

**SUMMARY OF THE
MASONVILLE CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING (MCAC)
June 13, 2023, 5:30 PM
Hybrid Meeting**

Attendees:

Action Baybrook: Jan Eveland
Angie Ashley Consulting: Angie Ashley
Baltimore Birding Club: Nancy O'Hara
Baybrook Elementary Middle School: Herelys Parks
Benjamin Franklin High School: Kelly Oglesbee
Canton Kayak Club: Ray Scurr
City of Baltimore, Department of Planning: Jazmin Kimble
Council Fire: Gabrielle Roffe
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, Joseph Ross
Maryland Environmental Service (MES): Matias Orrego
National Aquarium: Curtis Bennett
Terrapin Institute: Marguerite Whilden
United Way Neighborhood Zone, Brooklyn: Jill Bradley Palmore
US Department of Housing and Urban Development: Thea Becton
WOCO Hike & Sound Healing: Ralinda Wimbush

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.
- Community or committee members interested in involvement with content design for Masonville Cove interpretative signage or feedback for the Community Engagement Plan will contact Ms. Fisher at dfisher2@marylandports.com.
- Committee members will work to continue sharing DMMP committee meeting invitations to interested community members.
- Ms. Ashley will share details on the beneficial reuse projects of dredged material to address land subsidence at Blackwater Wildlife Refuge via thin layer placement. More information can be found here:
 - [Blackwater Wildlife Refuge \(Thin Layer Placement - Pictures\)](#)
 - [Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge Using Thin Layering Technique](#)
 - [Strategic Conservation Plan: Blackwater 2100 \(The Conservation Fund\)](#)

1.0 Introductions, Approval of Summary

Anita Kestel, MCAC Chair
Angie Ashley, AAC

All meeting materials can be found here: [MCAC – Google Drive](#). Ms. Ashley and Ms. Kestel convened the meeting. The March 14, 2023 MCAC meeting summary was unanimously approved by the Committee. It was noted that all March meeting action items were completed.

2.0 Interpretative Signage & Community Engagement Plan

Danielle Fisher, MPA
Gabrielle Roffe, CF

Committee members provided feedback through a workshop led by Ms. Fisher and Ms. Roffe on campus interpretive signage and a Community Engagement Plan (CEP) for Masonville Cove. Ms. Roffe stated that community feedback has always been important in designing programs and amenities at Masonville Cove but is essential in informing these efforts and will be collected through various events and community programs.

CEP development began in June and is estimated to complete in September 2023. The CEP will provide a renewed 3-year plan for programs and amenities informed by community feedback on preferred means of engaging with Masonville Cove and local interests. The CEP will help to identify barriers to engagement, opportunities, and what continued meaningful engagement with the community will be. Current programs are well received and this opportunity for feedback will continue Masonville Cove efforts in collaboration and co-designed with local communities.

During the working feedback session, MCAC participants used their mobile devices to join an online [vision board](#) and [feedback word-clouds](#) related to issues and topics important to the CEP and signage development. Participants creatively expressed their ideal experiences at Masonville Cove anonymously, with many adding pictures to the vision board and engaging with other posts. Content development for the signage begins in July and Partners hope design and fabrication will be complete by November 2023 with installation on the campus by the end of 2023. Ms. Fisher defined interpretative signage as ideally strengthening visitor connections and enhancing perceptions of the site, city, and region while also providing an enlightening experience which inspires stewardship and educates visitors on the history and wildlife of the site. Ms. Fisher asked that community or committee members interested in involvement with content design for the interpretative signage or feedback for the CEP contact her at dfisher2@marylandports.com.

Participants shared thoughts about themes concerning nature, the local environment, recreational activities, ecosystems, habitat, history, and sustainability efforts that they would like to see represented in signage or programs on campus. Ms. Eveland and Ms. Oglesbee requested that historical information relating to environmental justice, former industrial use of the site, and the past residential community of Masonville Cove be represented in interpretative signage. Ms. Oglesbee suggested that local community members and historic families of Masonville Cove could be asked to share stories of the site that could also be featured in signage. Mr. Bennett requested that longstanding relationships with the local community be highlighted and that many dimensions of the community should be included in signage so that the narrative is as holistic as possible and does not exclude any members from its perspectives. Ms. Wimbush suggested that themes of agriculture and highlighting community plantings could be a great future opportunity for Masonville Cove or a means of connecting with the community. Ms. Ashley clarified that edible plantings on campus may not be possible due to the soil cap remediation and historic

dumping that occurred on-site but agreed plantings in the community are an excellent idea. The Masonville Cove Partnership is grateful for the feedback on these projects and hopes to continue to inspire community pride through the quality of programs, experiences on campus, and upcoming signage.

