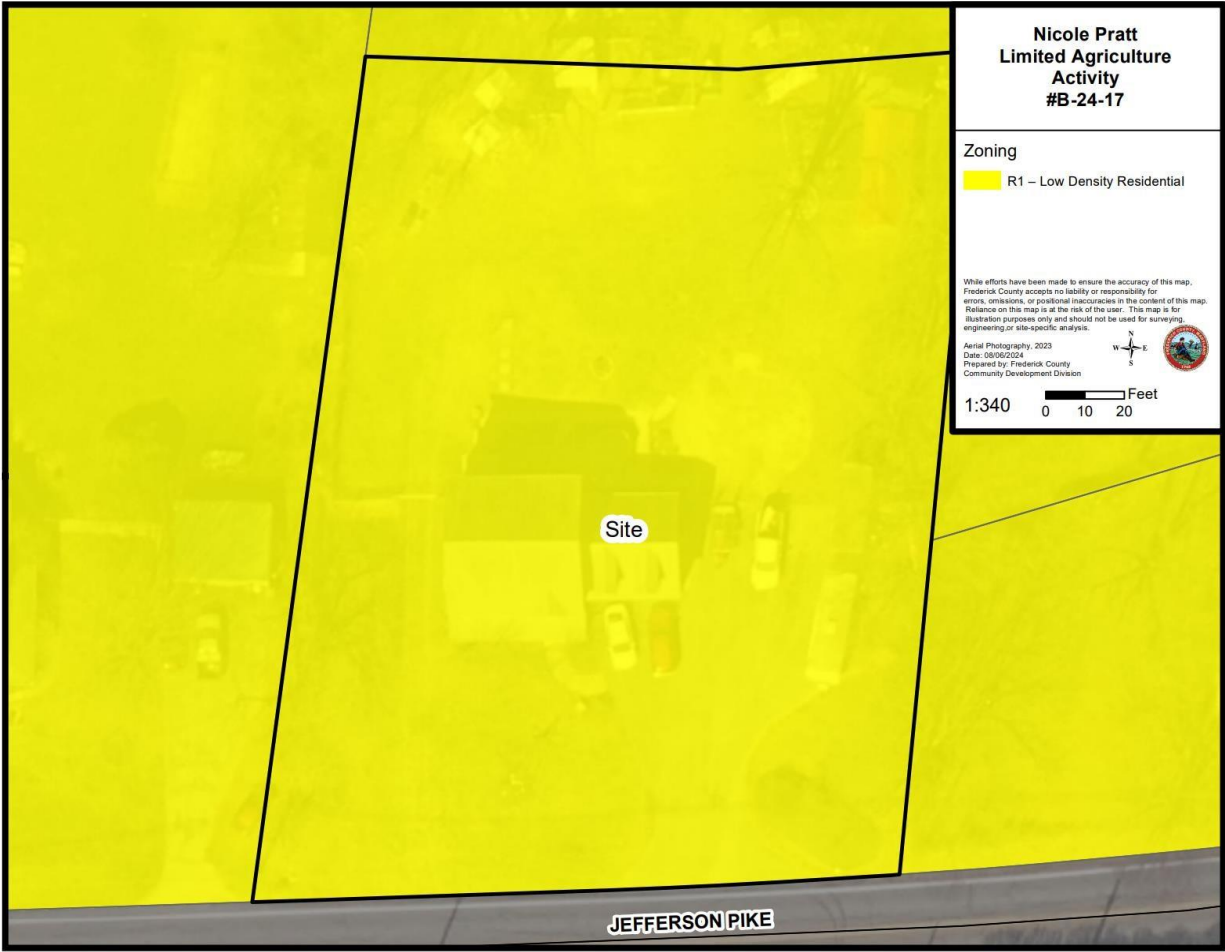
Attachment #1 Site Plan With Required Setbacks



