

## Mariah Gleason

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**From:** Peter F <peterfjimu@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 28, 2021 6:38 PM  
**To:** Susan Weiss; cmurray1217@gmail.com; Mariah Gleason  
**Subject:** Green cemetery meeting

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Dear Chris and Mariah

We are Susy Weiss and Peter Fremgen at 3809 Reas Ford Lane (the house Drew Murray built).

Thank you for hosting the meeting, we appreciate knowing what is happening. We are supportive of the project, and your family's other conservation efforts that preserve the rural character of the area.

## Mariah Gleason

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**From:** Philip Schrodt <schrodt735@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 1, 2021 11:07 AM  
**To:** Mariah Gleason  
**Subject:** Comment on SP202100009 Natural Burial Ground at Panorama Farms Community

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

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Thank you for the recent presentation on the natural burial ground proposal. I wanted to present a comment on this with respect to its relevance to the local Buddhist community, and if possible I would like to be notified when there are additional hearings on the issue.

Unlike Judaism and Islam, Buddhism does not have any scriptural advice on treatment of a body after death, and instead simply adapts itself to the local customs in the various cultures in which Buddhism is practiced. Typically this has meant cremation, but there is nothing special about that.

Buddhism does, however, have a \*major\* scriptural emphasis on "impermanence" and has many core teachings about the transient nature of the body. Consequently for people following various Westernized Buddhist traditions, and there are quite a few of these individuals in the Charlottesville/Albemarle area, the prospect of a natural burial is likely to be very attractive, and all the more so given Buddhist concern for preservation of the environment and the environmental costs of a modern, rather than traditional, cremation. As a practicing Buddhist, I've already asked to be given a natural burial, and it would, of course, be quite convenient if this could be done locally.

In terms of concerns about the impact of the funerals themselves on the site, in all of the Buddhist traditions graveside services are small, usually just a few family members, and any more elaborate rituals and memorials occur elsewhere. I'm sure this will continue in the Western practices.

Again, I enthusiastically endorse this proposal (and I will also circulate information about it to our community when the next hearing is scheduled) and I think this would be a lovely contribution to our area.

=====  
Philip A. Schrodt  
Charlottesville, VA 22901  
Phone: +1-785-550-3553  
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## Mariah Gleason

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**From:** Christopher Murray <cmurray1217@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 3, 2021 10:02 AM  
**To:** Willow Kelly  
**Cc:** Kate Adamson; Margaret Murray Bloom; Mariah Gleason  
**Subject:** Re: Green burial space!

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

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Good to hear from you Willow. I am thankful for your interest and would be eager to discuss your work further.

The special permit process is arduous and we do not know what conditions the county may impose. It would be a significant help if you (and others of like mind!) could write the County in support. Mariah Gleason is the planner ([mgleason@albemarle.org](mailto:mgleason@albemarle.org)) and their reference is "SP202100009 - A Natural Burial Ground at Panorama Farms." Again, many thanks for your interest and I look forward to hearing more about your important work.

Take care,  
Chris

Christopher Murray  
1217 Hazel St  
Charlottesville, VA 22902

On Mon, May 3, 2021 at 8:44 AM Margaret Bloom <[margaretmurraybloom@gmail.com](mailto:margaretmurraybloom@gmail.com)> wrote:  
Hi Willow - Thanks so much for writing. It sounds like you are doing some very wonderful things!

The green burial operation is being explored by my uncle Chris, copied here. I'm sure he would like to connect at some point, so thanks for reaching out.

Cheers,

Margaret

On Mon, May 3, 2021 at 8:09 AM Willow Kelly <[livinganddyingarts@gmail.com](mailto:livinganddyingarts@gmail.com)> wrote:  
Greetings, Panorama Farms Peeps!

I've copied my friend Kate on this email. We have been talking about becoming a non-profit and partnering with a conservation effort to bring a green burial space to Albemarle County for a couple of years now. A friend of ours tagged us on a Facebook post to tell us about you. We are so grateful that you are doing this! Kate and I also offer education and resources on home funerals, end-of-life planning and advocacy, green burials, rituals and ceremonies, vigils, etc. through experiential workshops and NHFA (National Home Funeral Alliance) training materials. If there is any way we can support you, please let us know. We are passionate about this work.

The same friend who let us know about you knows a guy named Nate who did the native plant landscaping for Duck Run green cemetery and he would love to assist on your project if that's something you're interested in. If so, let me know and I can connect you two.

Wishing you the best on this venture!

Willow Kelly

<https://willowkelly.com>

Advocate – Educator – Facilitator

Professional End-of-Life Doula & Caregiver

Love ~ Empower ~ Heal ~ Create ~ Transform

I acknowledge the Monacan Indian Nation and Tutelo-Saponi Peoples' ancestral land on which I reside commonly called Staunton, VA

--

*Christopher Murray*

*1217 Hazel St*

*Charlottesville, VA 22902*

*434.962.5338 cell*

## Mariah Gleason

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**From:** joan ripley <osprey4me@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 3, 2021 6:05 PM  
**To:** Mariah Gleason  
**Subject:** Panorama Farms Green Cemetery

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

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Dear Ms. Gleason,

Recently, I received a letter from Panorama Farms informing me of their plans to create a green cemetery. Though hardly everyone's favorite subject, this announcement came as a welcome bit of news.

I had been researching this for a while and discovered that there are indeed such natural burial grounds scattered around the country, but having one right here in Albemarle County would be a blessing.

I looked up the various references in the letter and attended the Zoom meeting to learn all I could.

