

**SUMMARY OF THE DREDGED MATERIAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
September 25, 2024, at 5:30 PM – Hybrid Meeting
CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield – 1501 S Clinton St, Baltimore, MD 21224**

Attendees:

Anchor QEA: Mark Reemts
Blue Water Baltimore: Dan O'Leary
Chesapeake Bay Association: Frank Neighoff
Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC): Angie Ashley (Facilitator), Adam Lindquist (Chair)
Cox Creek Citizens Oversight Committee (COC): Gary Gakenheimer (Chair)
EA Engineering, Science, and Technology (EA): Peggy Derrick
EcoLogix Group: Steve Pattison
Fort Howard Community Association: Scott Pappas
Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), Tidal Wetlands: Jon Stewart, Matt Wallach
Maryland Environmental Service (MES): Claire Spears
Maryland Port Administration (MPA): Dave Bibo, Danielle Fisher, Rachael Gilde, Katrina Jones, Holly Miller, Darren Swift
Masonville CAC: Anita Kestel (Chair)
Patapsco Back Rivers Tributary Team: Stuart Stainman
Resident: Latasha Gresham-James
Rock Creek Community: Ruth Sliviak
Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP): Russell Donnelly
Stoney Beach Community: John Garofolo
The Terrapin Institute: Marguerite Whilden
Tradeport Atlantic (TPA): Pete Haid
Turner Station Conservation Team: Gloria Nelson
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE): Kevin Fenyak, Rachel Kierzewski

Action Items:

- No action items were provided at this time.

1.0 Welcome and Roll Call

Angie Ashley, CAC Facilitator

Meeting materials are at the following link: [CAC 2024 - Google Drive](#). Ms. Ashley began the meeting with introductions.

2.0 Opening Remarks

Adam Lindquist, CAC Chair

Mr. Lindquist requested a motion to approve the May 8, 2024, CAC meeting summary. The Committee approved the meeting summary without changes. Mr. Lindquist welcomed attendees and stated that at the previous meeting, there was significant disappointment among committee members regarding the handling of the Hart-Miller Island (HMI) reopening and the Confined Aquatic Disposal (CAD) program. Mr. Lindquist stated he had communicated these concerns to the Executive Committee, ensuring that the leaders of various departments are aware that the community is not satisfied with how the process unfolded. Mr. Lindquist also stated he attended a Community Benefits meeting hosted by Baltimore County related to the re-opening of HMI, and there has been more engagement with the CAD subcommittee, offering a platform for sharing information and allowing people to voice their concerns. (Update: Re-opening of HMI is no longer being considered by the Sparrows Point Container Terminal Team).

3.0 Announcements

Holly Miller, MPA

Ms. Miller, Director of the Office of Harbor Development, provided updates on the dredged material management program, addressed the previously raised concerns about CAD and highlighted the progress on the CAD Subcommittee. She announced that Urban Wildlife Conservation Day, which was held on September 14th at Masonville Cove, was a great success. The event featured fishing, birding, a National Aquarium's BioBlitz, nature walks, and boat rides. It attracted a record number of 223 participants, with 59% being first-time visitors to Masonville Cove, and 40% of attendees coming from surrounding neighborhoods, including Brooklyn and other areas of Baltimore City.

Ms. Miller reminded attendees that the annual Cox Creek Open House in Anne Arundel County will be held on October 19th from 10-2 pm, featuring a self-guided bird walks, youth fishing, a "touch-a-truck" event, tours of the dredged material containment facility (DMCF), educational games, and a groundbreaking ceremony for the Swan Creek Nature Trail, a project through the conservation easement adjacent to Cox Creek and initiated by community request at the Cox Creek Citizens Oversight Committee (COC).

The Annual Meeting of the Dredged Material Management Program (DMMP) is scheduled for December 6th. Details regarding the location and time are still being finalized, and further information will be provided in the near future. This meeting is held to bring together all DMMP committees to discuss progress on recommendations and outline plans for the upcoming year.

