

## The Carroll County Times

### Right-to-Farm hearing on Marston Road property to continue April 5

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By Carrie Ann Knauer, Times Staff Writer | [0 comments](#)

The Carroll County Agricultural Reconciliation Committee will meet again April 5 to continue the hearing on odor complaints for a Marston farm after running out of time Monday night.

The ad-hoc committee was appointed by the Carroll County Board of Commissioners to hear from both sides of a complaint stemming from odors from residuals from food processing plants that are spread on a farm owned by Phil and Victoria Snader at their home farm in the 2300 block of Marston Road.

The committee started the hearing at 7 p.m. Monday and had agreed that the hearing session would end at 9 p.m. Committee members and about 60 people in the audience listened to about an hour of testimony from members of the Maryland Department of Agriculture and about an hour of testimony from Phil Snader.

G. Macy Nelson, an attorney representing the complainants, was still questioning Snader when committee chairman Barry Marsh announced a few minutes after 9 p.m. that perhaps the hearing should close for the evening and reconvene at another time. Other committee members agreed, and decided to meet again April 5.

The four MDA staff members who were interviewed discussed the state's nutrient management laws, which regulate what kind of nutrients and at what levels farmers may apply them to their fields.

Snader gave an overview of the materials he uses and how his business, Enviro-Organic Technologies Inc., provides those materials to about 50 or 60 farms in the region.

Nelson was questioning the specifics of each type of material and their sources when the committee decided to close the hearing for the night. April 5's hearing will start at 6:30 p.m. to allow some extra time, Marsh said.

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#### Story so far

Tom Devilbiss, county deputy director of planning, said he first met with residents about the odor complaints from the Snaders' property in April 2009. After the meeting, a resident filed a request for a hearing, commonly called a Right-to-Farm hearing.

Rather than go right into the hearing, the county asked residents to go through a mediation process offered by the Maryland Department of Agriculture. That was held in May.

When that did not resolve the issues, residents put in a complaint with the county that they believed the farm, which is under a state-held agricultural land preservation easement, was violating the easement by housing a commercial business.

The Carroll County Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Board heard the case in December and decided business operations should be allowed to continue but that all physical equipment should move off site.

The Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation Board heard the case in January and decided that the business should remove all unnecessary equipment. The state board asked a staff member of MALPF to work with the county and the Snaders to determine which equipment was necessary.

No conclusions were drawn at the meeting March 4, so the MALPF board is expected to discuss the issue again.