Naturally, there are many things that have to be taken into consideration - permissions given, distances discussed, laws referenced and rights clarified, a seamless blending of the present and the future, - but when all that is worked out, when hope and hard nosed practicality agree, it could happen. I think it should.

And I pray it does. I consider it an honor and a privilege to have this opportunity in our midst. A chance to give back to the earth a small portion of the bounties we have received during our lifetime, a chance to leave a gentle green footprint instead of unnecessary waste and destruction.

Charlottesville has a host of wonders, both natural and manmade, to its credit. To offer a green burial ground for those who are looking for a rewarding, responsible and meaningful resting place, could be the icing on the cake. Thank you for your efforts in trying to make this possible. A natural cemetery could bring Mary Elizabeth Frye's words to life:

Do not stand at my grave and weep.

I am not there, I do not sleep.

I am a thousand winds that blow.

I am the diamond glint on snow...

With all best wishes,

Joan Ripley  
460 Woodlands Road  
Charlottesville, 22901

## Mariah Gleason

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**From:** Vivian Groeschel  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 4, 2021 11:04 AM  
**To:** Mariah Gleason  
**Subject:** FW: Panorama Farm proposal for a burial site

**Importance:** High

*Vivian Groeschel*

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**From:** Rollins, Lisa K \*HS <LKR2H@hscmail.mcc.virginia.edu>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 4, 2021 10:48 AM  
**To:** Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@albemarle.org>  
**Subject:** Panorama Farm proposal for a burial site  
**Importance:** High

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Good Morning,

My name is Lisa Rollins and I live on Reas Ford Lane. I read an article in the paper dated May 2 titled "Albemarle Farm Proposed Natural Burial Ground" and found this very concerning. I am totally supportive of maintaining open land and I am sympathetic to the associated financial challenges.

However:

1. Panorama Farm is located about 2/3 of the way down Reas Ford Lane.
2. Reas Ford Lane is a gravel road that is single lane with vegetation on either side. As a result, there is no room to pass and this gravel road is subject to wear from the weather and traffic.
3. People walk on this lane as it is a way to stay away from the traffic on Reas Ford Road.
4. Those of us living on Reas Ford Lane are already dealing with increased traffic due to Panorama establishing a day camp during the summer months, as well as using it as a venue for weddings and parties.
5. If this burial site is also established, this would be the third thing Panorama has established that is increasing the traffic on this lane.
6. Many of the people attending these activities travel in excess of the speed limit even with the presence of signage.
7. The increase traffic also increases the amount of dust.
8. The road is not safe for large amounts of traffic.
9. Panorama has another access point off of Earlysville Road, which is a road that accommodates traffic and would not impact this small neighborhood of homes.
10. While I understand their need to find financial solutions, this decision would have significant impact on the rest of the neighborhood as the article mentioned a comparison site that "...most said they had between 8 and 25 attendees for burials and between 15 and 50 burials a year."

Please consider the negative impact of this proposal on this small neighborhood as this amount of traffic would adversely affect those of us who live on this small road.

Best,

Lisa

## Mariah Gleason

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**From:** Ellie Syverud <ellie7349@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 4, 2021 3:14 PM  
**To:** Mariah Gleason  
**Subject:** SP202100009 - A Natural Burial Ground at Panorama Farms

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Dear Ms. Gleason,

I am writing to express my support - and excitement! - for the application for a Green Cemetery at Panorama Farms. I am an ardent fan of green burial. I had recently been thinking about this subject (being of a certain age!) and found out that the nearest one is 50 miles away. I hope that Albemarle County will give serious and prompt consideration of this application.

Thanks,  
Ellie Syverud  
Crozet VA

--

*Action is the antidote to despair*



Mary V. Fisher  
20 Graemont Lane  
Earlsville, VA 22936  
434-973-9627

Email [maryphoe@comcast.net](mailto:maryphoe@comcast.net)

May 9, 2021

Albemarle County Community Development  
401 McIntire Road  
Charlottesville, VA 22902

Subject: Special Use Permit Application (Sp202100009) for a Natural Burial Ground at  
Panorama Farms

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am opposed to a part of the application for a Special Use Permit (SP202100009) submitted by Panorama Farms. The proposal to use State Road 661, Reas Ford Lane, as the sole entrance and exit to the proposed Natural Burial Ground at Panorama Farms will seriously undermine the safety and increase the traffic on Reas Ford Lane. This is the sole entry route for 18 residences, 12 of which front Reas Ford Lane. It is a 0.9 mile one lane road with no outlet. It is paved with gravel and has no shoulders and multiple blind curves. At the narrow end of the road two cars cannot pass each other; one or the other must back up. It is unsuitable to use this residential road to support access to a commercial enterprise.

Panorama Farms submitted a Special Use Permit application in 2011 (SP-2011-27), for operation of an Events venue. Because of my concern for traffic on Reas Ford Lane as a result of that commercial operation, I was assisted by Mr. David Benish, then Chief of Planning for Albemarle County Community Development Department. With his help, my neighbors and I were able to have a "Watch for Children" traffic sign installed at the beginning of Reas Ford Lane. In addition, he was instrumental in having the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) position traffic signs indicating desirable speeds of first 15 mph and then 10 mph on the road. These signs indicate the recommended speed for the conditions of the road. At the time I thought these were speed limit signs, but I later learned they were only informational signs. I was advised by the Albemarle County Sheriff Department that there is no posted speed limit on Reas Ford Lane and hence they cannot carry out any speed enforcement.

