

**SUMMARY OF THE
MASONVILLE CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING (MCAC)
March 14, 2023 6:00 PM
Hybrid Meeting**

Attendees:

Action Baybrook: Jan Eveland
Angie Ashley Consulting: Angie Ashley
Baybrook Elementary Middle School: Herelys Parks
Benjamin Franklin High School: Kelly Oglesbee
Greater Baybrook Alliance: Makayla Alicea
Kramer & Associates: Andrew Bing
Living Classrooms Foundation (LCF): Lorraine Warnick
Local Curtis Bay Resident, Board Member of Friends of Garrett Park: Rodette Jones
MCAC Chair: Anita Kestel
Maryland Port Administration (MPA): Bertrand Djiki, Danielle Fisher, Darren Swift, Katrina Jones, Rachael Gilde, Rachel Miller, Joseph Ross
Maryland Environmental Service (MES): Matias Orrego
Morgan State University: Ethan McLeod, Nick Chupein
National Aquarium: Swathi Ayyagari
Terrapin Institute: Marguerite Whilden
United Way Neighborhood Zone, Brooklyn: Jill Bradley Palmore
US Department of Housing and Urban Development: Thea Becton
US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS): Ela-Sita Carpenter

Action Items:

- Committee members will share with the Masonville Cove Connector (MCC) team any groups who would like to meet and learn more about the project.
- The committee will share upcoming National Aquarium programs with the local community and/or connect any groups interested in helping to lead local National Aquarium sponsored cleanups with Ms. Ayyagari at sayyagari@aqua.com.
- MES will share a copy of the Masonville Cove Eagles poster with Mr. Ross for MCC outreach.
- Committee members will work to provide DMMP committee meeting invitations to interested community members.
- Committee members will share ideas for the Friends of Masonville Cove Group, interested community members, or issues the group could pursue with Ms. Hope, in lieu of Ms. Alicea.

1.0 Introductions, Approval of Summary

**Anita Kestel, MCAC Chair
Angie Ashley, Angie Ashley Consulting**

All meeting materials can be found here: [MCAC – Google Drive](#). Ms. Ashley and Ms. Kestel convened the meeting. The September 21, 2022 MCAC meeting summary was unanimously approved by the Committee. It was noted that all September meeting action items were completed.

2.0 Masonville DMCF Operations

Bertrand Djiki, MPA

Mr. Djiki presented the Masonville Dredged Material Containment Facility (DMCF) operations and inflow from 2022 and outlined project expectations for 2023. The Masonville dike raising to +30' MLLW and Base Dike Widening (BDW) continues while the site actively receives inflow. In 2022, the Masonville DMCF received 22,939 cubic yards (cy) of inflow from the Seagirt Berth 3 Pocket Project Phase 1; 20,000 cy of inflow from the Dundalk Marine Terminal Berth 3 Reconstruction; and 17,000 cy of inflow from the Seagirt Berth 3 Pocket Project Phase 2. The Masonville DMCF is scheduled to receive approximately 33,000 cy of inflow in July 2023 from Consol Energy and 105,000 cy of inflow from a Trade Point Atlantic (TPA) dredging project later in the summer of 2023, with the exact date to be determined. MPA is considering shifting the TPA inflow to the Cox Creek DMCF, but currently foresees no obstacles to TPA inflow.

Spillways 1 and 2 have both been decommissioned as a part of the BDW. The Basis of design for the floating weir and pumping system as a long-term solution was completed in 2022. A prototype was constructed and tested at Cox Creek DMCF in January 2022. The floating weir system will replace the prior spillways with more efficient, cost-effective, and flexible dewatering operations. Floating weir pump systems and corresponding accessways will be procured and installed by MES for use at the Masonville DMCF.

BDW began in January 2022 and is 99% complete with 296 thousand (k) cy of fill material placed as of the end of March 2023. The BDW will support the dike raising to +30' MLLW. 14,000 linear feet of high strength geotextile have been added as part of the BDW. Geotextile layers reinforce dike strength and improve slope stability as construction progresses towards +30' dike raising and eventual +42' dike elevation. 100% design for dike raising to +30' was completed November 2022 and was approved by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). +30' construction is anticipated to begin summer of 2023 with an estimated 30-month project timeline and 2025 completion. Future dike raising to +42' will provide a cumulative capacity of 10.4 million cy for Masonville DMCF.

