

**SUMMARY OF THE
MASONVILLE CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING (MCAC)
September 12, 2023, 5:30 PM
Hybrid Meeting**

Attendees:

Action Baybrook: Jan Eveland

Angie Ashley Consulting: Angie Ashley

Baltimore Birding Club: Nancy O'Hara

Baltimore Green Space: Samantha Black, Sarah D'Adamo

Chesapeake Conservation Corps: Julia Moyer

City of Baltimore, Department of Planning: Jazmin Kimble

Dartmouth College, Environmental Anthropology PhD Candidate: Alexandria Casteel

EcoLogix: Dr. Mamie Parker

Greater Baybrook Alliance (GBA): Ralinda Wimbush

Living Classrooms Foundation (LCF): Lorraine Warnick

Maryland Port Administration (MPA): Bertrand Djiki, Danielle Fisher, Rachael Gilde, Katrina Jones, Holly Miller, Joseph Ross

Maryland Environmental Service (MES): Matias Orrego

National Aquarium (NA): Swathi Ayyagari

US Department of Housing and Urban Development: Thea Becton

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

Vulcan Materials: Rob Flanagan

Action Items:

- Committee members will continue to provide feedback and suggestions for interpretative signage and the community engagement plan.
- Committee members will work to continue sharing DMMP committee meeting invitations to interested community members.
- Committee members will email Ms. Wimbush at ralindawimbush@gmail.com with questions or suggestions for the Friends Group and invite fellow community members to participate.
- MPA should share drainage issues along Frankfurst Ave. with Baltimore City to be considered as a part of the road construction resulting from the sewer project.
- Committee members will participate in the survey concerning the DMMP annual meeting to provide feedback including meeting times.
- Committee members will share suggestions with Ms. Glide for local organizations to invite to the DMMP Annual Meeting.

1.0 Introductions, Approval of Summary

Angie Ashley, Facilitator

All meeting materials can be found here: [MCAC – Google Drive](#). Ms. Ashley convened the meeting and shared the MCAC chair, Ms. Anita Kestel's regards, as she had a conflict with the

meeting. The Committee unanimously approved the June 13, 2023 MCAC meeting summary. It was noted that all June 2023 meeting action items were completed.

2.0 Masonville DMCF Expansion & Operations

Bertrand Djiki, MPA

Mr. Djiki presented current and upcoming operations for the Masonville Dredged Material Containment Facility (DMCF) and Masonville Cove campus including DMCF inflow projections and campus environmental project updates.

Base Dike Widening (BDW) to +18' was completed in June and provides the foundation for +30' construction. Over 300,000 cubic yards (cy) of material was placed and compacted to produce the base and is supported by 14,000 linear feet of geotextile in two divisions at 12.5' and 14.5'. The dike raising to +30' will use a steep slope design to maximize capacity. Permitting for the next phase of the project is complete. MDE issued the Dam Safety permit in March and the erosion and sediment control and stormwater management permit in April. Allan Myers Construction Company was the low bidder and was awarded the small pond construction contract in September 2023. Notice to proceed will be issued in Fall 2023 with a construction term of 30 months.

The Masonville DMCF currently supports 6 million cubic yards (mcy) of inflow capacity at +18'. When +30' is complete, the DMCF will support 8.2 mcy with an ultimate capacity of 10.4 mcy when +42' is achieved. The temporary discharge system is still in use. Maryland Environmental Service is coordinating the new, permanent floating weir system procurement. The temporary discharge system will remain in place for 2023 and 2024. Current and upcoming inflows include 33,000 cy from Consol Marine completed in July 2023; 8,000 cy from Amports to be completed in October 2023; and 75,000 cy from Trade Point Atlantic also to be completed in October 2023. Additional upcoming inflows include 25,000 cy from Erasmus, and 5,000 cy from cruise ship terminal dredging.