Now, once again, my concerns about traffic are heightened. My neighbors and I have firsthand experience of the increase in speeding and lack of safety attitudes by visitors to the Panorama Farms Event Barn. To walk or drive on the Lane when these visitors are tearing down the road is a feat of personal courage. I believe visitors to the Natural Burial Ground will also be unconcerned about their speed. They will be unfamiliar with the narrow road, the blind curves, the lack of shoulders, the presence of children riding bikes, parents pushing strollers, and joggers. They will overshoot the entrance to the Burial Ground and end up at the cul de sac that terminates Reas Ford Lane, where they will inevitably utilize private driveways to turn around.

Panorama Farms contends that this will be a small Burial Ground, though they open the door to future expansion. I point out that the presence of even a small Burial Ground will continually create

greater and greater traffic. There will be visits to inspect the Burial Ground prior to procuring a site, there will be preparations the day before a burial by service vendors. There will be the funeral itself. Then service vendors will clear the area after the burial. Afterward for years, visitors will come and gather to pay respects on personal memorial days, and holidays such as Memorial Day. Florists will deliver arrangements at every turn. I foresee all these people as providing increased traffic and decreased safety on Reas Ford Lane.

Let me say that I am not expressing an opinion on the Natural Burial Ground. The owners of Panorama Farms may choose to use their property in a legal manner. But I object vigorously to that choice spilling over into the surrounding neighborhood to the detriment of the residents and other persons who use this small country lane for simple residential purposes. Particularly, when the owners of Panorama Farms have an access road to their farm from Earlysville Road.

I recommend that the Albemarle County Planning Commission consider alternative entrance and exit points to the Panorama Farms Natural Burial Ground and restrict the use of Reas Ford Lane for that purpose. I request that you put my concerns forward to the appropriate level at the Albemarle County Planning Commission.

Yours truly,



Mary V. Fisher

**ALLAN R. FISHER**  
**20 Graemont Lane**  
**Earlysvile, VA 22936**  
**434-973-9627**  
Email: [almaphoe@comcast.net](mailto:almaphoe@comcast.net)

May 10, 2021

Albemarle County Planning Commission  
401 McIntire Road  
Charlottesville, VA 22902

Re: Panorama Farm's Proposal for Natural Burying Ground

Dear Commissioners:

I support the Commission's efforts to maintain and increase open spaces within the county, and I support the proposal of the owners of Panorama Farm's to establish a natural burying ground on their property. However, I do not support and vehemently object to the use of Reas Ford Lane to provide access to the proposed cemetery. There is another, much more suitable alternative.

Beginning at Reas Ford Road, Reas Ford Lane is a nine-tenths mile long, single lane gravel road which provides access to twelve residences and the western part of Panorama Farms. For homeowners, the lane provides the only means to access their property. Conversely, Panorama Farms has access to its property and operations not only from Reas Ford Lane, but also from the Earlysville Road, a paved, two-lane road with adequate shoulders. Indeed, the Earlysville Road access is currently used for the farm's current, commercial mulch operation.

Besides providing access to residents and commercial vehicles serving their properties, Reas Ford Lane is heavily used by joggers and walkers seeking a path safer than walking on the shoulders of Reas Ford Road. The lane has many places where, two vehicles confronting each other, one has to back up a considerable distance in order to permit passing. It also has areas where, the sight-line is extremely limited and the road surface is three feet below the surrounding forest level, requiring a walker to climb or crawl out of the way of vehicles. There have been numerous "close calls" where residents and walkers have almost been struck by speeding vehicles, as well as two accidents. Dust raised by vehicles on the gravel surface has always been a problem, but it has been somewhat mitigated by the residents' observance of the posted, recommended speed limits.

Prior to the pandemic, Panorama Farms required customers to use Reas Ford Lane in order to access the "event barn" and summer camp commercial activities. When there was a party at the barn or during camp hours, literally lines of cars, speeding well in excess of posted limits,

raised dust clouds which forced Reas Ford Lane residents indoors several times daily. These activities will, no doubt, resume when Covid 19 restrictions are lifted. The addition of cemetery traffic would be particularly onerous and dangerous not only from the perspective of the danger by speeding vehicles to children, joggers and walkers, but also as a result of the voluminous dust clouds raised.

The solutions to the probability of increasingly heavy traffic on a sub-standard road are:

- Approve the use of Panorama Farm for a natural cemetery, thus saving green space.
- Instruct Panorama Farm to ban the use of Reas Ford Lane for any use their customers who patronize the party barn, summer camp/sports activities or cemetery. Entry to Panorama Farm for these events should be via Earlysville Road.
- Instruct Panorama Farm owners that any of their three gates on Reas Ford Lane should be opened only to permit the passage of farm vehicles or property residents.

Accepting these recommendations will better insure the safety and convenience of not only the residents of Reas Ford Lane, but also all those in Earlysville who use the road for recreation.

I am available to speak to the board at its convenience. Thank you for consideration of my remarks.

Sincerely yours,



Allan R. Fisher

## Mariah Gleason

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**From:** Amy-Eloise Neale <nealeae@outlook.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 10, 2021 7:59 PM  
**To:** Mariah Gleason  
**Subject:** Panorama Farms Special Use Permit Comments

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

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Hello Ms. Gleason,

We are residents at 3791 Reas Ford Ln, Earlysville, VA 22936, and hoped to express our concerns regarding the application from Christopher Murray/ Panorama Farms for a Special Use Permit for a Natural Burial Ground. We are aware that comments were due on the 5th of May, but we hope you will still consider our concerns.

