Proposal and recommendation from "The Friends of the Meadow" to the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors regarding the disposal of former AEP Property, Tax Parcel No. 054-A 4A, Parcel ID 035574 for development. hereinafter referred to as "The Property or the Meadow"

Friends of the Meadow proposes that the ~9.25 acres of the former AEP property North of Nik Ryan drive be conveyed to the Town of Blacksburg with the stipulation that the property be used in perpetuity as a passive recreational area with no permanent structures erected, parking facilities or roads constructed, or other development to be conducted except those in accordance with the existing passive recreational use. Structures such as simple playgrounds, picnic shelters, limited parking and a modest community garden shall be allowed. The remaining ~2.75 acres south of Nik Ryan Drive shall be conveyed to the neighboring landowner, Jeff Stosser, for $100,000 with the stipulation that no more than one single family dwelling may be constructed on the remainder of the property after any lot lines are redrawn. Additionally, we request that a sign (or plaque of some sort) be erected in the Meadow or at the entrance to honor Mrs. Annette Perkins for her efforts in obtaining and preserving the property.

HISTORY AND PHYSICAL ASPECTS OF THE PROPERTY- The main access point to this property is at the south end of Shelor Lane and is located in Montgomery County, but is adjacent to Nellie's Cave Park in Blacksburg. This was originally about a 20 acre farm belonging to the Shelor family. The land also sits at the very top of Nellie's Cave Mountain with both open fields and forest. There are tremendous mountain top views to the east, south and west.

Over 15 years ago when the Shelor family sold the property, American Appalachian Power purchased the farm and sought permission from Montgomery County to allow an electric substation to be built. AEP used a corner of the property for construction of the electric substation, and Annette Perkins was instrumental in her position as a member of the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors to have AEP convey 12 acres to the county. It is our understanding that studies were made for the best uses of the property and a decision was made for the property to remain natural with no immediate plans for development.

Much of the property is a hilltop/mountain top with two major sinkhole areas consistent with karst topography. Soon after the property was conveyed to the county, some neighboring residents approached the Montgomery County General Services Department and the Montgomery County Parks and Recreation department and obtained permission to mow grass walking trails.

Thereafter, the neighboring residents mowed and maintained grass walking trials over a large portion of the 12 acre property. Montgomery County was kind enough to provide some gates to discourage vehicle traffic on the 12 acre property. Also Montgomery County has routinely

mowed and bush hogged the fields twice each year to keep the fields from becoming overgrown.

RECREATIONAL USES OF THE PROPERTY- Over the years, this property has seen a continued increase use by the citizens of Montgomery County and the neighboring citizens. Such uses have been primarily walking the trails, enjoying the natural setting and view, dog walking, children playing and sleigh riding on the hills when it snows. A trail was also developed from the top of the property down the woods to connect to Nellie's Cave Park. The neighborhoods of Shelor Lane, Crestwood Drive and Nik Ryan Drive have no sidewalks, so the trail to Nellie's Cave Park is heavily used as a way to Nellie's Cave Park.

Additionally, the Nellie's Cave Park Nature Trail/Arboretum connects to the same trail leading down from the Meadow allowing persons using the town park to access the hiking trails in the Meadow. There are several apartments and condominium complexes surrounding Nellie's Cave Park, and many of those residents hike up the hill to the Meadow to enjoy the hiking trails.

ABANDONED STRUCTURE ON PROPERTY- Thankfully, there have been no reported serious injuries of persons using this property of the 15 years. However, there is a dilapidated structure that is potentially an 'attractive nuisance'. The Montgomery County Sheriff's Department has been called to the property in the past for concerns about persons being in the structure. We recommend the structure be demolished to reduce the chance of injury and to enhance the natural setting of the property. It is our hope that should the Town of Blacksburg accept the property with restrictions, the Town will demolish the building and remove the debris.

FRIENDS OF THE MEADOW – In the summer of 2016, persons interested in the property heard that Montgomery County was considering selling the Meadow property. Neighbors and concerned citizens came together to seek the preservation of the beautiful natural area. A petition was circulated in the neighborhoods with in excess of 100 signatures seeking preservation of the entire parcel. A committee of approximately 6 people representing the interests of the community has been meeting regularly to develop plans and proposals to help preserve the property.

THANKS AND RECOGNITION The Friends of the Meadow wish to expressly thank Supervisor Annette Perkins for having the foresight and courage to obtain and preserve this beautiful natural area for all of the citizens of Montgomery County. We also wish to thank the County for mowing and bush hogging the area over the years to keep it from becoming overgrown. The County also installed two gates to discourage unwarranted vehicle traffic which would destroy the natural walking trails. Finally, we also wish to thank Chris Tuck and the current Board of Supervisors its willingness to consider proposals to preserve this special piece of land for current and future citizens of Montgomery County and the Town of Blacksburg.