3.0 Innovative Reuse Committee

Darren Swift, MPA

Mr. Swift, Chief of Innovative Reuse Strategy and Partnerships, led a discussion on Innovative Reuse (IR) of dredged material and the IR Committee (IRC) by request of Ms. Kestel and several committee members who recently were excited to learn of the IR program.

The IRC's primary objective is to develop long term, sustainable IR and Beneficial Use (IRBU) projects to address and implement capacity recovery for the Dredged Material Management Program (DMMP) through safely recycling maintenance dredge material from the Baltimore Harbor channels, while following strict Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and State Highway Administration (SHA) regulations and standards. The IRC issued its first report to MPA in April 2007 and has continued studies since then to determine safe IR opportunities for dredged material. Mr. Swift confirmed for Ms. Jones (MPA) that SHA specifications for construction, land use, and use of dredged material are in discussion or already established as guidance for projects throughout the state.

Seven research and development projects are in progress to explore and develop IR opportunities that transform dredge material into construction and environmental products such as bricks, gravel or aggregate, sod, geotextile tubes (geotubes) which protect against erosion, and more. To best support IR efforts at scale, MPA purchased the Tronox property neighboring the Cox Creek Dredged Material Containment Facility (DMCF) to support operations to dry material, restore capacity, and minimize in house production costs given transportation and spatial needs that would otherwise not be possible with the Cox Creek DMCF site alone. The Cox Creek DMCF and directly adjacent Tronox property are in northern Anne Arundel County near the waterfront of the Key Bridge, Fort Armstead Park, and located directly off Kembo Road. MPA is also ensuring that remediation and a remediation plan of the Tronox property, which historically was an industrial site involved in production of titanium oxide, is developed in partnership with MDE and in full compliance of environmental safety standards. Mr. Swift confirmed for Ms. Kestel that the research and development companies are in discussion with each other and sharing successful uses of dredged material to best facilitate collaboration.

Strategies discussed by the IRC include coordinating briefings on innovative reuse opportunities with other Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) modal agencies such as the State Highway Administration (SHA). SHA is frequently engaged through Recycled Materials Task Force meetings where dredged material is suggested as recycled fill material for use in State Highway Administration projects. Mr. Swift previously worked with the SHA for 27 years in the Office of Material Technology and his experience and connections with the department have proven invaluable to advancing IR projects and collaboration between state departments.

Another strategic avenue that is pursued under the IR program is the possibility of dredged material qualifying as a sustainable or recycled material for use in projects and cost savings which benefit state departments and all Marylanders. New legislation was passed in Annapolis this year recognizing dredged material as a recycled material through the Maryland Green Purchasing Committee (MGPC), which establishes guidelines for other state agencies in purchasing recycled and rehandled materials. MPA and those involved in the IR program are excited and grateful to be recognized by the MGPC and views the

opportunity as a step in the right direction for qualifying dredged material as recycled material.

Technical factsheets which detail past IR projects, their successes, and the science behind them are also being developed. Prior successful IR projects have been detailed, including the use of dredged material as engineered fill at the Hawkins Point DMCF and the use of dredged material as daily/intermediate landfill cover which was conducted in partnership with Baltimore City.

Engagement is also occurring with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Maryland Geological Survey (MGS) to identify coastal resiliency opportunities using dredged material and develop a regional sediment plan. Shoreline opportunities include restoration, infrastructure protection, living shorelines, and softer shore projects using dredged material. DNR also has dredging operations for recreational boating channels and is looking for similar IRBU opportunities using that material.

Mr. Swift reviewed current research and development projects in further detail, the majority of which have now been completed. All projects follow MDE environmental regulations and safety standards with a goal of all products being developed under category one for unparalleled safety, which includes commercial and residential use. Several products were also developed with guidance for category two, which is restricted to commercial use, but is still in line with safety standards and consists of clean material.