Primarily, our reservations about the cemetery are regarding traffic levels of funerals. Funeral traffic will be directly passing by our home, creating excess dust, noise, and road damage. Since it is a single lane road, we are also concerned about people pulling off the road onto the edge of our property to let vehicles pass in the other direction, ultimately resulting into damage to our property. Water flow off the road during the rainy season already causes damage to our property as is, and higher traffic volumes could worsen this issue. Furthermore, increased traffic could cause safety issues for small children and domestic animals, especially if visitors did not abide by the road speed limit. Many people (ourselves included), run and walk on the road as well, and there is no shoulder/sidewalk to safely avoid traffic.

We also have a clarification question. During the community meeting, subdivision was mentioned several times. One attendee asked if the cemetery would prevent future subdivision of the "backside" of the farm, and the answer was unclear. Is this the case?

Thank you,  
Amy-Eloise and Jernej Markovc

**ALLAN R. FISHER**  
**20 Graemont Lane**  
**Earlysville, VA 22936**  
**434-973-9627**

Email: [almaphoe@comcast.net](mailto:almaphoe@comcast.net)

May 26, 2021

Albemarle County Planning Commission  
Attn: Mariah Gleason, Senior Planner  
401 McIntire Road  
Charlottesville, VA 22902

Re: Panorama Farm's Proposal for Natural Burying Ground

Dear Ms Gleason:

Thank you for your Email regarding my concerns about Mr. Murray's proposal to establish a natural burying ground. As I indicated in my letter of May 10, 2021, I and my neighbors have no objection to the cemetery. Our concerns have to do with increased traffic on Reas Ford Lane, a one-lane gravel road. Your missive, including pertinent statements from Mr. Murray, does nothing to alleviate these concerns. Indeed, Mr. Murray's obfuscations, denial of the obvious, and possible future plans have heightened concerns and raised alarms throughout the neighborhood.

Mr. Murray points out that there have been no weddings at his event barn since October 2018. While the pandemic has caused the banning of large gatherings, such prohibitions have now been lifted and we expect traffic on Reas Ford Lane to his venues (summer camp being now on the horizon) greatly to increase. The situation now is barely tolerable; should access to the cemetery also be added, an additional, heavy burden on local homeowners will be imposed. Burial services are quieter and more sedate, but the vehicles of the mourners, as well as funeral service vendors, make just as much noise and create as much dust as do those of party-goers. Permit me to note that, in actuality, Mr. Murray has no idea how many mourners will attend a burial. It might be a few; it might be several hundred.

There are no posted speed signs on Reas Ford Lane. The signs posted are yellow and warning only, According to the county sheriff, there is no enforceable, posted speed limit on the lane. Non-local vehicles speed down the lane now. Mr. Murray proposes to add to the current danger to pedestrians and opposing drivers.

Mr. Murray states that there is no public access to his farm from the eastern side of the farm and the Earlysville Road entrance. That is true. However, there IS a private road from his farm entrance to his commercial mulch operation which is heavily used. The road then leads to his home and surrounding outbuildings. That private road could simply be extended to his proposed cemetery AS WELL AS his event barn and summer camp site. There would be no real

requirement for access from Reas Ford Lane, were Mr. Murray willing to invest in a bit of grading and a few truck-loads of gravel.

Mr. Murray's possible, future plans are also alarming from a traffic standpoint. Should he decide to sub-divide his property and construct residences, is it to be expected that Reas Ford Road will also be required to absorb that vehicle traffic?

Mr. Murray proffers to install a walking trail on his property to where the gas line right-of-way begins. We neighbors are witnesses to Mr. Murray's other promises and place little credence on his word. Additionally, the right-of-way is only brush-hogged once yearly (if that). Walking through waist-high weeds and dodging bushes is not part of a pleasant stroll or jog down a walking trail.

Our concerns regarding increased traffic on Reas Ford Lane have been thoroughly delineated in my May 10 letter, as have proposed solutions. I ask the senior planner and the commission to study that document, as well as this, once again. Please continue to keep me informed.

