

**Minutes of AARC  
June 13, 2018**

**Call to Order**

**Roll Call**

Lindy Huber, Skip Phillips, John Wilhoit and Pattie Wilson (Planning Director)

**Minutes December 13, 2017**

Motion to approve by Mr. Wilhoit, second by Mrs. Huber.

All voted in favor

**New Business**

Consideration of Application 06-001-2018 - Rocking M, LLC (Merefield Farm) - 301 Lansing Lane, Midway KY 40347 – A-1 Agriculture District - Applicant is seeking a review and recommendation for an agricultural enterprise for agri-tourism involving horse farm and farm tours and events in horse barn and round pen.

*Background*

On Monday, June 4 the members of the AARC (Lori Garkovich, Lindy Huber, Skip Phillips, John Wilhoit, and Pattie Wilson) met Mr. Rob Maclin at Merefield Farm at 301 Lansing Lane to assess the physical environment within which the proposed agri-tourism activities will occur.

Merefield Farm is a 304± acre working horse and crop farm on Lansing Lane and Weisenberger Mill Road. The horse barn and round pen where special events will be held is located approximately 1/3 mile off Lansing Lane and approximately three quarters of a mile from Weisenberger Mill Road. The nearest non-owner residence is approximately 1,400 feet from the site of the special event barn. Hence, no light from arriving and departing guests will intrude on the neighboring property. The nearest non-owner agricultural activity is about 1/2 mile from the barn and is crop land.

The event barn and round pen sit on a small hill overlooking the bulk of this crop and horse farm. The barn has asphalt flooring and a small addition provides two bathrooms, a large dressing room, and a small main room. A new 1500 gallon waste disposal tank will be located to the side of the barn with the leach lines into an adjacent field. This has been approved by the Woodford County Health Department and they will confirm in writing to Mrs. Wilson when it's acceptably installed. The round pen outside has a cover and three-quarter walls all around. From this staging area, guided farm tours will leave to take visitors to an historic tobacco barn that still has components of a tobacco press and then to the crop land (corn and/or soybeans), a large sunflower field, the gardens. The sheep, chickens, goats and alpacas of the farm may also enter into the tour experience.

Between the months of April to October, about 40 farm-to-table dinners, weddings and receptions, corporate/organizational events and farm tours will be hosted at the farm,

The location of the farm and the event barn is very isolated from any impact on adjacent property owners, yet provides an exceptional example of a multi-commodity horse farm in a remarkable environmental setting. The owners have a strong sense of the history of this farm, many years of experience raising tobacco and thoroughbreds, and a practical knowledge of event planning and implementation.

The single recommendation of the committee members following this visit is the need for signage along Weisenberger Mill Road as well as signage at the farm lane that leads to the event barn so that potential guests do not intrude on property owners at the end of Lansing Lane.

### *Public Meeting*

At the Public Meeting Mr. Maclin reintroduced himself and indicated his regret that his wife, Missy could not be present at the meeting. He emphasized that this is a working horse and grain (soybeans and corn) farm. They also have sheep, alpacas, goats, chickens, and many dogs; they will have locally grown sweet corn this summer.

Mr. Maclin talked briefly about growing up on a general agriculture farm in Fayette county, where his father was farm manager, that he grew up working in the bluegrass' tobacco fields, that he obtained BS and MS degrees in agricultural economics from UK (his master's thesis was on burley tobacco production) and that he taught farm management at the UK Ag College in the early 80's.

He is very passionate about the heritage of this farm. He talked about the tobacco barn that is on the back of the property that they hope to preserve and include in the farm tours in the future. He said that his wife had been involved with farm to table events in the past and had the experience for these events and was very creative.

Events will be held in the front barn and the round pen. They plan on farm tours, dinners, weddings and receptions. The parking lot will be on the west side of the barn in a paddock. No paving will be done but if field gets sloppy they may install grass pavers. The existing small dumpster will be moved to the silo barn and replaced with a larger one.

There are two existing restrooms. They don't plan to have any port-a-lets but if clients wanted them they would allow them.

Mr. Maclin then recapped the conditions that are part of the plan:

- Guests will be limited to 200 for any one event
- No outside music and music to cease at 10:00 p.m.
- Site Plan to be complied with
- Events to occur between April 1 and October 31 of the calendar year.

- Maximum of 40 events per year.

The AARC then reviewed their scores from the Decision Tree. Several members had 645 points and with further discussion about inclusion of a written storm water management plan an additional 50 points could be attained putting them in the "Recommended for Approval by AARC" category. Mr. Maclin addressed the storm water by reiterating that they would not be blacktopping or building any new structures for this. He would only be installing grass pavers as needed and he would be happy to put this in the form of a written storm water plan. (See attachment)

The members then discussed the necessity of event signage. Mr. Maclin felt that they would want to add another Merefield Farm sign like they have at the farm entrance across the road at 300 Lansing Lane. Then at the time of events small directional signs would be placed so guests would be clear where to enter and park.

There were no other citizens present at the Public Meeting. Mr. Phillips closed the hearing and called for a motion.

**MOTION:**

**Mrs. Huber made a motion to recommend approval of the proposed agricultural enterprise for agri-tourism application, as presented, to the Board of Adjustment. 2nd by Mr. Wilhoit. All approved.**

**MOTION TO ADJOURN made by Mr. Wilhoit, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mrs Huber, with all approving.**