

**SUMMARY OF THE MASONVILLE  
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
April 6, 2021, 5:30 PM  
Virtual Meeting**

***Attendees:***

*Angie Ashley Consulting:* Angie L. Ashley

*Baltimore Bird Club:* Nancy O'Hare

*Baltimore City Department of Planning:* Bruna Atilla and Brent Flickinger

*Bay Brook Elementary/Middle School:* Jill Bradly

*Ben Franklin High School:* Kelly Oglesbee

*Greater Baltimore Wilderness Coalition:* Ashley Traut

*Living Classrooms Foundation:* Lorraine Warnick

*Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Port Administration (MDOT MPA):* Tom Hall, Kristen Keene, Bertrand Djiki, Kristen Fidler, Katrina Jones, Holly Miller, Amanda Peñafiel, Margie Hamby

*Maryland Environmental Service (MES):* Danielle Wilson

*MCAC Chair:* Anita Kestel

*National Aquarium:* Andrea Van Wyk

*University of MD, Baltimore County:* Stephan Bradley

*US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS):* Ela-Sita Carpenter

*Vulcan Materials:* Rob Flanagan

**Action Items:**

None

**1.0 Introductions, Approval of Summary**

**Angie Ashley, Angie Ashley Consulting**

Ms. Ashley called the meeting to order and read aloud the list of attendees and their affiliations. Ms. Kestel asked for a motion to approve the October 6, 2020, MCAC meeting summary. The summary was approved unanimously. Ms. Ashley introduced Brent Flickinger, who debuted his song "Down at Masonville Cove." The song ended with a round of applause.

**2.0 Harbor Development Update**

**Kristen Fidler, MDOT MPA**

Ms. Fidler started the update by thanking Anita Kestel for volunteering as the new committee chair for the Masonville CAC. Ms. Fidler reviewed recent staff changes in Harbor Development. Dave Blazer has retired. Holly Miller has been promoted to Deputy Director, Amanda Peñafiel to Senior Project Manager, Katrina Jones to Senior Program Manager for Engagement and Education, and Kristen Keene to Chief of DMMP Strategy and Partnerships.

Maryland port facilities fared better than ports in other states as it worked to recover from the impact of COVID and shared encouraging statistics. Cargo activity is rebounding since August/September 2020, highlighting the role that the port plays as an economic engine in Maryland.

The year 2021 marks the 20th anniversary of the Dredged Material Management Act (DMMA). MDOT MPA is taking a look back at the past 20 years and ahead to be thoughtful of where we are going. Ms.

Fidler encouraged the attendees to visit [maryland-dmmp.com](http://maryland-dmmp.com) to view the reflection video from those who were a part of the start of the DMMA and information about MDOT MPA sites. She encouraged attendees to view the annual report which is used by MDOT MPA as a guide for work yearly. As a response to DMMP Committee feedback, there will be a series of webinars this year. In February, MDOT MPA hosted a Coastal Resiliency webinar. The Mid Bay Island restoration project webinar will be hosted on May 19. The webinars are open to the public, and past webinars can be viewed in the webinar libraries at [maryland-dmmp.com](http://maryland-dmmp.com). MDOT MPA is interested in hearing topics ideas for future webinars.

Andrew Bing of Kramer and Associates will be working with MDOT MPA to deliver the FLAP multi-modal trail project, and he will be getting to know the MCAC members as the plan rolls out. Also, the Masonville conservation easement is still progressing and is under review with MDOT MPA's legal department.

Eagles are present on campus for the third year. The new nest is out of range of the current eagle camera. Three eaglets were spotted and will fledge in 10-14 weeks, likely by July 7. USFWS and MDOT MPA will determine when the campus can reopen once the eaglets are confidently hunting/feeding on their own.

### **3.0 Masonville Construction & Dike Raising**

**Bertrand Djiki, MDOT MPA**

Mr. Djiki stated that dike raising continues to be on hold and Masonville DMCF continues to actively receive inflow. Seagirt Berth 3 inflow is ongoing and it is about 70% complete. Spillway modifications are taking place. Mr. Djiki listed upcoming 2021 inflow projects potentially going into the Masonville site and noted they are just estimates.

Spillway modifications - With continued operations and inflow activities on-site, there is an ongoing need to manage water, and the two current, traditional spillway structures will not function and have been grouted (i.e. permanently sealed). The team has set up an interim short-term discharge where water will be pumped from the spillway box for discharge. For long-term discharge, MDOT MPA will transition to a new innovative design solution utilizing a floating weir and platform structure to continue with a pumping operation for water management at the DMCF.

Ms. Kestel asked why MPA is using the floating weir method. Mr. Djiki responded that with dike elevation going up, the spillway platform and structure would need to be elevated to accommodate access sampling and discharge. A floating weir which is a simple, yet economically practical solution. The floating weir and platform structure will be used for long-term operation and water management at the DMCF.