Sincerely yours,

Allan R. Fisher

**SP 2021100009**

**Natural Burial Grounds**

**At**

**Panorama Farms**

**Photographs of Reas Ford Lane (SR 661)**

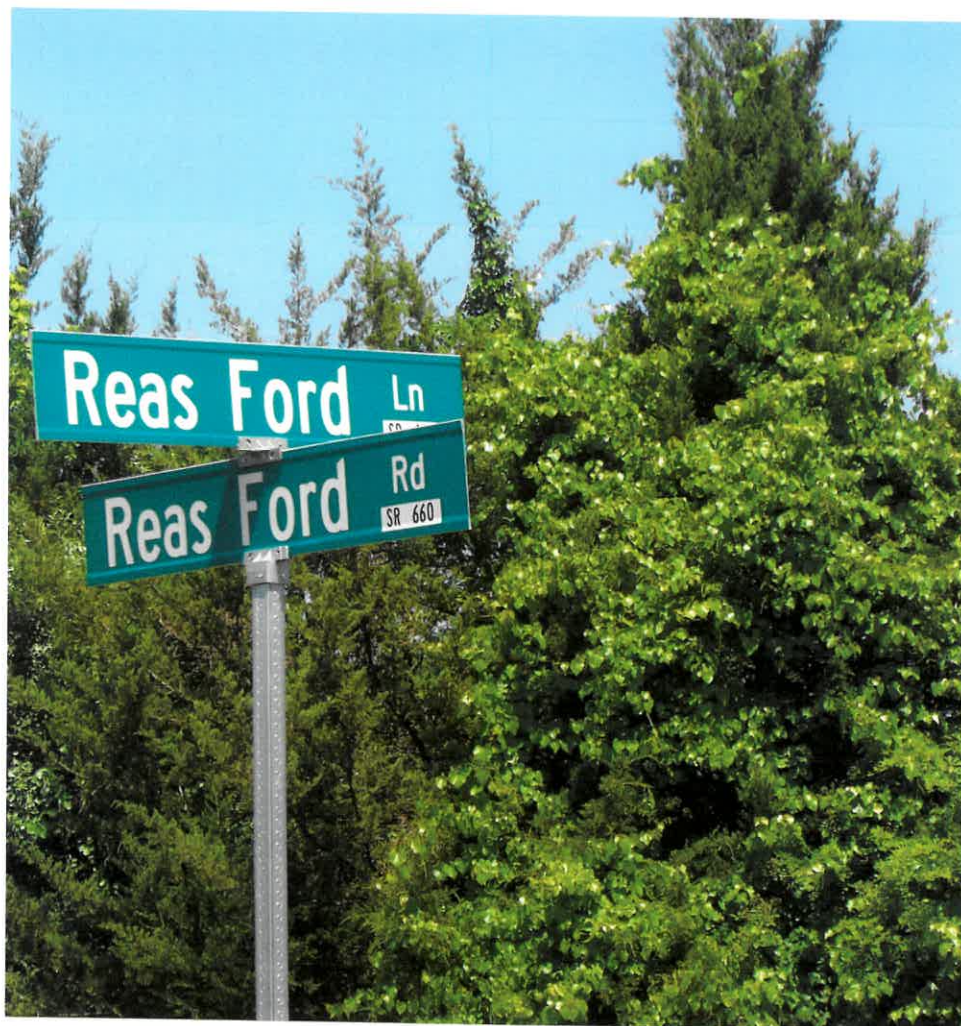
**And**

**Panorama Road (SR 844)**

**June 5, 2021**



JUNCTION OF REAS FORD ROAD (SR 660)  
and  
REAS FORD LANE (SR 661)



BEGIN REAS FORD LANE (SR 661)



NOTE: Gravel Road is 9/10 mile long

STATE - INSTALLED SPEED CUATION SIGN



VEHICLE ON LANE @ 1/10 MILE



(Photo facing south)

LANE FACING SOUTH @ 3809 REAS FORD LANE



JUNCTION OF REAS FORD LANE  
and  
GRAEMONT LANE



NOTE: Graemont Lane is paved and provides access to 7 homes.  
The sole access and egress to/from Graemont is via  
Reas Ford Lane.

REAS FORD LANE (facing south) AT 3/10 MILE



REAS FORD LANE @ 3604 (facing south)



NOTE: 6 foot folding rule in foreground



REAS FORD LANE @ 4/10 MILE ( facing south)



NOTE: Sunken road. Banks are 3-4 feet high on both sides.

NORTH BOUNDARY OF PANORAMA FARMS



PROPOSED WALKING TRAIL ON GAS LINE EASEMENT  
(facing north)



NOTE: This "trail" is brushhogged once yearly.

NORTHWEST ENTRANCE TO PANORAMA FARMS  
FROM REAS FORD LANE



REAS FORD LANE @ 6/10 MILE



REAS FORD LANE @ 7/10 MILE  
(facing south)



REAS FORD LANE @ 7/10 MILE

(facing north)



REAS FORD LANE @ 9/10 MILE





REAS FORD LANE @ 9/10 MILE

(facing south)



JUNCTION OF EARLYSVILLE ROAD (SR 743)  
and  
PANORAMA ROAD (SR 844)



PANORAMA ROAD (facing west)



NOTE: 2 lane paved road leads to Panoram Farms commercial mulch operation, homes and various farm buildings.



END STATE MAINTENANCE OF PANORAM ROAD (SR 844)



NOTE: private, paved road continues

## Mariah Gleason

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**From:** Nancy Hiles Johnson <nhilesjohnson@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 6, 2021 4:38 PM  
**To:** Mariah Gleason  
**Subject:** Supporting SP202100009

**CAUTION: This message originated outside the County of Albemarle email system. DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.**

Dear Ms. Gleason:

I live in Ivy, VA. I am **THRILLED** to learn that Panorama Farms is applying for a permit for a green cemetery. Please grant their request! This is where my husband and I would like to be buried one day.

Sincerely,

Nancy

Nancy Hiles Johnson  
930 Turner Mtn. Road  
Charlottesville, VA 22903  
434-284-1194

## Mariah Gleason

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**From:** sharon davis <skdavis936@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 7, 2021 3:28 PM  
**To:** cmurray1217@gmail.com  
**Cc:** Mariah Gleason  
**Subject:** Re: SP202100009 Proposal Questions

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### ***My replies below for the record:*** **Replies below:**

On Fri, Apr 30, 2021 at 3:17 PM sharon davis <[skdavis936@gmail.com](mailto:skdavis936@gmail.com)> wrote:

Dear Chris,

I understand today is the deadline for questions for you regarding yesterday's proposal for the green cemetery. I believe I have until May 5 for further comment.

A few initial questions for clarification of your presentation.

