

**SUMMARY OF THE MASONVILLE
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
April 5, 2022 at 5:30 PM
Hybrid Meeting**

Attendees:

MCAC Chair: Anita Kestel
Action BayBrook: Janet Eveland
Angie Ashley Consulting: Angie Ashley
Baltimore Bird Club: Nancy O'Hare
Baltimore City Recreation and Parks: Jamison Holtz
Ben Franklin High School: Kelly Oglesbee
Citizen: Rodette Jones
City of Baltimore: Jazmin Kimble
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, Joseph Ross
Maryland Environmental Service (MES): Danielle Wilson, Rachael Gilde, Pamela Pina
MedStar Harbor Hospital: Brian Gray
The Nature Conservancy: Andrea van Wyk
National Aquarium: Curtis Bennett
US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS): Ela-Sita Carpenter
Vulcan Construction Materials: Robert Flanagan

1.0 Introductions, Approval of Summary

Angie Ashley, Angie Ashley Consulting

All meeting materials can be found at the following link: [4_05_2022_MCAC_Meeting](#). The June 5 and October 5, 2021, Masonville Citizens Advisory Committee (MCAC) meeting summaries were unanimously approved by the Committee.

2.0 Harbor Development Update

Kristen Fidler, MDOT MPA

Ms. Kristen Fidler reviewed the 2021 Annual Report, highlighting accomplishments in the Dredged Material Management Program (DMMP) 2021 efforts, which included completion of the Poplar Island expansion, federal appropriation of funding for the Mid-Chesapeake Bay Island Ecosystem Restoration (Mid-Bay) project, and the Board of Public Works award of six research and development contracts for Innovative Reuse (IR) under an MDOT MPA request for proposals (RFP) solicitation. The 2021 Annual Meeting was held virtually on December 8, 2021 and was attended by 136 participants representing 79 organizations. She invited the MCAC members to view the Annual meeting materials and visit the interactive virtual exhibit hall at <https://maryland-dmmp.com/annual-meeting/>.

Mid-Bay was awarded \$84 million in federal funds, and construction is anticipated to start in Fall 2022. MDOT MPA has conducted extensive Mid-Bay outreach and engagement, including hosting a public meeting in November 2021, presenting to the Dorchester County council, and distributing a quarterly newsletter for stakeholders. MDOT MPA is planning a late summer public meeting to provide information on what to expect when construction is underway.

The +60' dike raising is underway at the Cox Creek Dredged Material Containment Facility (DMCF). With Cox Creek and Masonville DMCFs, the combined capacity will provide the 20 years required capacity for the anticipated harbor maintenance dredging volumes. The north-south cross dike is under construction at Cox Creek and, once completed, will allow ongoing construction at the DMCF during dredged material inflow. MDOT MPA is currently in discussions to acquire property adjacent to the Cox Creek DMCF to further long-term capacity recovery efforts through large-scale IR and for future cargo terminal/maritime use. Once constructed, MDOT MPA is planning to use the north/south cross dike at Cox Creek and the Kurt Iron Slip at the Masonville DMCF for potentially drying material to be available for larger-scale IR efforts. Two IR research and development RFP contract awardees will provide their study results and potential scalability to IR pilot programs at the June 2022 Innovative Reuse Committee meeting.

CSI conducted a pilot IR project at Masonville DMCF from March 15-17 to evaluate sediment and effluent characteristics from the material drying process. The project was conducted to inform the permitting and planning required for a potential full-scale project and ensure that the material, at a minimum, meets the criteria of Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) Category 2 – Non-Residential Restricted Use Soil and Fill Material. If the project is successful, the material could be a source for shoreline restoration efforts as part of the larger Middle Branch restoration effort.

Ms. Fidler provided information on projects that are integral to the future expansion and competitiveness of the Port of Baltimore (POB). After quality control testing is completed, the recently installed post-Panamax cranes will be operational. There will also be two 50-foot-deep berths operational, increasing efficiency and vessel safety in the channel. Additionally, the Howard Street tunnel expansion, which will allow for double-stacked container cargo by train, is underway, with construction anticipated to begin in May and operational in early 2025. These projects will allow a higher cargo volume to pass through POB and represent significant public-private partnerships and local/federal/state investments.

In support of increased cargo for POB, MDOT MPA and the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) are evaluating the need to deepen the remainder of the Seagirt Loop Channel to address the logistical challenges, safety concerns, and operational deficiencies of the shallow areas within that loop. Ms. Eveland asked whether deepening the Seagirt Loop would prevent issues like the ship *Ever Forward* running aground. Ms. Fidler stated that the causes of the *Ever Forward* incident remain unknown, so she cannot speculate on a connection between the Seagirt Loop work and the *Ever Forward* incident. The Coast Guard is leading the *Ever Forward* investigation. MDOT MPA and USACE are cost-sharing a three-year feasibility study to evaluate the economic benefits of the federal government investing in Seagirt Loop deepening. The study is underway, with the updated report planned for release end of July.

