



# HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

3430 Courthouse Drive

Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

410-313-2350

Voice/Relay

Valdis Lazdins, Director

FAX 410-313-3467

## HOWARD COUNTY AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD June 20, 2016

### Staff Report

- Owner:** George L. Doetsch, Jr. Revocable Trust  
5610 Chamblis Drive  
Clarksville, MD 21029
- Request Submitted by:** George Doetsch III, son of owner
- Farm Location:** 5610 Chamblis Drive, Clarksville  
Tax Map 34, Parcel 15, Lot 6, 99.23 +/- acres
- Easement Designation:** Howard County Easements HO-90-04-E
- Request:** To construct a tenant house
- Recommendation:** No recommendation to the Board on the request to locate a tenant house.

### Summary

George L. Doetsch, Jr. is the current owner of the subject property known as Marama Farm, which was placed in the Howard County Agricultural Land Preservation Program on June 15, 1990 by Albert & Virginia Spokes. The Spokes exchanged their lot rights per an amended deed of easement dated November 8, 1994, that provided for the right to a maximum of three unrestricted lots and four tenant houses. The deed was amended again on May 22, 1997 to release all three unrestricted lots. Mr. Doetsch purchased the property from Virginia Spokes on May 29, 2008. As the contract purchaser at the time, Mr. Doetsch requested approval from the ALPB on April 14, 2008 to re-designate the existing dwelling as a tenant house, in exchange for a new principle dwelling. Currently, Wanda and Billy Jones occupy the tenant house as the barn manager and horse trainer, while Mr. Doetsch lives in the new main house. Mr. Doetsch's son, George Doetsch III, is requesting a tenant house for his own use as the equine operation's part-time manager and breeder.

### Staff Analysis

Per Section 15.514 of the Howard County Code, the Board may approve the location of a tenant house after determining that the location minimizes any disruption of existing or potential future agricultural activities. In addition, the Code permits tenant housing based on the Board's determination that the dwelling is necessary to house a farm worker fully engaged in the operation of the agricultural use of the property. Marama Farm is primarily a thoroughbred horse breeding operation but also offers boarding, particularly for layup race horses. Mr. Doetsch III is requesting a tenant house for his personal use when he is on the farm and responsible for running it in his father's absence. As the attached letter and subsequent documentation state, Mr. Doetsch, Jr.

travels extensively and is not available for the many day to day decisions and other farm management functions for long stretches of time.

The ability of Mr. Doetsch III to fill in while his father is gone will be impeded by his family's imminent relocation from Arnold to St. Michaels. Due to the need for Mr. Doetsch III to be on site, the applicant is requesting a relatively modest tenant house of about 2,060 square feet of living space. He is also proposing an additional 2,655 square feet of garage area that will be for farm equipment and personal vehicle storage.

This request is a bit unusual in that typically tenant houses are requested for farm employees who are performing the manual labor for the operation, like the Jones couple on this property. However, the language in the deed of easement provides that this right extends to those who are "fully engaged" in the operation of the farm. The easement doesn't give much guidance as to what that encompasses regarding the amount of time devoted to the operation, or to the range of acceptable responsibilities. In this case, Mr. Doetsch III is completely in charge of running the farm and managing the horse breeding operation in his father's absence, which can last as long as three months at a time.

The proposed location is in keeping with the Board's general preference for the siting of tenant houses proximate to an existing farm lane and/or other residential or agricultural structures.

**Staff Recommendation**

Staff has considered this request carefully and has decided to not make a recommendation. In support of approving the request to locate a tenant house, it is clear that while Mr. Doetsch III is in residence he will have a level of involvement that justifies the "fully engaged" requirement stated in the easement. On the other hand, this is a part time situation and raises the question as to whether an additional house is needed on the property. Staff requests that the Board members consider all of the facts of the request, ask questions of the property owner and make their own determination.

