

**DRAFT SUMMARY OF THE
MASONVILLE CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
October 5, 2021 5:30 PM - Virtual Meeting**

Attendees:

MCAC Chair: Anita Kestel

Angie Ashley Consulting: Angie Ashley

Baltimore Bird Club: Nancy O'Hare

Ben Franklin High School: Kelly Oglesbee

Canton Kayaking Club: Ray Scurr

Concerned Citizens for a Better Brooklyn: Dianne Ingram

EcoLogix Group, Inc.: Anthony Brown

Kramer & Associates: Andrew Bing

Living Classrooms Foundation (LCF): Lorraine Warnick

Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Port Administration (MDOT MPA): Bertrand Djiki,
Kristen Fidler, Katrina Jones, Holly Miller

Maryland Environmental Service (MES): Tim Carney, Rachael Gilde, Pamela Pina

MedStar Harbor Hospital: Brian Gray

Morgan State University: Dr. Daniel Campo, Laurel McSherry

National Aquarium: Andrea Van Wyk

NatureWorx: Philip Hosmer, Erin Quinley

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

Vulcan Construction Materials: Robert Flanagan

Action Items:

1. The June 15, 2021, meeting summary will be distributed to the Committee for review prior to the next meeting.

2.0 Harbor Development Update

Kristen Fidler, MDOT MPA

Ms. Kristen Fidler informed the Committee that four new post-Panamax cranes arrived on September 9, 2021 and expected to be fully operational at Seagirt Marine Terminal (SMT) Berth 3 in early 2022. With the new cranes, through the Public Private Partnership (P3), Ports America Chesapeake (PAC) will be able to support two ultra-large container vessels simultaneously at SMT Berths 3 and 4. With SMT Berth 3 operating along with the Howard Street Tunnel expansion project, which is slated for completion in 2024, the POB will see an additional 600,000 containers annually.

The Cox Creek (CC) dredged material containment facility (DMCF) vertical dike raising to +60' has begun, with an anticipated completion in April 2024. The community enhancement projects associated with the expansion are in progress, with the development of a walking trail through the Swan Creek wetland and 100+ acre conservation easement adjacent to the DMCF currently in design phase.

MDOT MPA is actively pursuing acquisition of additional property near the CC DMCF for use as an area for large-scale, long-term innovative reuse of dredged material. The acquisition continues to be negotiated.

Five projects have been awarded to-date under the Innovative Reuse Request for Proposals (IR RFP) for research and development projects utilizing dredged material innovatively: 1) Belden-Eco Products -

ceramic bricks and permeable pavers; 2) Northgate Environmental - precast concrete and shoreline protection structures; 3) FasTrak Express - re-engineered soil to produce sod; 4) Harford Industrial Minerals - lightweight aggregate; and 5) Suscon Products - precast concrete products. A sixth contract is scheduled for Board of Public Works (BPW) review on October 20, 2021, and two additional proposals are currently under review by the IR RFP Technical Evaluation Committee. Results from the previously awarded RFP contracts will become available in 2022.

Ms. Fidler informed the Committee, that the Masonville Cove Environmental Education Center Great Room was dedicated to Frank Hamons, former Deputy Director of Harbor Development on 9/25 and is now, officially, the Frank L Hamons Great Room. Mr. Hamons was the visionary behind bringing stakeholders together and advancing restoration efforts such as the Masonville Cove at the MDOT MPA. Also on 9/25, the Masonville Cove partners celebrated National Urban Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Day. The National Aquarium (NA), National Park Service Chesapeake Bay Office (NPS CBO), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and Nature Worx (NW) were among many participants and guests joined by acting Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works Mr. Jamie Pinkham, and acting Director of USFWS Ms. Martha Williams.

3.0 Masonville DMCF Report

Bertrand Djiki, MDOT MPA

Masonville DMCF update presentation can be found [here](#).

Spillway Modifications

Mr. Djiki stated that spillway alternative and interim discharge solutions are in place to ensure effective water management during inflow operations, with long-term discharge solutions in development. The traditional spillway system has been discontinued and discharge from a floating weir is in development. This long-term solution will avoid inundation, create better safety for workers, and will be a cost savings.