Masonville Cove environmental updates included submittal of the water appropriations permit renewal, Kurt Iron Slip joint permit application modification submittal to MDE, DMCF algae monitoring, the adaptive management plan and campus mitigation activities, and the non-tidal wetland and tidal wetland improvements. Wetland vegetation surveys and hydrology monitoring are in progress, reef ball monitoring and seining was completed July 19th, IRIS tubes were installed June 2023, and population net trap surveys were completed the first week of August. A letter was submitted to regulators to discontinue gillnet monitoring on June 21st. Non-tidal wetland improvement construction began in 2022 and is continuing after delay from eagle nesting. Bilingual signs are posted around the site to keep visitors from entering the construction limit of disturbance. Excess material was removed and stockpiled on site and bentomat liners were installed on July 11th, 2023. The non-tidal wetland stockpile was removed as of September 2nd. Leafgro was delivered for final regrading of the non-tidal wetland area in early August. Sources of capping material for the excess cut placement area are being investigated and planting is expected to begin in October. A contract for tidal wetland supplemental planting was awarded to ER&M on August 7th and plantings are set to begin Spring 2024. Advertisement for critical area

tree plantings will begin in Fall 2023. Trees will be planted at the northern tip of AZ2 and replace critical area tree and shrub plantings throughout AZ 1, 2, and 3.

Mr. Djiki confirmed for Ms. O'Hara that dike raising from +18' to +30' will occur over the next 30 months and that the dike will be higher than the adjacent land. Mr. Djiki and Ms. Miller also confirmed for Ms. Warnick with Living Classrooms Foundation that MPA will investigate the contract language and inform the committee if there are opportunities for the community or programs to be engaged as part of the subcontractor's tidal wetland supplemental plantings. The construction and plantings will most likely be impacted by the buffer zone protecting the eagles nesting on campus, as they are regularly successfully nesting at their campus home during the winter.

3.0 Masonville Cove Connector

**Joseph Ross, MPA
Rachael Gilde, MPA**

Mr. Ross, MPA project manager for the Masonville Cove Connector (MCC) shared that the goal of the project is to provide safe, convenient, and equitable access to the unique recreational asset that is Masonville Cove. The MCC will directly connect with proposed local trails, including the Baybrook Connector along Potee Street and the existing Gwynn's Falls Trail along South Hanover. These connections will help build connections across Baltimore City and the east coast as part of the East Coast Greenway, a network of local trails nationwide. The MCC benefits all pedestrians including walkers, joggers, bicyclists, scooters, wheelchair users, and families with strollers. The MCC is a shared use path, not a sidewalk or bike lane, and seeks to provide accessible infrastructure for everyone. The project limits are along Frankfurst Avenue, beginning at South Hanover Street and ending 1.2 miles along Frankfurst Avenue to the Masonville Cove Environmental Education Center. The Frankfurst Ave corridor has enough available space to make the project feasible.

Two traffic studies have been conducted to support the development of design concepts. One traffic study was completed in Fall 2022 and another in Summer 2023 to capture traffic at different times of year. MPA received its first round of Federal Land Access Program (FLAP) grant funding for \$1,528,000.00 in 2017 for feasibility study and conceptual designs. In June 2023, it was awarded an additional \$1,065,267.39 in FLAP funding to support design and partial construction of the project. The project holds many core values for communities and access, but another important value includes supporting commercial vehicle operations, which benefit the local and national economy.

Next steps for the MCC include sharing concepts with neighboring communities and industrial stakeholders to collect and incorporate feedback. Coordinating with community and industry stakeholders throughout the project design and construction is essential. It will also be important to communicate and collaborate during development of adjacent projects including the I-895 Baltimore Harbor Tunnel All Electric Conversion Project by the Maryland Transportation Authority and Replacement of the Southwest Diversion Pressure Sewer Project SC #866 planned by Baltimore City Department of Public Works. Information on the automatic electronic toll

conversion and sewer projects is available online.

Ms. Warnick recommended that drainage issues along Frankfurst Ave. be shared with Baltimore City to be considered as a part of the road construction resulting from the sewer project. Ms. Wimbush asked if Frankfurst Ave. would be repaved as a part of the Baltimore City sewer project. Both Ms. Ashley and Mr. Ross responded in the affirmative. Ms. Ashley further explained that the sewer project is expected to be a large construction project that temporarily restricts Frankfurst Ave. to two lanes. Ms. Wimbush asked if a trail east of Masonville Cove and the potential MCC is possible and advocated for amenities along the MCC including rest spots and water stations. Ms. Ashley stated that the current project scope includes a trail from the intersection at Hanover Street 1.2 miles along Frankfurst Ave. Amenities are under consideration and will be pending funding.