1) Will this cemetery be defined as "commercial", and if not, how will it be defined? I didn't quite get this. **The Natural Burial Ground at Panorama Farms is not church-related, nor a private cemetery.**

***You compared this project to other "commercial" cemeteries several times - just attempting to gain clarity about the entity operating the cemetery.***

2 ) You have mentioned in previous email exchanges with me, that the 1953 entrance was going to be the main entrance for the cemetery. I believe you said during the presentation that it would be considered the main entrance, as VDOT approved this over the existing one? Was that correct? **The "1953 entrance" is one of the two entrance options. VDOT representative only said that it has a greater sight-line than 3550 Reas Ford Lane. While it is an operational issue (a management decision), the initial entrance will be 3550 Reas Ford Ln with its gravel road. It is unlikely that the first expenditure would be to grade and surface the 1953 farm track.**

3) What other uses will the 3550 access be used for? I'm referring to uses such as the panorama events or the summer camp? **The Panorama Events barn has not hosted an event since Oct 2018 and there are no immediate plans to revive the operation. We don't have a long-term assessment right now.**

**The ARC camp has operated for two weeks in June for over 30 years. We have no reason to believe the operations will change in the long term, and are unable to provide any further information.**

***I hope projections for traffic development, although slow at first, allows VDOT to consider (and those living on this road to provide input about) the road's capacity to accommodate the inevitable growth over the next five to ten years (and beyond). There will be increases due to cemetery activities such as burial services, related service or maintenance equipment/deliveries, annual gravesite visitors, and public in general.***

***In addition, there is the potential for development of the several hundred acre tract of land also being serviced by this road.***

4) Will the 3550 access be widened to 50', making it necessary for further clearing of the existing tree line next to the road? During one of our initial conversations, Drew had mentioned doing more clearing which would help with my view in that direction. Does that remain the case? How much is being planned to be removed? **In 2012, the farm entrance at 3550 Reas Ford Ln was approved for 200 person events. The internal gravel road from Reas Ford Ln to the events barn met the county's requirement for roadway width. There are no trees near the entrance, nor on the internal road through the cemetery site. And there are no plans to cut down any trees along Reas Ford Lane.**

5) It appears there will be parking areas within my viewshed. I have experienced blinding reflections off the car windshields parked along the road or field on a sunny day during the spring, summer and fall months, and even though intermittent, it is very disturbing. Could this be a consideration when designing the placement of the parking areas and pavilion roof material and orientation? **The proposed, main parking layout shows head-in parking alongside the internal gravel road. We will comply with County parking regulations. Future pavilion orientation and materials will depend on demand for the building, in the first place; and then on capacity, design, budget, and permitting requirement, all of which are to be determined if or when it gets built.**

***I do hope my concerns will be taken into consideration during the design phase, if approved.***

Observations/Concerns:

1) When Drew removed a 10-15' swath out of the overgrown fence line directly south of my home a few months ago, I was reminded I have no control over the entire fence line that separates our properties. Living in a passive solar home with a southern wall of glass, overlooking my septic field, I am not able to recreate a visual barrier, so it has really opened up my summertime viewshed of the barn, field and road, making this much more difficult to accept or understand why there will be nothing invested to make your proposal less impactful to my property, even at the initial stage. **The proposed layouts that you and I have discussed since August 2020 are now flagged in your viewshed, and situate any active burial area in the field about 500' from your property line. Low field stones would mark any graves, and the terrain falls away from the house. Active burial areas in those proposals are, by design, obscured from your house by a "corner" of woods. We will continue to work with you to fine tune that proposal. In the woods to the south and east, we propose a 300' setback. And, farther to the east, in the wooded area all-but invisible from our property line, I've proposed reducing the setback to 100' from the line.**

2) An addition to the comment/concerns by one of the meeting participants that live on Reas Ford Lane. I have lived on Reas Ford Lane for about 40 years, and I know that for a small one lane dirt road, it currently has a tremendous amount of traffic, keeping the road in need of attention. The Road Narrows and 10MPH signs on Reas Ford Lane were put up about a year after the events began occurring, but do very little to keep folks at the correct speed limit. It is particularly hazardous when there are visitors, contractors and crews, who are unfamiliar with the road, and it's characteristics. While it is not your responsibility to manage this, it falls on all of us through state and local taxes and those who live in this neighborhood to do so. As it is these days, it is critical for those who regularly use the road for running or walking maintain their ability to jump out of the way of speeding vehicles trying to stop quickly on a dirt road.



***I ask VDOT to please consider the currently posted signage does little to keep the many speeders maintaining 10MPH once they have better visual clearance in portions of the road, and seems to be those not familiar with the road. If approved, I believe it would be safer to have signage such as "turning vehicles" with a reminder of the 10MPH speed limit for both North and South traffic approaching the entrance.***

***Also, a note about proposed ways of notification of scheduled services: I hope you are able to create a better system of notifying the neighbors of upcoming events as the email notification method has not proven to be timely or effective for the long term. It also puts the burden on the neighbors that share the road to have available and check their email daily due to the quicker 24 hour turn around from death to burial.***

Please keep in mind, my goal in all of this is to ensure my property not be devalued as a result of your proposal. Although it is a small piece of land, it is my one investment for my financial future, and I must protect the value as best I am able and as respectfully as I can. **I appreciate your concern and can only say that some buyers might prefer the assurance that, in their lifetime, the woods will remain un-logged, and your viewshed will never become a housing development. In our commitment to self-sustaining open space, there are no other options to finance that goal.**

***Because of my previous experiences related to PFI projects, and the fact your unused access easement across the entrance of my driveway will not be removed until I indicate my position on the waiver, I am reluctant to do so, but know it's necessary.***

***As I noted before, the 3550 entrance will definitely devalue my property. This entrance will be open to the public, 7 days/week, dawn to dusk, in perpetuity, bringing traffic, activity, noise, and dust within earshot/sight of my bedroom window and back yard living area, not to mention the continual exposure to funerals which are not traditionally joyous occasions.***

***I am more concerned about property value after discovering that Realtor.com did research on how cemeteries affect home values. They used a list of federal and state cemeteries operated by the Department of Veterans Affairs and found that the median home price in ZIP codes with a cemetery is about 12% lower than similar homes in other neighboring areas without a graveyard.***

***I am not certain from my current perspective, I will enjoy the same "open space" and return on my investment, but rather reduced value and marketability with greater restrictions on the use and enjoyment of my property.***

***Based on the research I've done, the information and professional input I've received since I first learned of your project on September 14, 2020, I request that the 750' State mandated setback remain in place for this project, if approved.***

***I do hope you consider and respect my position as an adjacent property owner attempting to protect what value their property may have remaining if your proposal is approved; and not a pre-emptive act of aggression to somehow disrupt or stymie your continuing efforts to preserve Panorama Farms in open space, compelling you to respond.***

Since November of 2020, when I first learned of your project, I have spent a tremendous amount of time researching what this would mean and the effects it will have on my property value. I've spent even more time considering the

outcomes if your proposal was a success or not. It has been difficult to discern the real risks and benefits due to the projects' unique nature.