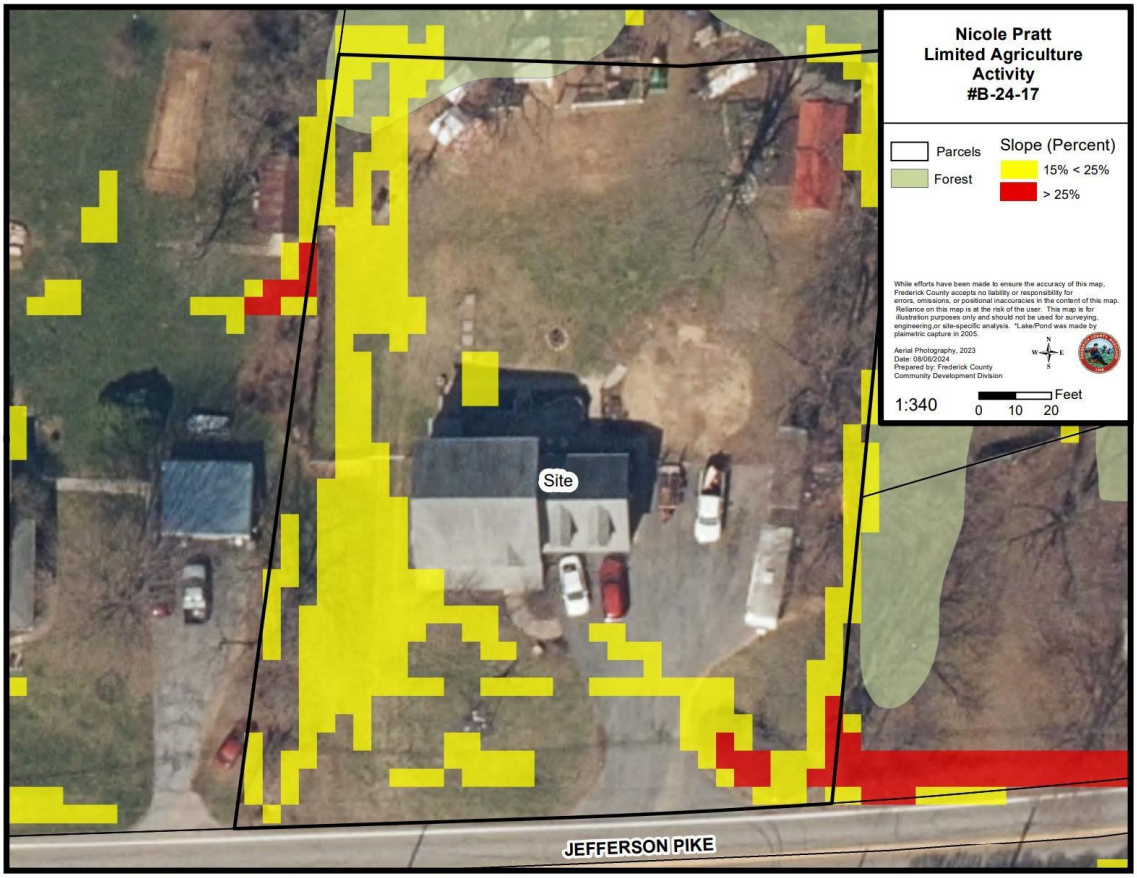
Attachment #2: Aerial Map



Attachment #4: Zoning Map



Attachment 5: Environmental Features Map




Attachment #6: Comprehensive Plan Map





Nicole Pratt-Hahn
1514 Jefferson Pike
Knoxville, MD 21758
301-418-5042

Chickens that are currently in my back yard are used for eggs production and butchered for meat that are consumed by my household

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Nicole Pratt-Hahn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nicole" being the most prominent part.

From: Leatrice Urbanowicz <lmurbanowicz@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 8:30 AM
To: Planning and Zoning
Subject: August 22 hearing

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Good day

While none of the appeals to be discussed on August 22 (B-24-12 B276165, B-24-16 B276721, and B-24-17 B275892) directly affect me or my home, I wish to state my views anyway.

First, B-24-17 B275892, regarding limited agricultural activity, I feel is the most critical of the three, and I strongly recommend you deny this request for the welfare of the animals involved. The property is only approximately 3/4 acre, which is not nearly enough land for the stated purpose of housing chickens, goats, and a calf. While fully adequate for chickens, 3/4 acre is not even close enough for either goats or a calf but especially not for both. Please do not allow the animals to be crowded onto this property.

Second, B-24-12 B276165, special exception for RV storage facility, unless objected to by direct neighbors, should be approved. It is located near an already-existing RV dealership, and is not visible from the nearby highway (US 15) so will not further detract from any highway views.

Third, B-24-16 B276721, variance to construct a pool house "needed for health-related matters." There are issues which need to be answered before approval is allowed. If the variance is objected to by close neighbors, particularly any along the back of the property who may feel adversely affected, it should be denied. You should also determine exactly what is meant by "health-related matters." Are we talking about installing a restroom so people don't pee in the pool, or what? This variance needs further review before passage is permitted.

I thank you for your time and for your service to our beautiful county.
Leatrice Urbanowicz
6008 Jefferson Pike
Frederick MD 21703
240-626-4640