Prepared by:  \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 6/9/16 \_\_\_\_\_

Joy Levy, Administrator  
Agricultural Land Preservation Program

**Attachments:**

- Tenant house application form
- Supplemental information to the application form
- Aerial photo
- Preservation map
- Soils map
- Detailed aerial photo of residential and ag structures
- Detailed site plan of residential structures
- Elevation of proposed tenant house, facing east
- Floor plan of proposed tenant house
- Supplemental pictures of the property



**HOWARD COUNTY  
AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM**

**APPLICATION FOR TENANT HOUSE**

NAME: George L. Doetsch, Jr., Sole Trustee, George L. Doetsch, Jr. Revocable Trust

CONTACT ADDRESS: 5610 Chamblis Drive

Clarksville, MD 21029

FILE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ ACREAGE: 99.23 AC±

**A. Please answer the following questions as they relate to the EXISTING conditions on this property:**

1) Are there any existing tenant houses on this property? Y N

2) If so, how many? One (1)

3) How many of these tenant houses existed prior to the County acquiring the easement on your property?

None

4) How many tenant houses have been built since the easement was recorded? One (1)

5) Provide approximate date of Agricultural Land Preservation Board approval for each post-easement tenant house: 2009

6) Please provide the name of the tenant in all existing tenant houses and state their responsibilities on the farm. William (Billy) Jones – horse trainer; Wanda Jones – barn manager

7) Is there a principal dwelling/main farmhouse on the property? Y N

**B. Please answer the following questions as they relate to the CURRENT REQUEST for a tenant house on this property:**

- 1) Please describe your farming operation: SEE ATTACHED SUPPLEMENT  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- 2) What is the name of the individual who will be occupying the requested tenant house if approved?  
George L. Doetsch, III  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- 3) Explain the responsibilities of the tenant, providing a percentage of the farm's work load the tenant is/will be responsible for: SEE ATTACHED SUPPLEMENT  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- 4) Describe the current land use of the area to be disturbed in constructing the tenant house: \_\_\_\_\_  
SEE ATTACHED PLAN  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- 5) Describe the access to the proposed tenant house (i.e. existing farm lane or newly constructed driveway):  
SEE ATTACHED PLAN  
\_\_\_\_\_

*NOTE: No tenant houses shall be constructed without the written approval of the Howard County Agricultural Land Preservation Board (ALPB). The approval for the construction of a tenant house by the ALPB is not an absolute right of a landowner, and requests shall be reviewed by the ALPB on a case-by-case basis. Each request shall be reviewed to determine if the proposed tenant house is necessary based on the nature of the farming operation, and if it is for a tenant fully engaged in the operation of the farm.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Landowner Signature/Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Landowner Signature/Date

*ALD* 5.17.2016  
Landowner Signature/Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Landowner Signature/Date

Please submit this form to:  
Joy Levy, Administrator  
Agricultural Land Preservation Program  
Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning  
3430 Court House Drive  
Ellicott City, MD 21043

<b>For Staff Use Only</b> ALPB Easement File # Date Received: ALPB Review Date: ALPB Action:
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SUPPLEMENT – APPLICATION FOR TENANT HOUSE  
MARAMA FARM – 5610 CHAMBLIS DRIVE, CLARKSVILLE, MD 21029

Marama Farm is a thoroughbred horse breeding operation located on Chambliss Drive in Clarksville, Maryland. Currently, 23 broodmares, fillies, colts and geldings by prominent sires including Ghostzapper, Grand Slam and Waquoit, stand at Marama Farm. The value of the livestock is greater than \$1,000,000.00 and represents a sizable investment for Mr. Doetsch. In addition to breeding and foaling, boarding is also offered at Marama Farm, particularly for layup race horses.

Marama Farm employs a husband-wife team, Wanda and Billy Jones, who live on-site in a tenant house, as barn manager and horse trainer; however, the owner of Marama Farm, George Doestch, Jr. retains the role of horse breeder and is responsible for making and overseeing the day-to-day operational decisions. These responsibilities include writing and signing all checks and processing payroll. Additionally, as the horse breeder, Mr. Doetsch makes all decisions regarding any sale and purchase of horses. This necessitates evaluating the animals, directing breeding procedures and ensuring the general care of horses. All critical decisions regarding feeding, exercise and health-care are made by the owner. Additionally, all record-keeping, insurance, marking and sales, including responses to inquiries and confirmation testing, are handled by the owner. The owner also makes all decisions regarding maintenance of Marama Farm including outbuildings, fencing, snow removal and other related projects.