The non-tidal wetland improvement mitigation project continues to move forward. Hydrologic study of the wetland was done in 2018, the wetland redesign was completed in 2021, and construction began in the summer of 2022. Construction is anticipated to be completed in 2023, and plantings will be held in the fall. Ms. Kestel asked Mr. Djiki about the grey highlighted area surrounding the wetland map in his presentation. Mr. Djiki identified the area as the limit of disturbance for the project, or the permitted area allowed by MDE for construction and equipment related to the project.

3.0 Masonville Cove Connector (MCC)

Joseph Ross, MPA

Mr. Ross discussed the MCC project and presented community benefit and aspirations for the project as it progresses. Mr. Bing, Ms. Fisher, Ms. Gilde, and Mr. Swift are all instrumental members of the project outreach team and have steadily increased presence and communication with local community groups to solicit feedback and ensure concerns are heard. The MCC project's mission is to establish safe, equitable, and convenient access for local communities to Masonville Cove and to connect to other trail networks such as the Gwynn's Fall Trail and the Baybrook Connector (once completed).

The MCC design is funded by a Federal Highway Administration Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) grant and by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Funding for the construction of the project is not yet fully allocated. Anecdotally, committee members had previously seen local community members

travel along Frankfurst Ave. as pedestrians, either commuting to work nearby or to a Masonville Cove program, noting the already present demand and need for increased safety.

The MCC will be a shared use path along Frankfurst Ave., and be a spur off the existing Gwynn's Falls Trail that currently ends at S. Hanover Street and Potee Street. The project will connect local communities to a unique recreational asset, given as high as 30% of residents do not have a car and Frankfurst Ave. does not currently accommodate pedestrian traffic. The MCC will be accessible to just about everyone in the community, including Walkers & joggers, Bicyclists, Scooters, Wheelchair users and Families with strollers.

Ms. Rodette Jones asked if there were plans to expand the MCC along Shell Rd to connect the adjacent way to Curtis Bay. Ms. Katrina Jones agreed that the MCC reaching closer to East Patapsco Ave. would be ideal in connecting all the surrounding community but stated the current design was not meant to exclude Curtis Bay. Mr. Ross and Mr. Bing explained they would like for the MCC to connect E. Patapsco Ave. as well, but clarified the design and project are dependent on limited funding, which connects them to the Baltimore Greenway Trails Network and existing trails. Ms. Kestel suggested the expansion of a bus route could also support connection and access to Masonville Cove. Mr. Ross and Mr. Bing added that while there isn't additional funding to expand the MCC now, there is hope that the project will expand in the future and will encourage additional investment into the surrounding community by Baltimore City or other entities by drawing national attention to the trail initiative.

The MCC project has several other opportunities and challenges to consider, but above all else safety for pedestrians and minimizing impacts to the environment and users of Frankfurst Ave. are priorities. The MCC aims to minimize any unnecessary impacts to private property. Frankfurst Ave. is designated by Baltimore City Department of Transport as an active truck route. The trail will run 1.2 miles alongside Frankfurst Ave. and Mr. Ross discussed several of the design considerations that will enhance MCC user experience including spacing of the trail, buffer zones, and more. The road has not seen improvement in many years, and adding signage, crosswalks, and other improvements is an opportunity to invest in the community and surrounding local businesses.

The MCC project is prioritizing ensuring the project does not interfere with industry, and community partners. These groups include neighboring Vulcan Materials and truckers, but also other trail partners such as Greater Baybrook Alliance (GBA). Collaborating with GBA and other partners will reduce complications and assist projects in reaching their goals. The MCC project is committed to holding conversations with all partners and community members to ensure they are heard. Baltimore City Department of Public Works will begin construction on a sewer line refurbishment project along Frankfurst Ave. in summer of 2023. Maryland Transportation Authority will also be converting the 895 tolls into automated electronic tolls soon.

Mr. Djiki asked if the MCC outreach team has met with Vulcan Materials. Mr. Bing stated the MCC outreach team has met with Vulcan Materials and they continue to have good conversations.

MCC project milestones and planning are advancing. 30% design is expected in summer 2023, 100% design is scheduled for summer 2024, and construction is targeted for summer 2025. Mr. Bing requested that committee members share with the MCC outreach team any groups who would like to meet and learn more about the project or share feedback.

Committee members agreed that they are excited for the MCC project and its opportunities. Ms. Rodette Jones asked if Vulcan Materials has considered moving their fence closer to their property to allow more space for the MCC and help make it safer. Mr. Ross confirmed that moving the fence is an item they may discuss in the future. Vulcan Materials would have to approve any proposed movement of their fence since it is their private property. Ms. Rodette Jones also suggested the lanes along Frankfurst will have to be widened to accommodate more room for the MCC. Mr. Bing stated that the spacing of Frankfurst Ave. is one of the aspects engineers are studying while designing concepts for the MCC.