Incremental Dike Raising

Dike raising activity is resuming and the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) Dam Safety permit modification has now been approved. The proposed base dike widening is to be constructed initially up to elevation +18' with construction to begin this fall/winter, pending erosion and sediment control permit modification approval from MDE and coordination with planned inflow. Eventually, the dike elevation will increase to +30' featuring steep slopes and a mechanically stabilized earth wall, which will innovatively reuse material and increase DMCF capacity. The ultimate planned elevation of +42' will provide a cumulative capacity of approximately 10.3 million cy and is slated to be completed in 2029.

Masonville Mitigation

The Gwynns Falls Trash Wheel, Gwynnda, was installed in May 2021 and was operation in July. Combined data from July and August reported 43.01 tons of trash were removed.

4.0 Partnership Updates

Masonville Birding Recent Highlights – **Tim Carney, MES**

Mr. Tim Carney's presentation is available [here](#). Bird monitoring is conducted twice per month, and any breeding behaviors are documented to showcase successful habitat restoration efforts at the site. Monitoring data is uploaded publicly to the ebird.org database. To join Tim's mailing list reach out to birdingtours@menv.com or send your bird sightings to tcarney@menv.com.

Ms. Dianne Ingram asked if completion of the DMCF and removal of mudflat habitat would limit bird visitation to Masonville Cove. Tim responded that it would take time, but that the mudflat dependent birds will likely move instead to Cox Creek's upcoming expansion or another nearby mudflat habitat.

Morgan State University School of Architecture & Planning **Dr. Dan Campo & Laurel McSherry, MSU**
Dr. Dan Campo, Associate Professor at the School of Architecture and Planning and Director of the Graduate Program in City and Regional Planning, and Ms. Laurel McSherry, Director of Graduate Landscape Architecture, are currently leading an 18-month study of Masonville Cove with their students examining design and access with the hope that they will find means of improving access and visitor's experiences without impacting the natural area or its unique qualities. Ms. McSherry stated that they began working with 8 graduate landscape-architecture students two weeks prior and are looking to also use Masonville Cove as an opportunity to study perennial questions in landscape architecture and explore key themes such as use, protection, change, fixity, management objectives, and aspirations of stakeholders. The results of the study will be shared upon completion.

Nature Worx

Erin Quinley, Nature Worx

Ms. Erin Quinley gave background on [Nature Worx](#), which is a nonprofit organization that leads experiential guided walks, where guides lead a variety of activities that connect participants to the healing benefits of time spent outdoors. One focal point of Nature Worx's mission is to help increase equitable access to the outdoors with places, such as Masonville Cove, and to get more people involved in green spaces. To date, Nature Worx has offered 11 free programs supported by a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust (CBT), through which over 88 guests have been invited to Masonville Cove. These programs have allowed Nature Worx to establish connections with Masonville Cove and learn more about the community needs, with an overall goal of increasing local participation and improving outreach strategies.

US Fish and Wildlife Service

Ela-Sita Carpenter, USFWS

Ms. Ela-Sita Carpenter's presentation is available [here](#), and included summary of the summer Masonville Cove mammal surveys, the *Baptisia* (false indigo) project growing in the Masonville Cove greenhouse, and the USFWS-hosted Kids Fishing Day and USFWS-assisted Urban Wildlife Conservation Celebration. In December, Ms. Carpenter is hoping to start a Community Science Program that would allow students and community members to participate in the December mammal surveys at Masonville Cove. Ms. Van Wyk asked if any animal remains had been found on-site. Ms. Carpenter reported that no recent remains have been found, but a rabbit was observed being chased earlier that day.

National Aquarium

Andrea Van Wyk, National Aquarium

Ms. Andrea Van Wyk presented updates on NA involvement throughout the extended Baltimore community. On June 16 and 17, NA and USFWS joined with the Greater Baltimore Wilderness Coalition at the [NatureCity Forum](#) to discuss broadening community engagement. NA also participated in Baltimore's Cities Connecting Children to Nature, [Nature Nurtures Series 2021](#). This workshop series had over 150 participants in both virtual and in-person workshops and covered topics including: 1) How to activate outdoor learning spaces; 2) Trauma informed care trainings; and 3) How Baltimore youth have used nature for healing trauma. Recordings of virtual workshops are available upon request.