4.0 C A D Subcommittee

Peggy Derrick,

EA Ms. Derrick, Vice President at EA Engineering who is serving as a facilitator, provided an overview of the CAD Subcommittee, formed under the Bay Enhancement Working Group (BEWG), which is focused on evaluating the technical aspects of CAD in Baltimore Harbor. Ms. Derrick stated that at the first meeting on September 12th, the subcommittee had 46 participants, including in-person and virtual attendees, along with at least ten members of the public.

This initiative stemmed from a legislative effort in early 2024, where a Senate bill was introduced to form a CAD task force. Although the bill did not pass, MPA committed to moving forward with a subcommittee under the BEWG to explore the technical aspects of CAD.

Committee membership includes representatives from regulatory agencies, such as the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), academic institutions, and technical experts in dredged material to provide a scientific and engineering perspective. Additionally, Senator Bryan Simonaire, Delegate Brian Chisholm, and Delegate Nick Kipke are involved, ensuring that legislative voices are part of the dialogue. The subcommittee also includes three community representatives from waterfront communities —Tasha Gresham-James representing Baltimore County, Kelly Hunt representing Anne Arundel County, and Adam Lindquist representing Baltimore City.

Ms. Derrick emphasized that this is a technical working group, and while public attendees are welcome to listen, time is set aside at the end of the meetings for interaction between community attendees and committee members to foster dialogue and address questions. Group members have specific expectations, including providing feedback and advice as needed, serving as liaisons to their communities or agencies, and participating in as many meetings as possible to maintain continuity. Members are also expected to review materials in advance to facilitate meaningful discussions during

meetings. The group encourages members to be open-minded, non-biased, team players, considerate of all views, and open to objectively evaluating scientific data.

The goal of the subcommittee is to review the overall concept, need, viability, and available options associated with a second CAD pilot. The committee is tasked with identifying and reviewing potential environmental and socio-economic benefits and impacts. They are expected to assess sediment quality of dredged material that would be placed within a second CAD pilot site or to devise rationale or methods to do so. Additionally, the committee will review and collaborate to develop a site selection process for a second CAD pilot. Ultimately, this process will culminate in a report, which will be submitted to the Management Committee and the Executive Committee.

The subcommittee has scheduled five hybrid meetings, held on the second Thursday of each month at 1:00 PM. Additional meetings may be added if necessary. These meetings will take place in person at the Cox Creek DMCF conference room with an option to join virtually. The meeting structure dedicates the first 90 minutes to technical discussions and presentations, followed by the last 30 minutes for open discussion.

In the first meeting, the framework was discussed, and MPA presented on long-range capacity planning, particularly how CAD fits into that process. Innovative reuse and beneficial use were touched on, followed by a presentation on the 2016 CAD pilot, which included testing and monitoring details.

At the next meeting, the group will review the 2011 BEWG recommendations, which prioritized CAD for further study. There will also be a discussion on the 2021 CAD pilot site selection process and the factors that influenced site selection, as well as some permitting considerations. The third meeting will focus more on the permitting process and sediment quality. The fourth meeting will focus on reviewing and developing a scoring process to determine a site or group of sites for a second CAD pilot and identifying any data gaps. The last meeting will outline the report. This process is flexible and may evolve to include additional topics or educational elements to ensure a thorough evaluation and recommendation process for the subcommittee members.

Following the first meeting, one notable request came from the community attendees, who expressed interest in presenting their questions and concerns to the CAD Subcommittee. In response, the subcommittee has decided to involve the three appointed community members to help develop a process for facilitating this communication and will create a procedure that allows community members to bring forward their concerns to the subcommittee.

Mr. Garofolo expressed concern over the community not being allowed to speak. Ms. Miller clarified that the community will be able to speak, but a process is being developed for these comments to come in and be addressed clearly due to the amount of people who would like to bring up concerns. Ms. Derrick will work with the community representatives to develop a process that provides equal opportunities for input from Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Anne Arundel County. The intention is to maintain fairness in how these perspectives are included in the discussions. Mr. Garofolo expressed upset over not being able to express his thoughts soon and that there are only five meetings scheduled. Both Ms. Miller and Ms. Derrick assured that the process had only begun two weeks ago and is currently in progress, and that time is needed to engage properly. Ms. Ashley also stated that more meetings can be added should the subcommittee require it, and additional clarification can be provided over email.