4.0 Partnership Updates

**Swathi Ayyagari, National Aquarium
Ela-Sita Carpenter, US Fish and Wildlife Service
Lorraine Warnick, Living Classrooms Foundation
Danielle Fisher, MPA**

National Aquarium (NA)

Ms. Ayyagari presented updates on National Aquarium's recent and upcoming activities. Highlights from fall included the Partnership's Urban Wildlife Conservation Day (UWCD) on September 24th, 2022, and the NA led BioBlitz. Over 130 people attended the BioBlitz and there were 745 total observations with 289 species identified. Of the 130 attendees, 39 participated in kayaking tours, Mr. Rodney Stotts with Rodney's Raptors taught visitors about raptor birds, and visitors participated in the MPA led DMCF tours. Other fall and winter program highlights included the International Coastal Cleanup on October 8th, 2022. 42 volunteers assisted in collecting over 15,654 pieces of trash which weighed 485 pounds at Masonville Cove. NA led the December 1st, 2022, First Thursday program where 10 guests made nature ornaments indoors. 20 ornament kits were also shared with the nearby Brooklyn Branch Library.

Committee members were interested in kayaking tours from UWCD. Mr. Djiki asked if the featured photo was of kayakers at Masonville Cove. Ms. Ayyagari confirmed the photo was taken at Masonville Cove's UWCD and the kayakers all launch from the shore by Captain Trash Wheel. Ms. Kestel asked if the Canton Kayak Club visits Masonville Cove. Ms. Ashley confirmed that Canton Kayak Club does visit and has representation on the MCAC.

Upcoming programs include cleanups, City Nature Challenge (CNC), and other external events.

- The Earth Day cleanup will be held on the afternoon of April 22nd.
- The CNC is an international urban wildlife observation competition and will be held April 28th through May 1st. This is a great opportunity to explore Masonville Cove using the inaturalist app.
- An introduction event to CNC with Patterson Park on April 29th.
- External events include a planting for Atlantic White Cedars at Nassawango Creek on April 1st, a cleanup day at Fort McHenry on April 15th, and stabilizing plantings for sand dune grass at Virginia Beach in May.

Local neighborhood cleanups led by NA resume in spring and will continue throughout the year. Ms. Ayyagari asked the committee to share any NA programs with local community, several registrations are always held for community members, and to also connect any groups interested in helping to lead local NA sponsored cleanups with her at sayyagari@aqua.com.

US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

Dr. Carpenter presented updates on recent and upcoming USFWS outreach and highlights from birds and mammals on campus. Dr. Carpenter and USFWS members have been participating in a course titled Co-designing Conservation. The goal of the course is to help teach how to better work with communities to develop conservation goals, projects, and programs curated for local communities. Mr. Curtis Bennett with NA was one of the coaches for the course, and Dr. Carpenter looks forward to applying lessons learned to future Partnership program design.

USFWS supported outreach efforts included the Brooklyn Branch Library display in November, which featured a poster, nature activities, books, crafts, and more. Forty local community members visited the display over ten days. Patuxent Research Refuge also shared Agents of Discovery missions, a location-based game played on smartphones. The app helps teach about the area and wildlife in Masonville Cove and Dr. Carpenter encouraged everyone to try it, and Mr. Orrego confirmed that there will be an AOD page on the Masonville Cove website.

Dr. Carpenter highlighted the success of UWCD and showcased other recent events including group visits to Masonville Cove by the Conservation Fund, the First Thursday USFWS led Mammals Walk, local career fairs with Maree G Farring EMS, a program with Latino students through Liberty's Promise with Benjamin Franklin High School (HS), and the Mammals of Masonville Survey programs in February. The program combines Dr. Carpenter's mammal surveys as part of the USFWS wildlife management program and invites the public to help gather data and learn about the process while encouraging stewardship. Six participants helped set trail cameras and highlights include coyotes, deer, rabbits, and other mammals. Several participants were members of the Chesapeake Bay Program who were involved in media creation and were able to capture excellent pictures shared in a post and video on Instagram. Fishing programs with the NPS Junior Ranger Angler program will resume this summer. USFWS will also be helping the Partnership's summer internship program and will help provide fun opportunities to engage with the Partnership, USFWS activities, and the surrounding area. Ms. Gilde asked if any of the participants were local community members. Dr. Carpenter confirmed that there were no direct neighbors but anecdotally shared that one of the participants walked along Frankfurst Ave. to reach the program and accessibility likely deterred more participants.