Although COVID-19 impacted 2021 outreach efforts, MDOT MPA and the Masonville Cove Partnership were able to host outdoor and classroom activities while following health protocols. As a result, outreach impact rose in 2021 with 10,682 engagements compared to 2020 with 6,743 engagements (planned outreach events, education programs, and site visits). In education efforts, 4,500 engagements occurred in 195 classrooms; 28% of those classrooms were part of the Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE) Green School program. Masonville Cove Environmental Education Center (MCEEC) is a certified MAEOE Green Center and, along with POB environmental education team Green Leaders, assists schools in achieving Green School status by providing professional development to teachers and staff, field experiences for students, and MAEOE Greens School application support.

In 2021 Masonville Cove had the highest visitation to date, with increases from neighbors and first-time visitors. There were 471 visits from neighboring zip codes in 2021, compared to 204 visits in 2020, and there were 1,014 first-time visits in 2021 compared to 215 visits in 2020. Ms. Eveland asked whether the data would lead to an increase in visiting hours. Ms. Fidler stated that the data support the need for more hours. Masonville Cove partners have begun increasing the evening and weekend hours, with one late evening each month, later hours on Saturdays, and multiple open Sundays with additional partner funding. Ms. Eveland suggested featuring Masonville Cove at the [Live Baltimore Trolley Tour](#) for homebuyers moving to the area, either as an exhibit table or site visit.

Ms. Fidler stated that MDOT MPA conducts trash and debris removal at Masonville Cove and surrounding communities. To date, 48,000 pounds have been removed on the Masonville Cove property through Captain Trash Wheel and with on-site shoreline clean-ups. In the surrounding neighborhoods, 2,115 cubic yards of trash have been removed through the Sponsor-a-Road program, solar compacting trashcans, and trash wheels partially funded through MDOT MPA.

MDOT MPA has signed the memorandum of agreement (MOA) with Federal Highway Administration, US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), National Park Service, and partner agencies in support of the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) grant. The MOA will be signed by federal partners soon. The grant will fund \$1.2 million toward design and construction of a one-mile spur trail to connect Masonville Cove to a green space network in and around Baltimore City. Ms. Fidler introduced Joseph Ross as a new staff member of the Harbor Development Team and stated that he will be working on the Shared Use Path.

Ms. Fidler highlighted the following recommendations as MDOT MPA's charge for 2022:

- Promote the inclusive and meaningful involvement of all people in implementing the DMMP.
- Engage stakeholders and recruit DMMP members that reflect the diversity of the communities adjacent to and impacted by the POB.
- Ensure the benefits of MDOT MPA restoration projects are distributed equitably without disproportionate impacts on vulnerable populations.
- Create equitable access to DMMP sites to intentionally engage urban youth in targeted environmental programs as a pathway to careers in STEM and the maritime industry.

3.0 Masonville DMCF Report **DMCF Construction & Operations**

Bertrand Djiki, MDOT MPA

Masonville DMCF presentation can be found [here](#). Mr. Djiki stated that the Masonville dike raising has resumed and that the site continues to actively receive inflow projects. Upcoming inflow projects include the Dundalk Marine Terminal Berth 3 reconstruction, Seagirt Berth 3 Pocket Project Phase 2, and Trade Point Atlantic.

Spillway 1 will be decommissioned in May. A temporary discharge system is being used at Spillway 2 until a long-term spillway solution is fully developed. A floating weir and pumping system will replace the existing spillways and provide more efficient, cost-effective, and flexible dewatering operations; and is in the final design stages. In January 2022, a weir was successfully tested using the 12" pump in the system, and with minor modifications, two more devices will be ordered. There will be two floating weir systems at Masonville DMCF and two at Cox Creek DMCF.

Base dike construction to serve as the foundation for raising the dike to +30' began in January 2022 and is projected to last up to 15 months, with 25% of overall progress made by late March. Geotextile material will be placed in May to reinforce dike strength and improve the slope stability when the dike is eventually raised to +42'. Ms. Eveland asked about the sediment used in the dike construction. Mr. Djiki stated that the material is a high percentage of granular sediment to function as a stable dike. The permit package for the +30' dike raising will be submitted to MDE at the end of April 2022. MDOT MPA anticipates getting approval by December 2022 to initiate construction in 2023. Future dike raising to +42' will provide capacity for 10.8 million cubic yards for Masonville DMCF.

Mr. Djiki stated that 46.865 acres around Masonville Cove will be put into a conservation easement with Maryland Environmental Trust and Baltimore Green Space. The final easement will be presented to the Board of Public Works on 4/27.