On July 17, NA combined their annual BioBlitz event and Latino Conservation Day which was host to 88 participants and 40 additional kayakers. The day featured fishing, kayaking, nature walks, and a species

survey at Masonville Cove, in which 137 different species were documented and recorded on iNaturalist. Echoes of Nature and Wings of America were also at the event showcasing native animals for visitors.

NA and Pamela Pina, HAF's NA summer intern, participated in and supported the Summer Camp Program with the Boys and Girls Club Brooklyn Branch, Curtis Bay Rec Center, and Farring Baybrook Rec Center. The program ran June - August and met with each group for 8 weeks total, engaging 55 students every week in nature exploration activities. Goals of the program sought to activate green spaces at each of these sites, while engaging and building connections with students. Topics discussed in the program included climate change, biodiversity, mental and emotional wellness in nature, and watershed habitats.

Ms. Van Wyk provided an update on the EPA Environmental Justice grant, which recently celebrated a visit to Patapsco Valley State Park on August 29 with the Templo de Ayuda y Restauración (TAYR) congregation. NA partnered with Chesapeake Conservancy's Bilingual Interpreters and Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to help about 35 Brooklyn-based TAYR congregation members connect with local green spaces at Patapsco's Orange Grove and Avalon areas through guided bilingual nature walks, chances to enjoy the streams, and an opportunity to be out enjoying nature.

Upcoming NA sponsored events include the Annual International Coastal Cleanup at Masonville Cove on October 16 and Community Cleanup October 31 with TAYR.

Living Classrooms Foundation

Lorraine Warnick, Living Classrooms Foundation

Ms. Lorraine Warnick provided an update on LCF's 5-week Baltimore Environmental Education Summer Math and Reading Trailblazers (BEESMART) program at Masonville Cove that helps prevent summer learning loss. LCF worked with 52 students this past season; 27 from Lakeland Elementary and 25 from Marie Farring Elementary. Of the participating students, 78% increased by one or more reading levels with a majority increasing by 2- 4 reading levels. The remaining 22% of students maintained their reading levels, meaning no participants fell behind in terms of reading level and ability. LCF is hoping to expand the Program to a third school by bringing in West Port Academy students next Summer.

LCF concluded the summer with 2 weeks of programming in August, serving 24 students through the Masonville Cove Summer Science and Nature Program. This hybrid program featured a half day in person at Masonville Cove and the remainder of the day at home with online learning and engagement programs. LCF has been visiting several back-to-school events to connect with students and teachers. LCF has received funding from the Baltimore Office of Sustainability CAMP grant for this school year and will be working with the Baybrook, Curtis Bay, Ben Franklin, Farring, and Lakeland schools.

Faith Based Connections

Anthony Brown, EcoLogix Group

Mr. Anthony Brown reported on recent his faith-based outreach throughout the local Baltimore City area, to connect with communities in Brooklyn, Curtis Bay, and Cherry Hill and encourage participation and involvement with Masonville Cove through programs, partnerships, and more. Over the last two months, focus has been on identifying and connecting with local faith groups. COVID-19 has presented unique challenges in engaging with faith-based communities since congregations are not able to gather in as large a setting as previously possible. Despite these challenges, adaptations have been made to present 3 virtual presentations and continue engaging in person with many local faith communities which are detailed in Mr. Brown's presentation [here](#). Mr. Brown found that while many faith communities have heard of Masonville Cove, some still have not. Several upcoming events and opportunities have been identified for

continued faith-based community engagement including the Cherry Hill Community Coalition presentation on 10/7 and the Greater Baybrook Faith Alliance presentation currently being scheduled.

5.0 Announcements and Open Discussion

Masonville Cove campus is now open again Monday through Saturday 9am - 4pm and upcoming events include:

10/6 - A sunset walk at Masonville Cove for Walktober starting at 5:15pm

10/16 – Annual International Coastal Cleanup from 9am-11 am and 11:30am-1:30pm

10/16 – Cox Creek Open House for the DMCF from 10am – 2pm with birding and guided tours

10/16 - Greater Baybrook Alliance 3rd annual celebration at Farring Baybrook Park from 4-6pm.

6.0 Adjournment

The DMMP Annual Meeting is scheduled for December 8, 2021. Sign up and additional details will be sent shortly. Ms. Ashley thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting was adjourned.