Ms. Whilden mentioned that the Wetland Administrator recommended including more community time on the agenda. Ms. Miller clarified that there are already 30 minutes of community time scheduled. Ms. Whilden then expressed concern that the time allocated at the end of the meeting was not sufficient for proper consideration. Ms. Miller acknowledged that the subcommittee is trying to adapt as needed. Additionally, Ms. Ashley noted a request for CAD Subcommittee members to review the public comments submitted on the legislation. Efforts are underway to compile all necessary information and prepare it before the next meeting. This includes the requested research and a meeting summary incorporating a list of attendees, as Ms. Sliviak had requested. The summary is being drafted and will be available before the next session. Ms. Derrick also noted that this is a technical working group and must ensure they can complete their necessary tasks during these meetings, so it is important they stick to the scheduled timing.

5.0 Initial CAD Pilot Project 2016

Mr. Mark Reemts, Anchor QEA

Mr. Reemts stated that a key focus of the current CAD Subcommittee discussions is evaluating the progress and lessons learned from the 2016 CAD pilot project, which was completed adjacent to the Masonville DMCF. The project, initiated in late 2016, involved the excavation of approximately 130,000 cubic yards of sand from the CAD cell and the placement of about 62,000 cubic yards of dredged material from the USACE navigation channel dredging project in early 2017.

Following the placement of the dredged material, an extensive study was conducted to monitor the behavior of the material over time. This included water quality monitoring during construction and a longer term analysis of whether the material remained in place, how it consolidated, and what insights could be derived to inform future projects. Although the original plan was to conduct one year of post-placement monitoring, the study was extended to two years to gather more comprehensive data.

The subcommittee has reviewed significant information regarding the results of the 2016 pilot and is considering what it can inform about future CAD projects. As part of this review, the question was raised about the current status of the site and how the material has behaved since the conclusion of the monitoring period. This ongoing assessment aims to use the results of the 2016 pilot to refine the approach for future CAD projects, ensuring that lessons learned are applied to improve future dredged material management and placement strategies.

Mr. Reemts displayed data from the completion of initial monitoring that compared the overall footprint of the CAD pilot project with a focus on changes in elevation after material placement and post-monitoring, approximately 21 months later. This consolidation process, where placed material initially "fluffs up" and then compacts, was expected and aligned with the project's predictions.

The monitoring involved several surveys over time, from the initial placement to several months after. By nine months, a significant and unexpected finding emerged with the formation of a scour hole in one corner of the CAD cell, with up to 8 feet of elevation change. This was linked to propeller wash effects caused by the placement of ship propellers over the CAD cell from the active berth. Notably, the scour hole did not appear in the initial six months of monitoring but formed by the ninth month, likely from a single event.

Due to this unanticipated finding, the study period was extended from the original one-year plan to two years, allowing further monitoring to determine if the material remained in place or if additional scour or other effects occurred. The additional time ensured a thorough understanding of the long-term behavior of the placed material within the CAD cell. The continued monitoring of the CAD pilot project has

shown that, after the initial discovery of a scour hole due, the area has largely stabilized. Over the two-year monitoring period the rest of the CAD cell consolidated as expected. There was no significant material loss outside of this small scour hole footprint, and these findings were shared with stakeholders through a series of meetings after monitoring concluded.

As of the most recent survey in November 2023, the overall footprint continues to remain stabilized. The scour hole persists but has shown signs of recovery, with some deposition occurring in the area. While impacts from propeller wash are still visible in the corner of the CAD cell, the rest of the footprint has shown a positive trend with material deposition over the past seven years. While these effects are still present, there has been additional sediment accumulation, and lessons learned from this monitoring will inform future CAD cell planning, particularly in relation to the influence of ship traffic and site selection considerations.