Incremental Dike raising - Mr. Djiki stated that MDOT MPA received final Dam Safety Permit acceptance certification of the +18 Dikes in March and the DMCF can receive inflow up to the freeboard elevation of +15. MDOT MPA is preparing for the next phase of dike raising. MDOT MPA received some funding and will resume dike raising design to +30.

Gwynns Falls Trash Wheel - MDOT MPA is working with Waterfront Partnership (WFP) of Baltimore in conjunction with other partners to bring the largest trash wheel in the area as the last mitigation project for the Masonville DMCF. "Gwenda, Good Wheel of the West," construction is complete. Piles will be driven in advance of the trash wheels installation; the final installation is scheduled for the end of May.

### **4.0 US Fish and Wildlife Service Update**

**Ela-Sita Carpenter**

Ms. Ela-Sita Carpenter introduced herself and her role as an urban wildlife biologist. Her focus will be on

research (mammals and birds at Cox Creek and Masonville), outreach (programming at Masonville and Patuxent Research Refuge), and USFWS programs (Urban wildlife conservation program and urban bird treaty).

Mammal surveys - Because of COVID and funding issues, only half of the surveys were completed in 2020. In 2021, FWS conducted infrared camera surveys for mammals and found deer, fox, possum, raccoon, and a pair of coyotes, which is not normal for the area. An eagle cam was installed in October 2020, however, eagles have shown nesting behaviors.

Plant propagation of the blue false indigo plant will occur in the Masonville greenhouse, set up in the next couple of weeks. The plant is used by the threatened and endangered frosted elfin butterflies; the plants will be transplanted to a preserve on the eastern shore once they mature.

Establishing a community science program at Masonville - The goal of the community science program at Masonville will be to invite community members to participate and gather data to help make management decisions at Masonville Cove. An introductory class will be held, followed by two to three classes to help with gathering infrared deer data, and finally, a summary class to help decide what management decisions should be made based on the data.

After being asked who could participate in the community monitoring, Ms. Carpenter responded that high school students or adults could complete the monitoring. Ms. Kestel asked why there was a decline in the fox population. Ms. Carpenter responded that the population goes up and down over the years, and this seems to be the year of the downward trend.

## **5.0 National Aquarium Update**

**Andrea Van Wyk**

Ms. Andrea Van Wyk began by discussing the fall 2020 activities as follow:

- International coastal clean-up was held on October 10, 2020. 9,100 pieces of debris were collected, and 280 pounds of trash were removed from Masonville Cove.
- Nature ornament 12/10/2020 was held in person and virtually at the Farring Bay Brook Recreation Center. The National Aquarium provided 40 participating students with activity kits of recycled/reusable craft supplies for creating nature ornaments, e.g., Christmas tree pinecones and Santa Claus made with toilet paper roll. A second program, Native Bird Feeder Craft activity, was hosted virtually on January 20th. The National Aquarium will continue to provide programming to community school teachers and through virtual programming.
- In celebration of Earth Day, the National Aquarium will host a guided nature walk at Garrett Park for the Brooklyn Boys and Girls Club on April 26th.
- On April 24, 2021, National Aquarium will host Project Clean Stream at Masonville; the event will occur in two sessions. Anyone interested can sign up at [Aqua.org/events](https://aqua.org/events); each session will host 25 participants only.
- The National Aquarium will be hosting the City Nature Challenge. The 2021 challenge will take place in two phases: April 30 - May 3 observation of wildlife, May 3 - May 9 identification of wildlife, and May 10 results will be announced. For more details, visit <https://aqua.org/support/conservation/city-nature-challenge-baltimoreading>.
- The Greater Baltimore Wilderness Coalition will be hosting the Nature City Forum June 16 -17. Mayor Brandon Scott will be one of the speakers. [Nature City Forum registration](#).

- The National Aquarium will be hosting the Nature Nurtures workshop. It will be a series of virtual and in-person mid-June – early July. The series will sponsor formal and informal educators as well as healthcare workers. [Nature Nurtures registration.](#)
- The National Aquarium will be hosting its annual Bioblitz at Masonville Cove, joint with Latino Conservation Day on July 17<sup>th</sup>. In the event of inclement weather or the eagles have not fledged, the Bioblitz will likely be held in September.
- National Aquarium continues to engage with the Hispanic Access Foundation and will be hosting an intern this summer with Patuxent Research Refuge. The internship will take place from May-August. The intern will help with various activities related to Masonville and Patuxent Research Refuge; one event will be Latino Conservation day on July 17.