Ms. Gilde stated that concept designs took multiple values into consideration, including planning for a shared-use path buffer, opportunities to provide amenities, user comfort, traffic calming, supporting the queuing and operations of commercial vehicles, and avoiding high volume conflict points. The MCC additionally seeks to minimize impacts to the environment, private property, utilities, major grading of the road, and retaining walls.

The MCC team has been actively seeking input about the design concepts from stakeholders to work towards design that will fit the needs of Frankfurst Avenue users. They have engaged with community stakeholders including Vulcan Materials Company, Baltimore Industrial Group, Baltimore City Department of Transportation, elected officials, and community leaders. These groups and individuals have been active in conceptualizing possibilities with the team, prioritizing safety, and protecting existing community productivity. In addition to industrial users of Frankfurst Ave., residents from the neighboring community continue to be engaged through listening sessions where concepts are explored and detailed in depth, pop-up events at libraries, community hubs, and recreational areas, and a public open house meeting. Feedback will be gathered in person, at nearby community meetings, in writing, and virtually. A bilingual pamphlet detailing the project and its goals, an interactive online [story map](#), and other opportunities will also help raise awareness of the MCC. These outreach tools aim to meet everyone where they are, in English and in Spanish, to maximize engagement. Committee members committed to sharing information about the MCC project with their networks.

MCAC members provided recommendations for groups and locations where the MCC project could be featured to raise awareness and collect feedback from a range of audiences. Ms. Becton encouraged engaging local communities on NextDoor since some residents are skeptical of the project or spreading misinformation. Ms. Black and Ms. D'Adamo recommended connecting with Liberty's Promise from Benjamin Franklin High School, the Weinberg Foundation, Restoring Inner City Hope (RICH), Black Yield, and Cherry Hill Food Co-op. Ms. Wimbush recommended connecting with local resident Ms. Stephanie Bliss. Dr. Carpenter encouraged engaging with the local Brooklyn Branch Library. Mr. Orrego recommended engaging local faith groups such as Templo de Alabanza y Restauracion (TAYR) and City of Refuge Pathway Church of God.

4.0 Friends of Masonville Cove

Ralinda Wimbush, GBA

Ms. Wimbush, Environmental Justice Organizer with GBA, shared updates on the formation of the Friends of the Masonville Cove and Farring Baybrook Park. Ms. Wimbush opened with an inclusive exercise, meditation on restoring environments local to the Chesapeake Bay, and reviewed the recent, successful Friends Group mixer event. Community members joined together to meet, learn about Masonville Cove through tours and presentations, and began collaborating as advocates for their local urban green spaces. Children were engaged in an urban planning activity and craft led by LCF and there will be space for leadership roles within the Friends Group that will help elevate community members. Friends group members also participated in Partnership feedback surveys and exit surveys on what they are seeking from the Friends Group. Raffles and giveaways sponsored by Masonville Cove Partners included a giveaway of four tickets to the National Aquarium, GBA goodie bags, and Partnership materials.

Ms. Wimbush noted that many members want to help make a difference but do not always have an avenue available to foster that passion, and the Friends Group will be a space dedicated to invigorating them, their local green spaces, and connection to the healing forces of nature. MCAC members can email Ms. Wimbush at ralindawimbush@gmail.com with questions or suggestions for the Friends Group and invite fellow community members to participate.

5.0 Partnership Updates

Swathi Ayyagari, National Aquarium
Lorraine Warnick, LCF
Dr. Ela-Sita Carpenter, USFWS
Danielle Fisher, MPA

National Aquarium (NA)

Ms. Ayyagari shared NA updates including summer highlights, fall programs, and upcoming events. There will also be upcoming conferences with Nature City Forum from September 20th to the 21st and the Nature Nurtures Symposium at Digital Harbor High School on October 22nd.

Summer highlights included Latino Conservation Day (LCD), an August shoreline cleanup, and the WildSTEM internship. LCD was held on July 30th and 118 people from the local community as well as the Baltimore City Latino communities participated largely from TAYR, Patterson Park Audubon, and families in the area. Bus rides from nearby community locations supported accessible transportation. It was a fantastic day with boat rides, archery, fishing, bird walks, arts and crafts, and bilingual support from many partners across the city and state. The August shoreline cleanup was rescheduled from Earth Day in April, due to rain, but 38 people removed 6,131 pieces of trash and debris, totaling 132.39 pounds.