Mr. Gakenheimer stated that during a site visit to the Masonville DMCF early in the 2016 C A D pilot project, the quality of the sand that emerged was striking, particularly considering the condition of the area at the time, which was cluttered with derelict boats. The cleanup efforts were impressive, and it was fascinating to observe the pristine sand being excavated.

5.0 MDE's Role in Dredged Material Management

Matthew Wallach, MDE

Jonathan Stewart, MDE

Mr. Wallach outlined the requirements and process for state tidal wetlands licenses related to in-water projects, highlighting the role of MDE in facilitating reviews and consultations with various resource agencies. The review process involves collaboration with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), engineers, wildlife services, and external experts as needed. Public involvement is an essential aspect, typically including a 30-day review period during which a public hearing may be conducted. Notices are distributed to adjacent property owners and the wider community to ensure all potentially affected parties are informed.

Comments from the public are collected and addressed, as they may influence the review and outcome of the project. Upon issuing a license, it includes general and special conditions that are enforceable, which may vary depending on the project. The review process initiates only after an application has been submitted, providing necessary project details and locations. Mr. Stewart stated that MDE focuses on environmental reviews, gathering public comments, and conducting scientific inquiries to form a report of recommendations. These recommendations are submitted to the Board of Public Works (BPW) for approval or denial of issuing the wetlands license, with a public notice process in place for transparency and public input. Some projects may prompt immediate requests for public hearings due to anticipated interest or concern.

Any member of the public can request a public hearing, regardless of the volume of feedback received, meaning that even a single request can trigger a hearing. This process is not contingent on the number of comments submitted or their scientific merit, as any individual's opinion can initiate a public forum. Public hearings can serve various purposes; they may be called by those who oppose a project, those who support it, or those who seek more information. Guidance on this process is available on MDE's website, and public notices for projects are published in newspapers and shared with interested parties.

To request a public hearing, individuals need to provide a contact email and phone number. MDE also handles issues related to water quality certifications for projects that require such approvals. MDE prepares recommendations for water quality certifications, often in conjunction with tidal wetlands

license projects. Individual water quality certifications are typically necessary for larger dredging projects, while smaller projects may qualify under the Maryland State Programmatic General Permits (MDSPGP), which are issued every five years. Not all projects will receive a separate individual water quality certification if they meet the general permit requirements; however, the agency ensures a public comment process is in place to address any concerns raised by various agencies and stakeholders.

In the 1990s, USACE and MDE introduced a Programmatic General Permit to streamline the permitting process for various projects. This initiative aimed to consolidate the efforts of multiple agencies to facilitate a more efficient review process for projects that required state and federal authorizations. The MDSPGP lists activities into different categories. Category A projects meet specific criteria outlined in the permit and can receive a state authorization directly with the MDSPGP determination. However, if an activity exceeds Category A criteria, it falls into Category B, necessitating review by USACE. The MDSPGP allows for a more expedited process for certain projects while ensuring that those with more complex requirements are handled appropriately. By establishing this framework, USACE and MDE sought to enhance coordination among agencies and reduce the time and complexity involved in securing necessary authorizations for various projects.

The MDSPGP operates on a five-year cycle, expiring on September 30th and starting a new phase on October 1st of that year. The current cycle will expire on September 30, 2025, and the next phase will begin on October 1, 2025. USACE is already preparing for this transition, evaluating which activities' requirements may change; which will determine how a proposed project is reviewed under the MDSPGP Category A, Category B, or an Alternate review (not an activity addressed in the MDSPGP or not meeting the requirements in either Category) such as large-scale dredging projects.

The review process allows for public input, and adjustments are made based on regulatory needs, environmental considerations, and operational requirements. For example, over the past few cycles, certain Category requirement limits have been lowered or raised to better fit project needs. This continuous assessment helps streamline the approval of projects that meet the required criteria while ensuring that more complex projects are given appropriate review. Regarding Ms. Ashley's question, the public will have access to this information and updates about the MDSPGP through USACE. Information about the new MDSPGP process, including public notices and how to participate in the review, will be posted there as the timeline progresses and public input is requested in the lead-up to the 2025 transition.