Eagles on campus successfully hatched three eaglets in early March. The eagles and nest are visible on the [Port of Baltimore's YouTube channel](#), which streams every day from sunrise to sunset. Since the eagles have also hatched earlier in the year than in the past USFWS and Partners anticipate the eaglets will fledge by late May or June, allowing campus nesting restrictions to be lifted earlier and support more programs. Dr. Carpenter, Ms. Ayyagari, and Mr. Orrego collaborated with Ms. Chloe Woodin, a Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine student, on a medical illustrations program project about the Masonville Cove nesting eagles. Partners and the committee were thrilled by the bilingual poster, which will be featured on campus in a permanent kiosk and is available on the Masonville Cove Eagles webpage. The poster is for outreach and educational use only and cannot be used commercially. Mr. Ross asked if a copy of the Masonville Cove Eagles poster could be shared for MCC outreach. Mr. Djiki asked why eagles chose to nest at Masonville Cove and Ms. Oglesbee asked about their survival rate. Dr. Carpenter answered the survival rate, even with three eaglets, has been successful at Masonville Cove. The abundance of fish, game, and habitat has made the space very attractive and the location's proximity to industrial spaces does not deter the eagles. They have a protected and heavily forested habitat, and nesting restrictions help protect their space from people or vehicles which might disturb them. USFWS and Dr. Carpenter find that wildlife are increasingly adapting to urban spaces and Ms. Katrina Jones agreed.

Dr. Carpenter shared bird updates from Mr. Tim Carney with MES, including a rare visitor highlight and Baltimore County's first recorded visit of a Northern Lapwing from February. The species is typically found in Europe or Asia but occasionally visits the Northeast United States. While the Northern Lapwing was onsite, over 260 visitors came to Masonville Cove over the span of four days. Some visitors were in the area from Quebec and others made intentional drives from as far as Kentucky and South Carolina. Other uncommon birds on campus recently included the Short-Eared Owl, a nesting pair of Ravens, and American Woodcocks. USFWS and Partners are excited to host a bird banding station with Birds of Urban Baltimore at Masonville Cove beginning this spring.

Living Classrooms Foundation (LCF)

Ms. Warnick provided updates on the LCF and their continued success in providing environmental and STEM programming to local communities for all grade levels while inspiring environmental stewardship and enhancing successful skills.

Funding from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the South Baltimore 7 (SB7) Coalition has funded programs for the school year from fall through June, including the school leadership and urban runoff reduction project (SLURRP) with 4th and 5th grades. LCF is serving over 500 students in 5 area schools including Baybrook Elementary-Middle School (EMS), Curtis Bay EMS, Maree G Farring EMS, Lakeland EMS, and Westport EMS. LCF has also secured funding from the Environmental Protection Agency and South Baltimore Gateways Partnership to begin a program for 3rd-grade students titled Climate Change Makers. LCF also works with over 400 additional students in six area schools including Baybrook EMS, Curtis Bay EMS, Maree G Farring EMS, Lakeland EMS, Westport EMS, and Cherry Hill EMS. This includes classroom visits, schoolyard programs, lesson materials and documents for teachers, and free field trips with bus transportation to experience Masonville Cove. LCF has also partnered with Baltimore City Schools through funding with the Chesapeake Bay Trust to transport 9th-grade students for stream studies and Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience projects. LCF serves approximately 300 9th-grade students in the CBT-funded MWEE program and helps connect them to the nature around them at Masonville Cove.

LCF has been receiving many requests for Spring field trips by teachers across Baltimore City. When LCF is unable to accommodate additional programs, they have been successfully leveraging Partnership support from NA, USFWS, and the MPA's Environmental Education Team members with MES. LCF is excited that some groups will come to Masonville Cove as an educational space for their own programs after previously visiting. Ms. Kestel asked if there is a possibility of building a STEM internship for high school students in the area. Ms. Warnick agreed it would be a great opportunity, funding dependent, and confirmed that the Partnership has done high school internships in the past but are currently hosting a local college internship. While funding for high school and college internships continues to shift year to year, the Partnership has more consistently been able to support internship programs over time and will continue to improve. Ms. Katrina Jones and Ms. Warnick both agreed that Masonville Cove is an invaluable resource in allowing community members and Port neighbors to experience green jobs. Building a pathway to green careers, opportunities, and education continues to be an LCF, MPA, and overall Masonville Cove Partnership priority.