The first product was developed by Belden-Eco Products, who developed a recipe using only dredged material to develop permeable pavers or bricks. They successfully produced quality red bricks which met MDE requirements for category one unrestricted use.

Northgate Environmental Management completed their project using two work teams to develop different concrete products utilizing dredged sediment. The first project they developed were concrete traffic barriers, which could act as medians on roads and highways as the concrete mixture did not meet the required strength. Their second project developed was shoreline protection structures which help with shoreline restoration and provide habitat and areas of safety for fish and aquatic species.

FasTrak Express completed a reengineered soil project and developed a material mix consisting of 50% dredged material, 25% sand, and 25% mushroom compost to successfully grow sod. Sod was grown on the Eastern Shore and while successful, one drawback was the required transportation.

Harford Industrial Materials explored utilizing the fine material within the dredged sediments to create lightweight aggregate. Lightweight aggregate can be used in structural concrete, various fill applications, or as gravel. The Harford Industrial Materials project team successfully developed their product as a proof of concept but there were challenges in their capacity to produce the aggregate at scale. Hartford Industrial has expressed interest in visiting the Tronox facility once ready for production to determine potential assistance in separating dredged material solids.

Suscon Products successfully completed concrete projects developing structures such as retaining walls out of dredged material. Hartford Industrial Materials and Suscon are sister companies, and both have equipment to separate sediments, which allowed them to more successfully separate the sand and clay components from dredged sediment. Suscon successfully utilized the sand component in their concrete mixture to develop strong precast structures.

CSI Environmental's project includes the use of geotubes to dry dredged material for reuse in erosion control and flood damage reduction. Geotubes were deployed for a monitored study at the BGE Spring Gardens facility to support shoreline protection and protect infrastructure from flooding events. Geotubes were filled of dredged material directly from the DMCF and dewatered within the geotube using polymers. The geotubes were then vegetated with native plants to support habitat. CSI Environmental is monitoring the geotubes and will report results within the next two years.

University of Maryland (UMD) is in the process of studying vegetative earth berms developed from dredged material which are earth structures that protect infrastructures against flooding events. The UMD project will consist of laboratory work to help determine ideal mixtures of different recycled materials such as dredged material, concrete, compost, gypsum, and other products stress tested under simulated flooding events. Constituents and concentrates that emerge from the structures, if any, will be identified during the study and will help determine which product mixture is most effective.

Ms. Whilden asked if reused dredged soil could be utilized in the future to address land subsidence in the Chesapeake Bay and if there is concern over contaminants in the material or structural stability. Mr. Swift confirmed that addressing land subsidence, restoration, and countering erosion is one of the primary goals of partnering with MDNR. Mr. Swift also confirmed that all material brought to any of the DMCF properties is rigorously tested prior to inflow to ensure compliance with MDE and possible future reuse through IRBU opportunities. Ms. Ashley highlighted and will share the results of the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) operations in the eastern shore which addressed land subsidence at Blackwater Wildlife Refuge via thin layer placement.

4.0 Partnership Updates

**Lorraine Warnick, Living Classrooms Foundation
Curtis Bennett, National Aquarium**

Living Classrooms Foundation (LCF)

Ms. Warnick congratulated teachers, parents, and students on another successful school year and highlighted successful LCF programming. Ms. Warnick thanked community funders and grant organizations from the Environmental Protection Agency, South Baltimore 7 Coalition, South Baltimore Gateway Partnership, National Park Trust, Chesapeake Bay Trust, and many others which support LCF's work with local schools and the community. Highlights from the end of the school year and early summer included student experiences such as animal identification, native plantings, and opportunities to flourish as student scientists with microscopes and programs which connect them to life in and around the water.

Other exceptional programs included shoreline programs and cleanups with Captain Trash Wheel, animal ambassador visits, and fantastic outdoor experiences which help everyone connect with and learn about nature. These programs all support LCF in facilitating positive experiences which instill a sense of stewardship. Lorraine thanked the committee and teachers for their support in sharing programs, encouragement of additional community member participation, and for spreading word of the outdoor space at Masonville.

US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

Ms. Ashley presented US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) updates on behalf of Dr. Ela Carpenter due to a scheduling conflict. Partners celebrated the first season of migratory bird banding on campus through

successful operations and partnership with Birds of Urban Baltimore. Dr. Carpenter and Maryland Environmental Service staff had the opportunity to learn how to support handling and banding birds as part of the migration study which occurred until June 10, 2023 and will resume for the fall season in late August.