Ms. Sliviak asked for clarification on the process for when it requires USACE involvement versus when it doesn't. Mr. Stewart stated that smaller projects not involving USACE are handled through the MDSPGP system. However, larger projects, like CAD or major dredging, typically require an individual permit, as they fall outside the MDSPGP's scope due to their size or complexity. In these cases, the project goes through a public notice process, jointly managed by MDE and USACE, with announcements made via newspaper, MDE's website, and the USACE's website. Ms. Ashley stated that for MPA projects, the process includes sending email notifications to DMMP committees depending on the project's specifics. Mr. Wallach added that after the public notice is issued, people typically have 30 days to respond. However, for specific projects, there is an additional two-week period after the public hearing, which is typically held toward the end of the initial 30-day public notice period. This means the actual public notice period is extended, providing additional time for feedback and public input after the hearing.

Mr. Pappas asked whether the public would have an additional 30-day comment period if the use of HMI as a placement option for the Sparrows Point Container Terminal continues forward. Mr. Stewart stated that MDE operates independently from the USACE regarding public notices and hearings, even though they collaborate on certain projects. If USACE modifies a permit, such as adding a new dredged material placement area, the public would be notified if the change is significant enough to require further review. USACE follows its own regulations to determine whether public notice or hearings are necessary. For state projects, if MDE finds that a modification to an existing license introduces new or increased impacts, it would initiate a 30-day public notice period and potentially a public hearing. This process applies to projects requiring a state license. If such a modification affected an MDE-issued license, the public would be informed and allowed to provide input. While the USACE may have a similar process for its permits, MDE's procedures are separate and distinct.

Mr. Haid stated that if part of the project involves potential placement at HMI, USACE will require a Section 404 permit and Water Quality Certification, regardless of the placement option chosen. This dredging permit will go through a public notice period and will likely also have a public hearing. For HMI, which is part of an existing DMCF, there may be some necessary upgrades to the drainage system, and these upgrades will likely require their own tidal wetlands license, which would also likely go through a public comment period. Mr. Pappas asked for clarification on whether HMI State Park, owned by DNR, is actually a DMCF. Ms. Miller clarified that the beach area and the South cell of HMI is part of the State Park, while the North cell is not and is an inactive DMCF. The entire island is owned by DNR, and the active part of the South cell is also filled with dredged material.

Ms. Whilden asked whether CAD will require a Wetlands License and, if so, what the procedure is for submitting concerns to the BPW. Mr. Stewart stated that when an application for another CAD pilot project is submitted, it will follow the same process as the original one from 2016, which requires a license. The public will be able to participate in the comment period and public hearings during the initial review by the Department. At this stage, comments go directly to Mr. Wallach, who handles Baltimore City and all commercial dredging activities. Once the Department receives these comments and makes a recommendation to either approve or deny the project, the second opportunity for public input comes when the BPW issues its own notice. This notice goes to everyone who commented, giving them another chance to provide feedback or even appear at a board meeting. While BPW meetings can be limited in space, those interested can still send a representative if needed. Mr. Wallach added that MDE ensures that all public comments are addressed during the review process, including those opposing a project. If someone remains opposed, MDE responds by explaining its rationale for recommending approval and providing specific reasons. This exchange, including any opposition and the Department's response, is included in the Report and Recommendation (R&R) that goes to the BPW. The BPW members and their staff are made fully aware of any remaining opposition, as it is clearly documented and not concealed. This allows BPW to consider both the Department's reasoning and any unresolved concerns from the public. Those who oppose the project can also reach out directly to the Board at this stage for further engagement.

Mr. Stewart stated that even if a concern raised by an individual has been marked resolved, MDE still reaches out to that person to confirm their satisfaction with the resolution. This is part of a transparent process to ensure all issues are settled before the final recommendation is presented to BPW. When BPW staff reviews the R&R, they will consider whether any remaining comments need to be addressed. Although most people may not be aware of a project until it is publicly announced, MDE maintains a public-facing portal that allows people to search for active permits and licenses in different river systems. In cases like CAD, the MPA also distributes public notices via email to the community through

committee structures to keep them informed. Mr. Stewart encouraged attendees to start by using the [public website](#).