George Doestch, Jr. and his former spouse, Marilyn, have handled the owner responsibilities to date. Mr. Doestch, age 74, is now semi-retired and travels for extended periods. In Mr. Doestch's absence, George Doetsch, III, who is skilled and experienced in the workings of Marama Farm, fulfills the responsibilities of owner/horse breeder.

George Doetsch, III and his family, who currently reside in Arnold, Maryland, will be re-locating their primary residence to St. Michaels, Maryland. The ability for George Doetsch, III to serve the functions of owner/horse breeder for Marama Farm when Mr. Doetsch is not available is impaired by his inability to be on-site. It will be necessary for George Doetsch, III to have accommodations on-site for the extended periods when Mr. Doetsch is unavailable.

The proposed construction of a tenant dwelling on Marama Farm for George Doetsch, III, is necessary in order to fulfill the responsibilities of owner/horse breeder in Mr. Doetsch's absence. The proposed operations of Marama Farm must be carefully supervised and the Doestch family entrusts this function to members of their family.

The proposed tenant dwelling is of modest size and approximately ½ of it includes storage space for various farm equipment. The proposed tenant dwelling is also adjacent to the existing driveway and located far away from the barn and pastures so as to not disrupt agricultural activities. Given that the size of Marama Farm is approximately 100 acres and provides for the possibility of four tenant houses under the Deed of Easement with Howard County, a copy of which easement is attached, the allowance of allowing a total of two tenant dwellings is appropriate and consistent with the Deed of Easement.

## Levy, Joy

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**From:** Sang Oh <soh@talkin-oh.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 08, 2016 2:09 PM  
**To:** Levy, Joy  
**Subject:** Re: Doestch request

Joy

I spoke to Chip. He advised that he will be at the farm working in some capacity for 51 weeks out of a year. He also advised that his father is gone 3 months out of a year.

And, yes, cars as well.

Thanks.

Sang

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 8, 2016, at 9:25 AM, Levy, Joy <[jlevy@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:jlevy@howardcountymd.gov)> wrote:

Sang – regarding the garage, which as you know is larger than the house – your letter states that it's for farm equipment. There are several barns and other ag structures on the property that I'm assuming serve that purpose. Are the proposed garages for cars also?

And still waiting on an estimate of how much time per year he will be on site.

Thanks.

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**From:** Sang Oh [<mailto:soh@talkin-oh.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 06, 2016 5:56 PM  
**To:** Levy, Joy  
**Subject:** RE: Doestch request

Joy

1st floor living: 1250  
2nd floor living: 810  
Total Living 2,060 sq. ft.

The garage areas are 1197 and 1458 sq. ft.

Sang W. Oh  
Talkin & Oh, LLP  
5100 Dorsey Hall Drive  
Ellicott City, MD 21042-7870  
410-964-0300 x14  
410-964-2008 fax

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**From:** Levy, Joy [<mailto:jlevy@howardcountymd.gov>]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 06, 2016 3:41 PM  
**To:** Sang Oh  
**Subject:** Doestch request

Hi Sang – can you please tell me the amount of liveable space that is being proposed. I can't decipher the diagram you gave me.