Christopher Murray  
1217 Hazel St  
Charlottesville, VA 22902  
434.962.5338 cell

On Mon, May 3, 2021 at 9:45 AM Christopher Murray <[cmurray1217@gmail.com](mailto:cmurray1217@gmail.com)> wrote:

### Replies below:

On Fri, Apr 30, 2021 at 3:17 PM sharon davis <[skdavis936@gmail.com](mailto:skdavis936@gmail.com)> wrote:

Dear Chris,

I understand today is the deadline for questions for you regarding yesterday's proposal for the green cemetery. I believe I have until May 5 for further comment.

A few initial questions for clarification of your presentation.

1) Will this cemetery be defined as "commercial", and if not, how will it be defined? I didn't quite get this. **The Natural Burial Ground at Panorama Farms is not church-related, nor a private cemetery.**

2 ) You have mentioned in previous email exchanges with me, that the 1953 entrance was going to be the main entrance for the cemetery. I believe you said during the presentation that it would be considered the main entrance, as VDOT approved this over the existing one? Was that correct? **The "1953 entrance" is one of the two entrance options. VDOT representative only said that it has a greater sight-line than 3550 Reas Ford Lane. While it is an operational issue (a management decision), the initial entrance will be 3550 Reas Ford Ln with its gravel road. It is unlikely that the first expenditure would be to grade and surface the 1953 farm track.**

3) What other uses will the 3550 access be used for? I'm referring to uses such as the panorama events or the summer camp? **The Panorama Events barn has not hosted an event since Oct 2018 and there are no immediate plans to revive the operation. We don't have a long-term assessment right now. The ARC camp has operated for two weeks in June for over 30 years. We have no reason to believe the operations will change in the long term, and are unable to provide any further information.**

4) Will the 3550 access be widened to 50', making it necessary for further clearing of the existing tree line next to the road? During one of our initial conversations, Drew had mentioned doing more clearing which would help with my view in that direction. Does that remain the case? How much is being planned to be removed? **In 2012, the farm entrance at 3550 Reas Ford Ln was approved for 200 person events. The internal gravel road from Reas Ford Ln to the events barn met the county's requirement for roadway width. There are no trees near the entrance, nor on**

**the internal road through the cemetery site. And there are no plans to cut down any trees along Reas Ford Lane.**

5) It appears there will be parking areas within my viewshed. I have experienced blinding reflections off the car windshields parked along the road or field on a sunny day during the spring, summer and fall months, and even though intermittent, it is very disturbing. Could this be a consideration when designing the placement of the parking areas and pavilion roof material and orientation? **The proposed, main parking layout shows head-in parking alongside the internal gravel road. We will comply with County parking regulations. Future pavilion orientation and materials will depend on demand for the building, in the first place; and then on capacity, design, budget, and permitting requirement, all of which are to be determined if or when it gets built.**

Observations/Concerns:

1) When Drew removed a 10-15' swath out of the overgrown fence line directly south of my home a few months ago, I was reminded I have no control over the entire fence line that separates our properties. Living in a passive solar home with a southern wall of glass, overlooking my septic field, I am not able to recreate a visual barrier, so it has really opened up my summertime viewshed of the barn, field and road, making this much more difficult to accept or understand why there will be nothing invested to make your proposal less impactful to my property, even at the initial stage. **The proposed layouts that you and I have discussed since August 2020 are now flagged in your viewshed, and situate any active burial area in the field about 500' from your property line. Low field stones would mark any graves, and the terrain falls away from the house. Active burial areas in those proposals are, by design, obscured from your house by a "corner" of woods. We will continue to work with you to fine tune that proposal. In the woods to the south and east, we propose a 300' setback. And, farther to the east, in the wooded area all-but invisible from our property line, I've proposed reducing the setback to 100' from the line.**

2) An addition to the comment/concerns by one of the meeting participants that live on Reas Ford Lane. I have lived on Reas Ford Lane for about 40 years, and I know that for a small one lane dirt road, it currently has a tremendous amount of traffic, keeping the road in need of attention. The Road Narrows and 10MPH signs on Reas Ford Lane were put up about a year after the events began occurring, but do very little to keep folks at the correct speed limit. It is particularly hazardous when there are visitors, contractors and crews, who are unfamiliar with the road, and it's characteristics. While it is not your responsibility to manage this, it falls on all of us through state and local taxes and those who live in this neighborhood to do so. As it is these days, it is critical for those who regularly use the road for running or walking maintain their ability to jump out of the way of speeding vehicles trying to stop quickly on a dirt road.

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Since November of 2020, when I first learned of your project, I have spent a tremendous amount of time researching what this would mean and the effects it will have on my property value. I've spent even more time considering the

outcomes if your proposal was a success or not. It has been difficult to discern the real risks and benefits due to the projects' unique nature.