4.0 Partnership Updates

Ela-Sita Carpenter, USFWS
Curtis Bennett, National Aquarium
Lorraine Warnick, Living Classrooms Foundation

US Fish and Wildlife Service

FWS hosted two 2021 First Thursday events featuring pollinators and mammals at Masonville Cove. In 2022, FWS intends to host a pollinator program in May, fishing programs in July, and migratory banding in the fall. In January, Dr. Carpenter hosted a Community Science Program allowing participants to assist with the winter mammal surveys at Masonville Cove. Participants were from Baltimore and Bowie State University and assisted in setting up trail cameras and identifying mammals. They found an increased presence of foxes and a decrease in coyote activity. Ms. Jones asked whether Dr. Carpenter would conduct bat surveys as a public program. Dr. Carpenter stated that she will assess the bat population at Masonville Cove first and then consider whether it would be a good fit for a public program. On March 11, FWS and MV Cove partners hosted a visit from Secretary Deb Haaland of the Department of the Interior (DOI) at Masonville Cove to learn about partner efforts. FWS continue to grow *Baptisia* (false indigo) seedlings in the Masonville Cove greenhouse, with plans to plant offsite. FWS hopes to continue the program.

With the assistance of Tim Carney (MES), the bald eagles that have nested on campus in previous years are being monitored and are displaying different behavior. This behavior may indicate that one of the eagles is different from previous years and that the pair have not laid eggs, which would typically have occurred by this time of year. Ms. Warnick asked about appropriate messaging to explain why eagles are not nesting. Dr. Carpenter confirmed that it is normal for a pair to skip a year of nesting and that it does not indicate a problem with the broader population in Baltimore. Ms. O'Hare asked whether the eagle restrictions on the property will be lifted if the eagles do not nest. Dr. Carpenter stated that when FWS biologists determine that the pair are officially not nesting, information about lifting eagle restrictions will be provided to the public.

National Aquarium

Mr. Bennett will be filling in for Ms. Andrea van Wyk, who accepted a new position with the Nature Conservancy. National Aquarium (NA) is currently interviewing applicants to fill the position.

In October 2021, NA conducted biweekly programs with library and recreation center groups in Brooklyn. The International Coastal Cleanup occurred on 10/30, and 34 volunteers removed shoreline debris. NA collaborated with Ben Franklin High School as part of the Raven's Call to Action program to support the

continued clean-up efforts in the community and rain garden maintenance near the school. NA partnered with local churches to host 94 volunteers in a community clean-up, including Templo de Ayuda y Restauración (TAYR) Latino-based congregation in south Baltimore. NA also engaged with TAYR at Patapsco Valley State Park in the fall to explore additional green spaces. NA supported First Thursdays in 2021. In November 2021, NA participated in the FWS Urban Refuge Academy, which focused on prioritizing work in urban refuges and rebuilding structure and function to meet goals. Upcoming programs include the City Nature Challenge and Project Clean Stream at the end of April. In coordination with FWS, NA will host four courses on community engagement for the DOI, including the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and NOAA. In July, NA will host Latino Conservation week, and in collaboration with Patuxent Research Refuge, NA will host a Hispanic Access Foundation summer 2022 intern at Masonville Cove.

Living Classrooms Foundation

Living Classrooms Foundation (LCF) continues to provide environmental, science, technology, engineering, and math (E-STEM) programming to the community to inspire environmental stewardship and enhance skills to succeed in school and society. LCF received grants from multiple funders to support this work, including the Baltimore City Office of Sustainability Critical Area Management Program, South Baltimore Gateway Partnership, South Baltimore -7 Coalition, and the Keep Maryland Beautiful grant. The funding supports LCF Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (MWEE) programming that reaches 600 students in the area schools (Lakeland Elementary School, Westport Academy, Maree G. Farring Elementary Middle School, Ben Franklin High School, Curtis Bay Elementary School, and BayBrook Elementary and Middle School). The programming includes a series of in-person classroom, schoolyard, and field trip programming throughout the school year to connect students with their local watershed to promote a sense of stewardship. LCF recently partnered with Baltimore City Public Schools through the Outdoor Learning Network Initiative to be one of several sites for 9th grade MWEE as part of the effort to provide MWEEs to all Baltimore City 9th graders. Information for upcoming programs is available through the newsletter and at masonvillecove.org.

5.0 Announcements and Open Discussion

Ms. Jones shared that a summer youth birding week is in development for the week of 7/11, with recruitment focused on youth from the surrounding community. It is a pilot program that will convene each day at Masonville Cove, with ten students ages 8-12. Activities will include an introduction to birding and bird identification. It will also include visits to all MDOT MPA sites to explore different habitats and the comparative diversity of birds found in each habitat. She requested that committee members share information with youth they may know from the surrounding community.

6.0 Adjournment

The next Masonville Citizens Advisory Committee meetings are scheduled for June 14 and October 4.