## **6.0 Living Classroom Foundation (LCF)**

**Lorraine Andrews Warnick**

Mrs. Warnick began by providing an overview of the 2020/2021 school year education activities. LCF created and provided action-oriented science, technology, education, arts, and math (STEAM) kits to 300 4th and 5th graders from Lakeland, Maree G. Farring, Federal Hill Prep, and Westport. These kits assist the student and teachers with virtual Meaningful Watershed Education Experience(MWEE) programs and School Leadership in Urban Runoff Reduction Project (SLURRP) led by LCF virtually. The kits were provided with the help of the Baltimore City CAMP grant and a Chesapeake Bay Trust grant.

The Masonville Cove Campus is now open from 9 am - 4 pm on Saturdays. Visitors can sign in at the virtual kiosk and find various self-led activities, in particular, the “Walk It!” from the Walking Classroom. Visitors can borrow a headset and walk around the campus listening to preloaded environmental education lessons. Masonville has been chosen as one of the host sites for Cache Across Maryland; from now until May 15, anyone can participate and find the geocache at Masonville and other sites across Maryland. If visitors do not have their own GPS device, they can borrow one from the MCEEC.

LCF is hosting monthly community programming; April 14 at 1p will be community shoreline clean-up, and April 28 will be community water quality monitoring. These events will be hosted monthly. Mrs. Warnick encouraged everyone to visit [Masonvillecove.org](http://Masonvillecove.org) and sign up for the events.

## **7.0 CAMP and Forest Conservation**

**Bruna Attila, Baltimore City Department of Planning**

Ms. Attila reviewed the Critical Areas Management Program (CAMP) described what is mandated by the State of Maryland as it regulates development that happens within 1,000 FT from tidal waters. The program requirements include stormwater management, afforestation, and mitigation for vegetation removal. In the new CAMP Manual 2020 Edition, the cost of offset fees was adjusted. Mitigation requirements can be met on-site, off-site, and through an offset fee. When a project/development pays an offset fee, the money goes to the stormwater management offset fee fund or the afforestation offset fee fund. The offset fee funds must be used to meet the goals of the CAMP to improve water quality, conserve and restore habitat, and promote an attractive and sustainable environment.

The Forest Conservation Act was enacted in 1991 to minimize the loss of Maryland's forest resources during land development and making the identification and protection of forests and other sensitive areas an integral part of the site planning process. Forest conservation is triggered at 5,000 sq. ft. of disturbance. The main regulatory components are the preservation of existing forests and mitigation for forest clearing. This requires that at least 15 percent of a site must have tree cover (planting rate calculated at 15 trees per acre). The requirements may be met in four different ways: on-site preservation and/or mitigation, off-site mitigation, payment of offset fees, a combination of on-site, off-site, and/or offset fees.

### 2021 Environmental off-set fee grant program for CAMP + Forest Conservation

The fund has approximately \$450,000 in grant funds available for this grant cycle. Ten to 20 grantees are expected to be selected. Grant awards for each grantee will be between \$5,000 to \$49,000; projects must be implementable within the one-year grant cycle. Eligible projects include afforestation/reforestation; stormwater management; and environmental education.

This year there is a prioritization of “Impact Investment Areas and emerging Organizations”. Emerging organizations are defined as organizations headquartered in or whose work is centered in communities that have historically been under-funded, may not have established revenue sources, and may lack access to capital. Proposals submitted by organizations that are not considered “Emerging” are also eligible but are encouraged to submit a joint proposal with an Emerging Organization.

The current Community Development's Impact Investment Areas include Park Heights, Penn-North, Upton, Druid Heights, Southwest Partnership, Johnston Square, Broadway East, East Baltimore Midway and CHUM. Although projects located in Development Impact Areas will be provided additional points, projects located across the city are eligible and encouraged to apply.

The Office of Sustainability will be offering one-on-one guidance sessions to help answer questions about the eligibility of projects, budget preparation, etc. Grant application will be released in mid to late April and proposals due mid to late May, with proposal selection announcement in late June. The finalized schedule and application form will be posted here: <https://www.baltimoresustainability.org/>. Contact Bruna Attila if you have questions: [Bruna.Atila@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:Bruna.Atila@baltimorecity.gov).

Ms. Fiddler and Ms. Kestel were interested in putting things together to discuss how future funding could be used at Masonville Cove. Ms. Jones. asked if emerging new partners could include schools and if so could they partner with more established organizations to submit a proposal. Ms. Attila responded that schools are eligible; criteria qualifications are forthcoming and it would be best for the entities interested to have a one on one with the Office of Sustainability.

### **8.0 Announcements and Open Discussion**

Ms. Kestel asked MDOT MPA to hold an additional MCAC meeting this year. The new meeting date is June 15. Ms. Oglesbee expressed that the mascot at Bay Brook Elementary Middle is Bruce the Eagle. If the eaglets get named, it could be fun to name one Bruce to get students connected to Masonville Cove.

### **9.0 Adjournment**

Ms. Ashley thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting was adjourned.