The WildSTEM internship was organized by MPA and the Partnership to provide an incredible experience for five interns from local Historic Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). The internsexperienced a variety of activities while based out of Masonville Cove and visited NA to learn about animal care, information technology careers, government affairs, community programs, the interpretation of arts, and sciences. These variety of interests and experiences were

all relayed through the lens of a variety of conservation careers even if they did not have environmental majors.

September 23rd is the planned 10th anniversary celebration of the partnership designation on Urban Wildlife Conservation Day and a NA-led Bioblitz. The Bioblitz provides a great field experience for participants and helps collect scientific data on the diversity of plants and wildlife living in the local area. The celebration will feature event favorites including kayaking, Rodney's Raptors, DMCF tours, birding, bird banding, seed bombs, tree giveaways, and more. All associated events are free, and registration is open to the public. The kayaking outfitter is experienced and beginner friendly and provides life preservers for participants and all supplies needed to explore in a guided trip around Masonville Cove. Kayaking trips are open to all experience levels, although participants must meet certain weight and age criteria due to kayak manufacturer safety standards and liability.

Upcoming community cleanups include a joint cleanup with TAYR and Pathway Church of God in the nearby Brooklyn community and International Coastal Cleanup Day will be held on October 22nd at Masonville Cove.

Living Classrooms Foundation (LCF)

Ms. Warnick presented updates on LCF summer programming, which was supported by funding from Baltimore Summer Funding Collaboratives. A five-week program known as the Baltimore Environmental Education Superheroes (BEES) program was held for thirty students from Maree G Farring Elementary School and focused on literacy, math, and STEM activities. Students also enjoyed outdoor experiences like fishing, gardening, and exploration among other activities. Participants benefited from social emotional learning which set milestones to increase confidence, emotional intelligence, and social skills. Each student increased their reading level score by at least one level, if not more, on the Fountas and Pinell reading test, which is standardized among the school system and state reading comprehension level exams. LCF is excited to continue supporting the program and students in their growth and development.

Local families also signed up and registered for LCF Summer Science Nature Programs where students visited across two different weeks and went fishing, explored trails, and enjoyed many nature-based learning, STEM activities, and experiences. LCF was also involved in the WildSTEM internship and engaged interns in a plethora of experiences and opportunities. All programs are highlighted in the newsletter archive on the Masonville Cove website.

Teachers are busy preparing for and beginning the new school year and students from Benjamin Franklin High School's ninth grade class will visit Masonville Cove regularly as part of the stream studies integrated into their curriculum. Ms. Warnick advised that as the season for applying for grant funding begins again, LCF and Masonville Cove staff will begin reaching out to partners for letters of support to help secure future grant funding for programs with schools and at Masonville Cove.

US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

Dr. Carpenter provided updates on USFWS recent summer events, activities, and upcoming programs. One of the biggest activities for the summer was catch and release fishing on campus, which featured successful opportunities including a Train the Trainer event with Mr. Chris Guy from the USFWS Chesapeake Bay Field Office and Partners, National Park Service Junior Ranger Angler programs featuring transportation access, BEES Family Day, August First Thursday programming, and more.

USFWS was also involved as a Partner in the WildSTEM internship and supported experiences including visits to the Patuxent Research Refuge, Easton solar pollinator space, meetings with leadership at the Department of the Interior headquarters, the Chesapeake Bay Field Office, and BWI airport. Unique intern experiences included snakehead fish dissection, culvert assessment, local community outreach opportunities, a law enforcement ride along, and trail camera surveys of mammals on campus. Some of the unique trail camera surveys included the first documentation of a coyote family with their pup, a tailless raccoon, deer, opossum, rabbits, rats, and a turkey! Bat acoustic surveys were also completed on campus this summer. Dr. Carpenter also shared a greenhouse update on the False Blue Indigo (*baptisia australis*), being grown to support endangered frosted elfin butterfly habitat in Maryland. The False Blue Indigo has been planted at Nassawango Creek Preserve.

Recent community events and programs included the Women of Color Only (WOCO) hike, sound healing butterfly hike, back to school events, the Brooklyn Branch Library Urban Wildlife Conservation Display, and both August and September First Thursday events. Upcoming wildlife programs and outreach opportunities for visitors include bird banding operations on campus with Birds of Urban Baltimore, monarch butterfly tagging as part of UWCD on September 23rd, bat walks with Baltimore Green Space at Masonville Cove on October 26th and at Garrett Park on October 30th, and winter mammal surveys.