Thanks, Joy

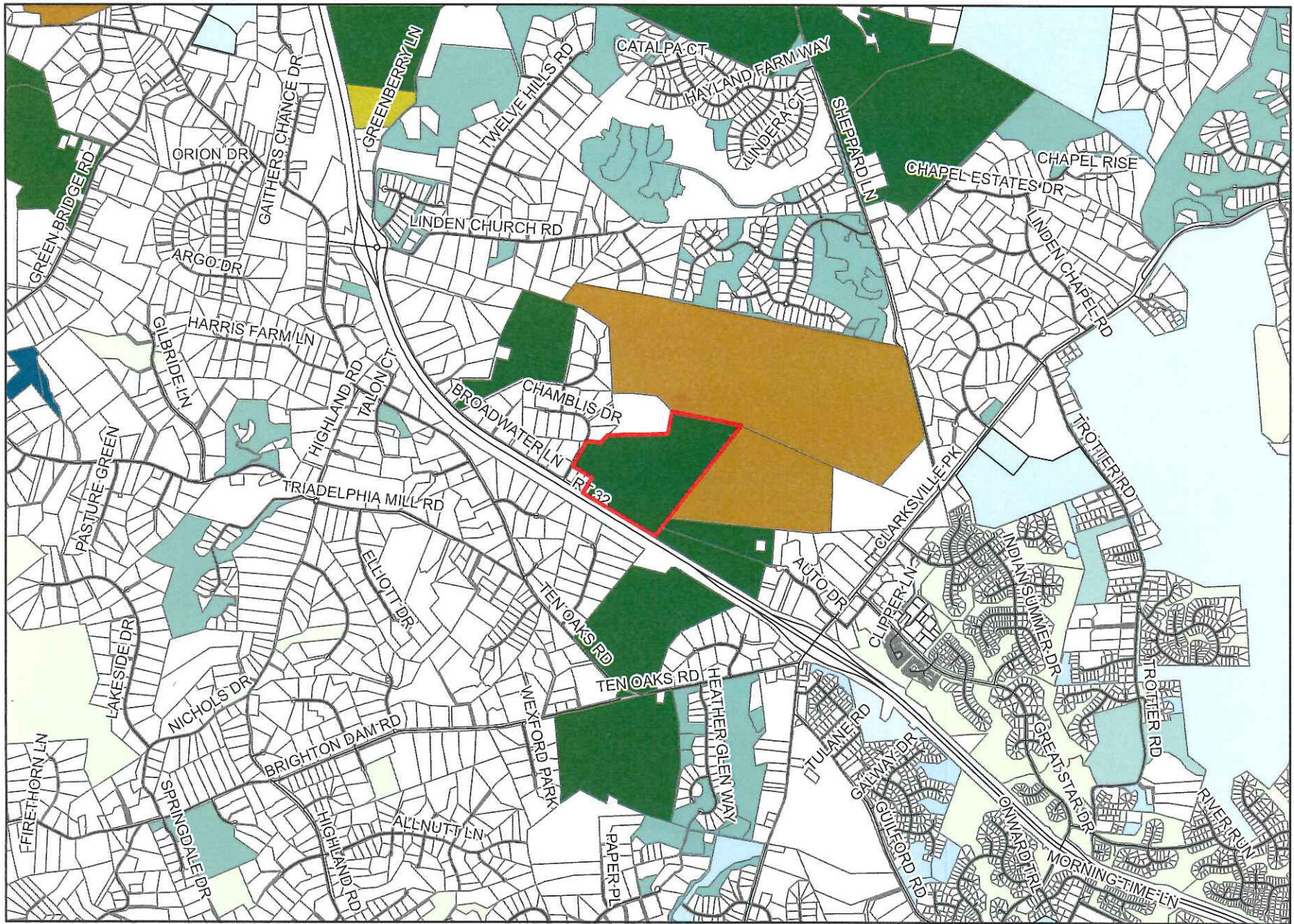
*Joy Levy, Administrator  
Agricultural Land Preservation Program  
Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning  
3430 Court House Drive  
Ellicott City, MD 21043  
410-313-4382  
[jlevy@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:jlevy@howardcountymd.gov)*