Wildlife updates included the successful fledging of the three resident eaglets on campus and fulfillment of their required two-week grace period. Dr. Carpenter announced that USFWS decided the campus was fit to fully reopen to the public and programs beginning June 14, 2023. The International Urban Wildlife Conference occurred June 4 – 7, 2023 and the Masonville Cove Partnership was able to participate and present as part of a case study alongside two other wildlife refuges in the USFWS Co-Design Conservation Symposium.

Recent programs included hosting bird banding as part of the official Black Birders Week event, a pollinator program with the Transformation Center after-school group, and BenFest at Benjamin Franklin High School. There are many upcoming summer events and programs, which are featured on the community program flyers and Masonville Cove website along with fishing events, the WildSTEM internship, summer mammal surveys, and ongoing community outreach and engagement.

National Aquarium (NA)

Mr. Bennett presented National Aquarium (NA) updates on behalf of his colleague Swathi Ayyagari, who normally attends the MCAC meetings.

Spring and recent community programs included activities and cleanups in partnership with local community and school groups, fostering continued growth of local partnerships and relationships. A cleanup program with Liberty's Promise from Benjamin Franklin High School on April 20, 2023 removed over 215 pounds of trash from streets surrounding the school. On May 20, 2023 a cleanup in partnership with Action Baybrook and their leadership in Brooklyn filled a dumpster and helped address litter while raising awareness of issues in South Baltimore. A cleanup in partnership with City of Refuge and Templo de Alabanza y Restauración (TAYR) in Brooklyn on June 3, 2023 removed over 478.2 pounds of trash with assistance from 168 people from both congregations and continues to build on a partnership ongoing since 2017 to address community issues and opportunities. The Earth Day cleanup at Masonville Cove was rescheduled to August 12, 2023 due to rain and inclement weather.

Summer programs include upcoming monthly First Thursday programs at Masonville Cove during extended hours for visitor access. Local groups Baltimore Broken Glass and Women of Color Only (WOCO) led programs for community members on July 6, 2023 and NA will lead a Family Fishing Evening on August 3, 2023. Ms. Eveland inquired if transportation shuttles run on First Thursdays and Ms. Warnick confirmed that it is something not traditionally offered by the partnership, outside of a community uber program, but may be improved by physical access projects related to the site.

Upcoming fall programs include the Nature Nurtures Symposium at Digital Harbor High School on July 22, 2023 through the Baltimore City Connecting Children to Nature Initiative and several nonprofit partners. The request for proposals is active and the Nature Nurtures Symposium is looking for workshops and session applications. There will be sessions about various levels of trauma informed care, which center healing and connection strategies for programming. The 10th anniversary of Masonville Cove being

identified as the nation's first Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership will be celebrated on September 23, 2023 with activities including kayaking, an NA led BioBlitz, and programs from all Masonville Partners.

Mr. Bennett shared that Masonville Cove will be Baltimore City's host site for Latino Conservation Day in July as part of the broader Hispanic Access Foundation's Latino Conservation Week. The Masonville Cove Partnership has been supporting the event since 2013 and shares a Hispanic Access Foundation Intern position with Patuxent Research Refuge each summer. Partners for the event beyond the Masonville Cove Partnership include broader Baltimore, Maryland, and Latino conservation partners such as Latino Outdoors, Patterson Park Audubon Center, Patapsco Heritage Greenway, EcoMadres, Chesapeake Conservancy, DNR, CBT, and Baltimore City Department of Public Works.

NA lastly celebrated its status as the Baltimore City lead organization for the City Nature Challenge (CNC) for three consecutive years and the recent CNC, which ran April 28 to May 1, 2023 resulted in 7,785 total observations by 550 observers. 1,305 unique species were identified using the free iNaturalist app and 24 of them were rare, endangered, or threatened. Participants in the Baltimore entry extended beyond Baltimore City, with some participants joining from counties across Maryland. NA is now planning for the next CNC and dates have been determined for 2024.

5.0 Adjournment

The meeting concluded at 7:30 pm. The next MCAC meeting is scheduled for September 12, 2023.