Maryland Port Administration (MPA)

The Masonville Cove Partnership had a busy summer and Ms. Fisher highlighted programs MPA were involved in.

Youth Birding Week expanded from its first year to support up to 15 students and had a waitlist. Due to logistical issues from families, only 11 of the 15 students were able to participate. Students were headquartered at Masonville Cove, and ages ranged from 8 to 10. Participants enjoyed tours and learning experiences led by birding experts on Hart-Miller Island, Poplar Island, and Cox Creek. Each student completed and presented a group and individual birding projects.

The WildSTEM internship was a six-week collaborative program led by MPA and Partners where five students from HBCUs participated in an internship experience in partnership with the Harbor City Links and the Lillie May Carroll Jackson Charter School (LMCJ). Students gained practical work experiences in a wide variety of conservation jobs and developed individual projects and business plans in support of the missions at Masonville Cove and LMCJ as related to their diverse majors and interests. None of the participants were seeking conservation related degrees before the experience, but one of the interns changed majors afterwards. The internship also intentionally

helped to establish connections between the interns and industry as well as government partners within the conservation field. Ms. Gilde supported design of the robust curriculum and experiences for the internship schedule, alongside Dr. Parker, Ms. Wimbush, and internship coordinator Ms. Kadija Ndiaye.

MPA also supported coordination of a Junior Ranger Angler program and outdoor skill center clinic for local community from City of Refuge with NPS and USFWS. Mr. Reece Tremaglio helped lead the event and teach participants. Not only is Mr. Tremaglio the youngest sponsored professional bass fisher in the country but an inspiration among the Maryland and African American fishing communities.

MPA and Partners have been closely following MPA's 2023 priority to effectively engage with community stakeholders in English and Spanish wherever possible. The majority of events, materials, and now signage will be bilingual to provide accessible experiences for the local Spanish speaking community. The Latino Conservation Day organized by Partners was also a tremendous success. A new avenue MPA is establishing to improve access for Spanish speakers is the addition of bilingual birding tours and Spanish options on the MPA birding tour registration page. Updated registration will also ensure that both regular visitors and more first-time participants will be guaranteed a tour to attend. Ms. Fisher invited committee members to attend the upcoming Urban Wildlife Conservation Day, which is designed to be a special celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership designation, and to be part of the VIP portion of the celebration.

5.0 Dredged Material Management Plan Annual Meeting

Rachael Gilde, MPA

Ms. Gilde invited committee members to the upcoming Dredged Material Management Programs (DMMP) Annual Meeting in December, which coincides with the release of MPA's Annual Report, highlighting accomplishments, and recommendations for next year. The hybrid meeting is a celebration of Port operations and a space to connect on plans, and it is especially important to connect with local community organizations and committees to build those plans together. Last year's meeting had a total of 133 attendees, with 54 of them virtual, and is a great networking opportunity. Ms. Gilde requested that committee members send feedback in an upcoming survey if they had attended the meeting in the past, what meeting times work best for attendance, and how they would best feel welcomed. Additional suggestions on how to continue increasing equitable access to DMMP sites, how to best recruit diverse DMMP committee members from local communities adjacent to and impacted by the Port, and suggestions for continuing to incorporate nature-based and climate resilient solutions into DMMP projects. Ms. Gilde also asked committee members to send suggestions for local organizations to invite to the DMMP Annual Meeting.

Ms. Becton suggested inviting the Baltimore Urban Waters Partnership to the meeting. She attended in the past and noted that MPA and the group has become disconnected and wants to make sure they are engaged. Baltimore Socio-Environmental Collaboration is an educational

group and Ms. Becton is happy to help connect MPA to them and thinks they should attend the Annual Meeting. Ms. Becton shared that she will attend the Annual Meeting, however she hopes the meeting will be an earlier time, and that there is a higher-level representative from the Department of Housing and Urban Development in attendance.

Mr. Orrego suggested inviting groups including Baltimore Birding Club, Baltimore Green Space, South Baltimore Community Land Trust, Baltimore Tree Trust, Charm City Land Trust, and Middle Branch Park organizations to the meeting.

5.0 Adjournment

The meeting concluded at 7:30 pm. 2024 meeting dates will be announced at the end of the year.