George L. Doetsch, Jr. Revocable Trust, Tax Map 34, Parcel 15

Aerial

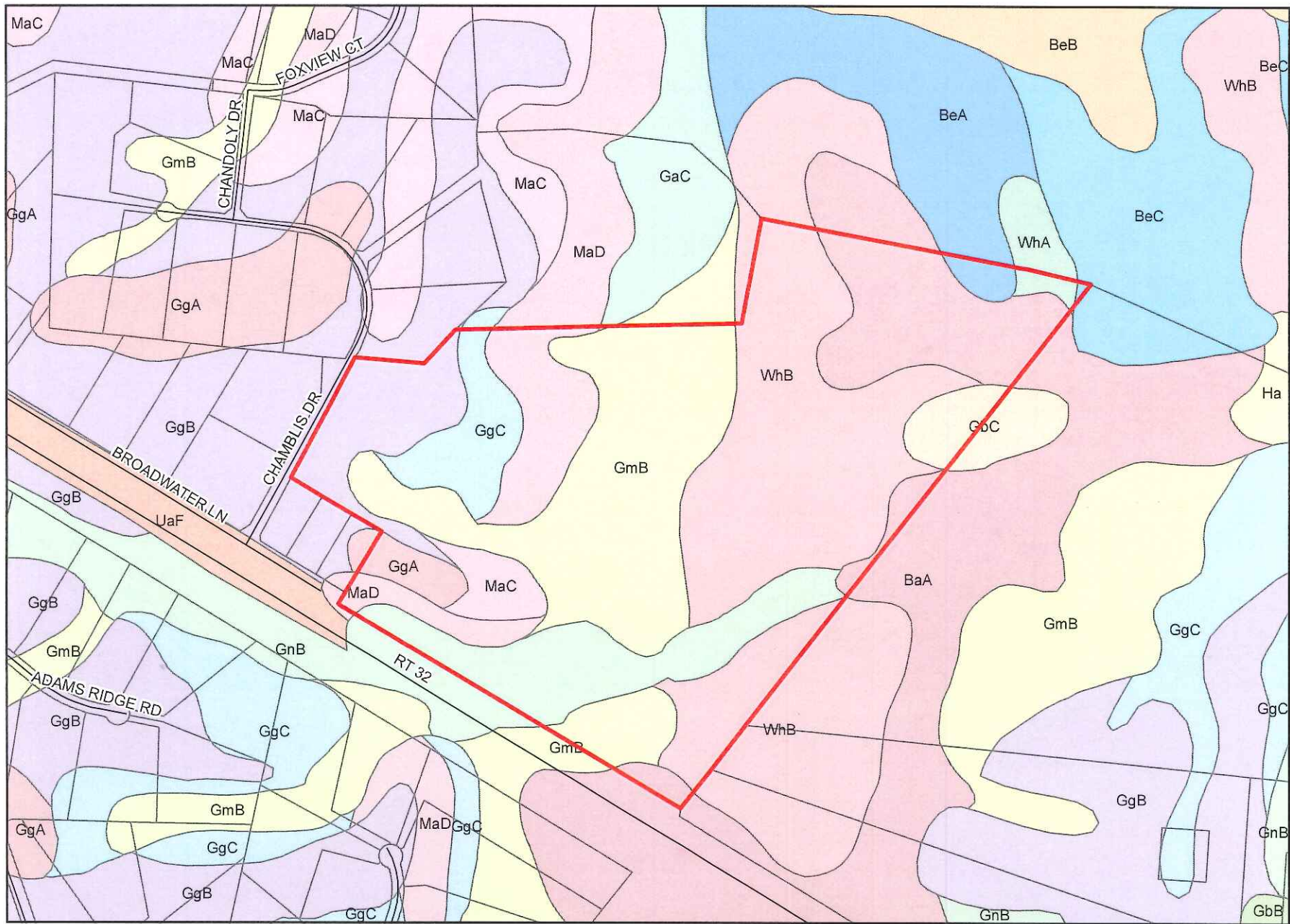
By: Joy Levy  
Resource Conservation Division  
Map Width: 5,400 feet  
Print Date: 05/20/2016



George L. Doetsch, Jr. Revocable Trust, Tax Map 34, Parcel 15

Land Preservation

By: Joy Levy  
 Resource Conservation Division  
 Map Width: 5,400 feet  
 Print Date: 05/20/2016



George L. Doetsch, Jr. Revocable Trust, Tax Map 34, Parcel 15







Soils

By: Joy Levy  
 Resource Conservation Division  
 Map Width: 5,400 feet  
 Print Date: 05/20/2016



George L. Doetsch, Jr. Revocable Trust, Tax Map 34, Parcel 15

Tenant House Detail

- |                                                                                                              |                                                                                                        |                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  Proposed Tenant House #2 |  Principle Dwelling |  Tenant House #1 |
|  Property Line            |  Paved Driveway     |  Farm Structures |

By: Joy Levy  
 Resource Conservation Division  
 Map Width: 1,125 feet  
 Print Date: 06/08/2016