MPA

Ms. Fisher shared the Port of Baltimore's Dredged Material Management Program's (DMMP) outreach year in review with the committee. In 2022, MPA and Partners had 68,444 total engagements including community presentations, volunteering, classroom programs, visits to DMMP sites, and professional development. Nearly 54,000 of those were DMMP site visits. A total of 13,989 engagements with the public occurred through 474 events. While many of those engagements were in classrooms, over 27% were in communities of the Port. A total of 7,806 engagements contributed to educational impacts with 292 different classrooms engaged, with 62% being Title I Schools and 34% MAEOE Green Schools. Port tours, including sites like Masonville Cove, comprised 51% youth audiences. MPA is committed to intentional engagement of youth, classroom programs, being a good neighbor and environmental steward, and providing quality environmental education experiences.

Ms. Fisher and the MCAC discussed MPA's outreach and engagement recommendations for 2023. First, recommendations include prioritizing environmental justice by effectively engaging stakeholders in both English and Spanish wherever possible and increasing the public's knowledge about the Port of Baltimore to pursue outcomes that equitably benefit all Marylanders. This recommendation includes accessible information, flyers, websites, and being present in community meetings. Ms. Oglesbee recommended that the Partnership continue visiting Curtis Bay Community Association Meetings, as environmental justice is always a hot topic, and invited Ms. Fisher to attend an upcoming student focus group committed to environmental justice at Benjamin Franklin HS. Second, MPA is committed to recruiting DMMP committee members which reflect the diversity of the communities adjacent to, and impacted by, the Port. Ms. Fisher asked the committee to invite any community members interested in attending the DMMP committee meetings. Ms. Ashley reminded the committee that there are also other ways to engage with the DMMP committees, including newsletters and events. Lastly, MPA will pursue equitable access to DMMP sites to intentionally engage youth in educational programs as a pathway to thriving career opportunities, including those in STEM and maritime industries. This final recommendation is concerned with access, including the MCC project and connecting with students and local communities through schools and events. Mr. Bing recommended the personal journeys of MPA employees, like Ms. Katrina Jones and Ms. Fisher, be shared as stories on social media to highlight career pathways. Ms. Becton recommended these stories could be shared on Instagram or TikTok.

Ms. Fisher shared information for the upcoming Youth Birding Week (YBW) program. The second annual YBW will be held July 10th through the 14th, and local children ages 8 – 10 are being prioritized for registration. The YBW program is free, with materials included, and provides an amazing birding experience with field trips to DMMP habitat sites. Ms. Fisher asked that if any parents, teachers, or mentors have any questions about the YBW program or would like to register their child(ren), they should contact her at dfisher2@marylandports.com.

5.0 Friends Group Overview

Makayla Alicea, Greater Baybrook Alliance

Ms. Alicea is an environmental justice organizer with GBA, a non-profit community development organization local to Brooklyn, Brooklyn Park, and Curtis Bay, whose role is to establish Friends Groups (FG) for Farring-Baybrook Park and Masonville Cove. The two locations are connected by the watershed and surrounding area. Ms. Alicea met with nearly 30 community members on March 1st for a Friends of Farring-Baybrook Park interest meeting. GBA's priorities for the community area include housing, economic development, transportation, quality of life, youth and education, and community outreach. GBA is also dedicated to access and, like the MCC project, is organizing for the Baybrook Connector. The shared use path, funded for 100% design by the Maryland Seed Fund, will help further connect local

communities to amenities and merges multiple transportation systems for safe pedestrian travel. Ms. Alicea is happy to connect any MCC team members with the Baybrook Connector project team for conversations.

A Masonville Cove FG can benefit the local community, with groups empowering community members as advocates and stakeholders for amenities, events, and other projects. Masonville Cove is positioned to be the first Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership FG. The first step in establishing Masonville Cove's FG will be to hold an interest meeting with community members and to discuss what is possible for the group given the Partnership's unique position and experience with environmental issues. Ms. Alicea asked that committee members share any ideas for the FG interest meeting, interested community members, and issues the FG could leverage with her. FGs nationwide advocate for the amenities and features in parks and organize dedicated volunteers who enjoy collaborating on events and projects. This framework can be formal, like an official nonprofit, or nonformal, and provides a platform for community members to advocate for features like lights on campus or even new programs like yoga. The FG model has been successful for nearby areas, including Garrett Park, where the FG was able to successfully drive revitalization of the space and additional amenities, including outdoor basketball courts, a workout station, and green space improvements. Many MCAC members indicated that they had not visited Garrett Park before and Ms. Alicea offered to provide a tour in the future.

6.0 Adjournment

The meeting concluded at 7:45 pm. The next MCAC meeting is scheduled for June 13.