Mr. Garofolo asked who the permitter would be for Anne Arundel County. Mr. Wallach stated that for reviewing CAD projects, the state assigns specific reviewers depending on the location of the project. Mr. Stewart clarified that if a CAD project comes in within the boundaries of Anne Arundel County and beyond a designated line separating Baltimore City, Ms. Melissa McCann would handle the review. However, for projects inside Baltimore City or involving large commercial dredging activities, Mr. Wallach, who specializes in such projects, would be responsible. This distinction holds regardless of whether the project falls under county or city jurisdiction, as water-based projects are treated differently.

Mr. Stainman asked if there are ever public information meetings before a public hearing. Mr. Stewart stated that MDE doesn't hold public information meetings before public hearings except in specific cases. For major projects like Amtrak's high-speed rail over the river, the applicant is encouraged to conduct public outreach before any official hearing to address concerns early on. Similarly, MPA projects often have an information session on the same day as the public meeting to ensure all stakeholders have the necessary details before submitting comments. If individuals have questions about the review process or the public notice procedure, they are encouraged to reach out directly to the Department. However, for specific project-related inquiries, such as those regarding a potential CAD project, unless an application has been submitted, there's limited information available. Ms. Miller clarified that there's currently no active CAD project application, and the CAD Subcommittee is still evaluating whether and where to pursue another CAD pilot project.

5.0 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Kevin Fenyak, USACE

Rachel Kierzewski, USACE

Ms. Kierzewski stated that she would address the Baltimore Harbor Virginia Approach channels, including Cape Henry, Rappahannock Shoal, and York Spit. The York Spit project is set to be awarded within the current fiscal year (FY), with the contract expected by September 30. Approximately 2.6 million cubic yards (mcy) of material will be dredged from sections of York Spit and placed in the Wolf Trap Alternate Placement Site, Northern Extension, Cell Six. The work is scheduled to begin by November 15 and must be completed by April 1, in alignment with the time-of-year closure restrictions. Although the contract will be awarded in FY24, the actual dredging will take place in FY25.

Mr. Fenyak stated that for the Maryland channels portion of the Baltimore Harbor project, this year's plan involves dredging approximately 2.3 mcy from six different channels. Two of these channels, Curtis Creek and Fort McHenry, both located in the Inner Harbor, will contribute about 500,000cy and will transport material to the Cox Creek DMCF. The other four channels, Upper Range, Cut Off Angle, Craig Hill Entrance, and Craig Hill Angle will send their dredged material to Poplar Island. A solicitation for the work has already occurred, with a low bid received. The project is awaiting the federal fiscal year turnover to secure the necessary funds and officially award the contract. If all goes as planned, dredging should begin in late October or early November 2024, starting with Curtis Creek and progressing through Fort McHenry, ultimately completing work by the end of March 2025, aligning with the environmental time-of-year restriction closure.

The Seagirt Loop Modification project is currently in the engineering and design phase. Ms. Miller stated that the design agreement was recently returned from the North Atlantic Division for execution and is now being routed for signatures. It is expected to be ready for further action from USACE by early next week.

Mr. Fenyak stated that at Poplar Island, the current capacity stands at 33% remaining. The recent award of the contract for dike raising in Cells 6 and 11 does not alter the overall capacity, as this work was part of the original plan. Construction is expected to begin in January 2025 and continue through November of 2025. The next material inflow, scheduled for early 2025, will involve placing approximately 1.7 mcy of dredged material into Cells 2AX, 8, 9, 10, and 11.

Ms. Kierzewski stated that the first phase of the Mid-Chesapeake Bay Island project began in 2022. The second phase was awarded in August 2024, with the Notice to Proceed (NTP) anticipated in October 2024. For James Island, documentation is still in progress, and any further work will depend on the availability of funding.

Ms. Whilden expressed her confusion over the separation between the James Island project and the remnants of James Island and requested information as to how James Island Project location was determined. Ms. Whilden expressed concerns over correspondence she had with USACE staff regarding the status of James Island. Ms. Kierzewski confirmed that she will relay Ms. Whilden's concerns regarding community involvement to the USACE project manager for James Island.