Thanks for your time answering my questions and consideration of my observations and concerns.

Regards,  
Sharon Davis  
3604 Reas Ford Lane  
Earlysville, VA 22936

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*Christopher Murray*  
*1217 Hazel St*  
*Charlottesville, VA 22902*  
*434.962.5338 cell*

## Mariah Gleason

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**From:** Diane Fletcher <dhfletcher75@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 9, 2021 12:20 PM  
**To:** Mariah Gleason  
**Subject:** Green Burial sites

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

**CAUTION: This message originated outside the County of Albemarle email system. DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.**

Ms.Gleason,

I have a long standing interest in green burial. It is known that traditional burial requires embalming which is extremely harmful to the environment or cremation which is also very harmful to the environment. It is becoming more and more apparent how fragile our environment is and how endangered our planet is because of pollution from chemicals and toxins that are being released into our atmosphere.

We have a responsibility to preserve our planet in every way we can. Green Burial could make a significant difference in reducing the huge amount of dangerous chemicals that are added to our already very damaged environment.

Please vote to allow the permit be issued to allow Panorama farm to become a green cemetery . Permitting a green cemetery is beyond being a "good idea", it is the right thing to do.

Thank you.  
With sincerity,

Diane Fletcher  
[dhfletcher75@gmail.com](mailto:dhfletcher75@gmail.com)

## Mariah Gleason

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**From:** Carolyn Shaffer  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 22, 2021 8:50 AM  
**To:** Mariah Gleason  
**Subject:** FW: Panorama Farm

Thank you,

Carolyn Shaffer  
Clerk, Planning Commission and Boards  
[Albemarle County](#)

[cshaffer2@albemarle.org](mailto:cshaffer2@albemarle.org)  
Phone: (434) 296-5832 ext 3437  
401 McIntire Road, , Charlottesville, VA 22902

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**From:** Stack, Janet W (jws8n) <jws8n@virginia.edu>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 21, 2021 1:26 PM  
**To:** Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@albemarle.org>  
**Subject:** Panorama Farm

**CAUTION: This message originated outside the County of Albemarle email system. DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.**

To Members of the Albemarle Planning Commission:

We are writing in support of the proposed Green Burial Site at Panorama Farm. The advantages of this type of burial are several (<https://funerals.org/?consumers=green-burial>):

1. It provides a simple, natural, and unpretentious arrangement. The costs are much less without the need for embalming, fancy caskets, or concrete vaults.
2. Each year US cemeteries bury 30 million board feet of hardwood and 90,000 tons of steel in caskets as well as 17,000 tons of steel and copper in vaults and 1.6 million tons of reinforced concrete in vaults.
3. Embalming fluid contains formaldehyde, a respiratory irritant and known carcinogen. In the US about 5.3 million gallons of embalming fluid are used every year, and workers in funeral homes are routinely exposed to it.
4. These sites restore or preserve a natural landscape populated by native trees shrubs, and wildflowers. Most do not use fertilizer, pesticides, or herbicides. Thus they provide food and refuge to birds and other wildlife.

I hope that the Commission will give positive consideration to the prospect of using this rural land for this very good purpose. I believe it would be a most welcome addition to County resources.

Janet W. Stack, Ph.D.  
John S. Stack  
Keswick, VA



# Congregation Beth Israel

A member of the Union for Reform Judaism

Ms. Maria Gleason  
Senior Planner, Community Development  
Albemarle County

June 21, 2021

Congregation Beth Israel is writing in support of the granting of a Special Use Permit for “A Natural Burial Ground at Panorama Farms”, SP202100009. We have spoken with Mr. Murray for many months considering the feasibility of creating the opportunity for green burial practices in our area. The parallels and similarity with Jewish burial law and practices is not a coincidence, given the intent to provide a respectful resting place for the bodies and a respectful treatment of our environment, both are which are foundational in Judaism.

Jewish burial law and practices are clearly aligned with green burials in a number of ways:

- Bodies are not embalmed: there is no use of chemicals that can harm the environment or violate the respectful treatment of the body;
- Biodegradable materials are used: the commandment “Unto dust shalt thou return”, requires use of a shroud or simple pine casket with no metal or other materials that do not rapidly decompose to return to a natural state;
- Contact with the earth: In Jewish practice there is no use of concrete or metal vaults or liners which slow down or disturb the disintegration of the body and casket.

The strong alignment of burial practices between Jewish law and practice and the intentions of the Burial Ground at Panorama Farms is important, not just for Panorama Farm itself but for the entire community because of its impact on the environment. It is important to recognize that a natural burial ground is valuable because of not only what will be done with the land but what will NOT be done with the land. The preservation of open space, with natural vegetation and lack of interference with plant and animal life and natural water flow, are critically important to Albemarle County. As less available land is converted to higher density housing and business, it has become increasingly important that we preserve open land for the long term for the good of our residents, present and future. This goal, however, is virtually impossible in the current economic climate, where owners of open land cannot continue to preserve open space without alternative means of

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financial support. Environmental stewardship must be supported by public policy and application of such policy.

Creation of “A Natural Burial Ground at Panorama Farms” thus accomplishes two goals: preservation of open space in a financially feasible way, and provision of green burial options for our local community, where there is growing recognition that outdated burial practices are not sustainable in the long run due to decreasing land availability. We at Congregation Beth Israel, hope that you will consider granting of the Special Use Permit for this forward-thinking project.

Sincerely,

Diane Gartner Hillman, D.H.A  
President, Board of Directors

Micah Schwartzman  
Incoming President, Board of Directors

Rabbi Tom Gutherz  
Senior Rabbi