



**Western Loudoun Rural Uses and Standards (WLRUS)
Meeting Date Changed
New Date: Monday, May 4th at 6:00 pm**

**Sign up to speak at public input!
Call: 703-777-0200 beginning Friday, May 1st at 8:30 am**

Finding the Balance in Western Loudoun

On Monday, May 4th, at 6:00 pm, the full Board of Supervisors will be considering motions for western Loudoun uses and standards. As your representative, I am committed to protecting western Loudoun's rural, historic and scenic character while achieving a balance between rural economy uses and neighboring residential uses.

My predecessor, Supervisor Tony Buffington, also expressed the same desire for balance and said it had become evident that many western Loudoun residents were uncomfortable with the lack of balance.

Policies in our 2019 Comprehensive Plan call for compatibility of rural economy uses through the evaluation of scale, intensity and design in comparison to adjacent uses.

Residents have been waiting for 10 years for regulations that protect their quality of life. It is not just about noise, but also traffic, setbacks, landscaping and buffering, hours of operation, land disturbance, parking, lighting, groundwater, and public health, safety and welfare.

The Board has been meeting with stakeholders for 2 years to discuss and develop updates to regulations in western Loudoun. The Transportation and Land Use Committee (TLUC) held eight stakeholder meetings that were comprised of western Loudoun businesses, agricultural and conservation representatives and residents. Based on the stakeholder conversations, letters received via email, and public input received from 4 years of the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite process, staff brought forward motions they believe were a consensus. The majority of these 57 motions received unanimous approval at the three TLUC direction meetings.

My office worked with stakeholders and residents to collaborate and find a compromise on issues important to rural businesses and the agricultural and equestrian community. We were able to come to consensus on issues like permanent food trucks, farm worker housing, additional annual parties above the daily limit for larger inns, and more protection of the existing forested areas of the mountainside overlay district.

At a TLUC direction meeting on January 29th, the Committee approved a motion that I did not support because it would negatively impact adjacent uses. The motion would establish the right to unlimited events with unlimited guests for farm wineries, limited breweries and limited distilleries.

Currently, venues that want to expand their opportunity to hold events need to apply for a banquet/event facility. The motion to permit unlimited events with unlimited guests weakens existing regulations and was made without notice or awareness in advance to residents or other stakeholder groups.

This is the most concerning change that is in direct contradiction to resident input. I hope my colleagues will support staff's position on May 4th to require invitation only events with large numbers of guests as needing a temporary special event permit or approval of a banquet/event facility. Public input and Board of Supervisors review is part of the minor special exception approval for a banquet/event facility.

I support a tiered system where establishments with larger acreage would be permitted to host larger capacity events. A limited brewery with 10 acres has a different impact on adjacent uses than a farm winery with 100 acres. However, all establishments that host many guests need to obtain the appropriate building and fire prevention code approvals to protect the safety and welfare of attendees.

Concerns have been raised that some establishments have been allowed to take advantage of code exemptions for farm structures. These businesses are operating as a banquet/event facility with little to no on-site agricultural production. Such facilities contribute to intensified land use impacts in rural Loudoun and have the potential to pose safety risks, such as inadequate fire detection and suppression systems, construction installations without code inspections, (e.g., electric, water, heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems), a lack of clear evacuation routes, and accessibility for individuals with disabilities.

Residents deserve the assurance that they are safe when they visit a rural business. They also deserve a high quality of life in their homes. I believe we can achieve a balance between rural businesses and neighbors while ensuring compliance with our existing regulations.

There will be public input at the board business meeting on May 4th beginning at 6:00 pm. To sign up to speak in person or virtually, please call: 703-777-0200. Signups begin at 8:30 am on Friday, May 1st. I anticipate the 90 minutes allowed for public input will fill quickly with advanced sign-ups so please remember to sign up as early as possible.

For those who cannot attend in person, you can send an email to BOS@loudoun.gov to provide comments. A staff report for Monday's meeting will be available Thursday evening and can be found at [Board Meeting Packets](#).

Board direction from this meeting will go to the Zoning Ordinance Committee and Planning Commission for their feedback and then back to the Board of Supervisors in 2027 for a public hearing and final decision. Thank you for your engagement in this process.

Kind Regards,

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