5.0 DMMP Committee Updates

Committee Chairs, MPA

Ms. Ashley thanked the attendees for their open dialogue and welcomed the various DMMP committee chairs to share updates.

Masonville CAC

Ms. Kestel stated that the final meeting of the year was held on September 3, and planning is underway for new dates in 2025. The Friends of Masonville Cove group is being established to focus on building capacity. They are currently leading an initiative to install a new garden in front of the Environmental Education Center and are seeking new members. Ms. Kestel encourages anyone interested in joining to contact Ms. Fisher (MPA).

An American white pelican, first seen on June 10, marks the first record of this species at Masonville Cove and another American white pelican has been spotted at Poplar Island.

Urban Wildlife Conservation Day, held on September 24, was a success, with increased attendance thanks to community feedback. MPA and the Masonville Cove Partnership enhanced the event by providing shuttle service from the local library, offering food, and promoting the event with bilingual postcards. Additionally, this year marked the 6th birthday of Captain Trash Wheel, who has collected 50 tons of trash, preventing it from entering the Patapsco River.

Mr. Stainman stated that there are several capital projects related to the trail leading to Masonville Cove and asked if there was an estimated project timeline for the Masonville Cove Connector. Ms. Ashley stated that the team is currently working toward 30% design, with federal funding provided by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highways Administration. MPA is actively seeking construction funding for the project, which is anticipated to take a couple of years to complete the transition from 30% design to 100% design and secure funding.

Ms. Miller stated that the team hopes for construction to begin in 2026, although there may be coordination with other capital projects in the area, such as the Baltimore City sewer line replacement

project and the redesign of the 895 Toll Plaza. Efforts are ongoing to align these projects and seek additional grant funding for construction.

Cox Creek C O C

Mr. Gakenheimer stated that the next Cox Creek C O C meeting will be held on October 9 at Cox Creek DMCF, with Joe Ross (MPA) in attendance to provide updates on the Masonville Cove Connector. There will also be a groundbreaking ceremony for the Swan Creek Nature Trail during the Cox Creek Open House on October 19th. The Swan Creek Nature Trail is expected to be completed in 2025.

Mr. Gakenheimer stated that a challenge for the C O C this year has been the lack of committee members due to the dated legislation that outlines member organizations. However, the organizations designated to hold positions on the Cox Creek C O C have been updated to better reflect active local organizations. Efforts are underway to appoint new members to the committee.

Ms. Ashley stated that the C O C is legislated, and its membership is outlined in statute. Given the proximity of the Cox Creek DMCF to Baltimore City, South Baltimore District 46 has a seat on the committee. The process of filling seats for appointments is ongoing, and anyone who resides in District 46 and is interested in participating is encouraged to reach out.

Mr. Gakenheimer added that the Cox Creek Open House is expected to attract a significant turnout, similar to last year's event, which saw around 150 attendees. The tour will feature a new piece of property recently purchased by the MPA. The event is family-friendly, with activities like "Touch a Truck," where children can interact with construction vehicles.

Hart-Miller Island C O C

Mr. Lindquist, on behalf of Mr. Brylske, stated that the first annual "Friendsraiser" for the Friends of HMI took place on Saturday, July 20th, at Charly's Creek Restaurant, raising over \$4,000. The HMI C O C met on the island on July 16th, where discussions continued regarding the potential reopening of HMI. The reopening is contingent on establishing a Community Benefits Agreement by the end of the year, which is being overseen by Baltimore County. All HMI C O C members are also part of the Community Benefits Agreement Steering Committee, which includes nine members and has held three meetings so far. Per the legislation, MDE will need to provide final approval for the placement of dredged material. MPA continues to support the HMI C O C and its sister state agencies as the reopening plans develop.

Mr. Brylske has been active in community engagement, attending various meetings with groups such as the Essex-Middle River Civic Council, North Point Peninsula Community Coordinating Council, Bowleys Quarters Improvement Association, Wilson Point Association, and the Oregon Ridge Nature Center. These meetings have shown a strong community interest, with reasonable concerns being raised about the future of HMI. Public input is being collected outside of the HMI C O C as well.

Mr. Nieghoff asked for clarification on a conversation held previously where it was suggested that MPA suggested reopening HMI for material placement. Ms. Miller clarified that there were discussions last fall about capacity concerns, specifically regarding Trade Point Atlantic's projected dredging needs. The limited capacity at the Cox Creek and Masonville DMCFs was acknowledged, and although there was mention of available capacity at HMI, it was not considered a serious option at the time. The idea of updating the legislation¹⁰⁰ to address this wasn't pursued further in those discussions, so when the legislation came later, it was a surprise to MPA staff, as they were not consulted during the process.

6.0 Round Table Remarks & Open Discussion

Committee Members, MPA

Mr. Lindquist stated that there is a new public kayak launch in Fells Point, and the ribbon-cutting event will be held on October 17, along with the annual water quality report. The first public swim in the harbor in over 40 years was a success, and 150 people participated without any issues, followed by Katie Humphrey's marathon swim from Sandy Point into the Baltimore Inner Harbor two days later.

The Trash Wheel Fan Fest was held on Saturday September 21 and was a very successful fundraiser. In 2023, all the trash wheels operated at peak capacity and removed over a million pounds of debris from the Baltimore Harbor, making a significant impact on the health of the Chesapeake Bay.

Ms. Whilden brought up concerns at a previous meeting about the lack of community representation and noted that the representation seemed one-sided. Mr. Swift had suggested attending the CAC, but Ms. Whilden questioned when the Eastern Shore, particularly Talbot and Dorchester counties, would be considered in the discussions, as it seemed their input was not being fully represented in the process. Ms. Ashley clarified that there are two Eastern Shore residents who hold positions as members of the CAC. One was supposed to attend virtually, and the other is currently traveling internationally. Ms. Whilden stated that Poplar Island should have the same level of representation as the Cox Creek and Masonville DMCFs and pointed out that a bill had been introduced for this purpose, but MPA objected to it. Ms. Ashley explained that Poplar Island and Mid Bay projects are led by USACE, and there is a formal process for public involvement through permitting, though it differs from the MPA's citizen committees. Ms. Whilden expressed that she is disappointed with the amount of citizen engagement for Poplar Island in reference to projects like HMI. Ms. Ashley emphasized that the MPA is working to ensure transparency and equity in DMMP projects. Active engagement with Eastern Shore communities is ongoing through public meetings co-hosted by MPA and USACE, and additional meetings are held upon request. The MPA created the CAC to provide a platform for public concerns, though it is not legislated. The committee facilitates communication and ensures concerns are captured and addressed through its structure. Ms. Whilden requested time to speak with the CAC chair, and Mr. Lindquist agreed.

Mr. Pappas stated that in a past meeting it was mentioned that the North Point-Rock Point Line is outdated and asked when it is possible for MPA to begin a meaningful conversation with legislators about changing this rule and considering placement outside of the Baltimore Harbor now that technology has advanced past the need for this law. Ms. Miller agreed and stated that now is the time to begin this dialogue and that Senator Simonaire has approached MPA to have that very conversation. This is a complex issue and a question that needs to be fully vetted, but MPA plans to move forward with these discussions and begin preparing so that if legislation is introduced, there will have been a robust dialog within the DMMP committee structure. Ms. Miller is unsure if it will be answered by the next legislative session as many deadlines are coming up at the end of the year, but MPA will begin the process to move forward on this topic. Ms. Sliviak stated that she understands the need for a 20-year plan and asks why the option to move forward with new legislation wasn't considered sooner. Ms. Ashley stated that this consideration is a complex process and that the dialogue around dredged material has changed drastically in the past five years, which is now helping to build interest among stakeholders and legislators to move forward with this new possibility.

Ms. Ashley thanked the attendees for coming and encouraged everyone to attend the upcoming Open House on October 19, 2024, and the Annual Meeting on December 6, 2024. The meeting was adjourned at 7:30.