

Notes from meeting of MET's Land Committee
Wednesday 9-1-2021
1:00 pm

Attending Committee Members: G. Burnett, M. D'Arcy, M. Benjamin, J. Jitkoff,
Attending MET Staff: J. Chapman, A. G. Carlson, J. Turgeon, J Markline
Guests: MaryBeth and Roger Aronow

Next meeting: Wednesday, October 20, 2021, at 1 pm

Agenda Item 1:

- a) Easement Program Update:** AG Carlson provided the following update:
 - The hiring Freeze Exemption for the Easement Program Planner position was approved. DNR HR will post the position shortly.
 - J. Turgeon is reviewing AG Carlson's first draft of the Conservation Easement Program Manual.
 - AG Carlson is working with Cindy Hoffman, MET's new Records Manager on how to archive and organize the records that the Easement Program creates.
 - Patterson Mill LLC Conservation Easement recorded on August 16, 2021.
 - J. Turgeon reported that kickoff event for the Southern Maryland Conservation Alliance is on September 7, 2021. J. Turgeon will provide information at the meeting of the full Board.
- b) Easement Pipeline Report:** AG Carlson presented the pipeline:
 - Of the 30 projects on our Active Project list AG Carlson has touched 20 in the last 4 weeks, moving each along in the process.

Agenda Item 2: Conservation Easement Projects

- a) 153.56 +/- acres in Worcester County with Lower Shore Land Trust** AG Carlson presented the proposed conservation easement project. J. Jitkof moved to recommend approval of the Staff recommendation and place project for the Consent Calendar. M. Benjamin seconded the motion. **The committee recommended approval of this project to the Board of Trustees on the Consent Calendar.**
- b) 143.1015+/- acres in St. Mary's County** AG Carlson presented the proposed conservation easement project. M. D'Arcy moved to recommend approval of the Staff recommendation and place project for the Consent Calendar. G. Burnett seconded the motion. **The committee recommended approval of this project to the Board of Trustees on the Consent Calendar.**

Agenda Item 3: Stewardship Program

- a) Program Updates:** J. Chapman provide the following program updates:

FY2021 Monitoring Accomplishments

Monitor Role ↑	Reports	Acres
Staff	373	42,650
Volunteer	83	10,747
Staff w/Co-holder	15	1,271
Co-holder	418	52,113
Total	889	106,781

540 hr; ~\$15,660

Out of 616 CE's coheld with 36 coholders

Number of Properties 751 58% of 1298 easement interests held by MET

Number conducted remotely with Lens: 370 370/889= 42% of reviews/monitoring

- Continuing Remote Monitoring with Lens System of Western Shore approximately 3/4 complete, but needing to order more 2021 satellite imagery
- Conducted training on August 9 for Julia Jitkoff and Ann Jones, who was particularly interested in doing reviews for several Baltimore County properties coheld with local land trusts for which Ann coordinates monitoring
- Continuing to coordinate with Lower Shore Land Trust (LSLT) on the TNC/LTA grant funded Lens project; LSLT contractual staff is developing files from surveys of Rural Legacy properties and uploading them to Lens for future remote reviewing
- Stewardship staff is updating both Eastern and Western shore GIS info for uploading to Lens
- Working with DoIT staff to oversee progress on new data collection tool using ESRI GIS software, which will replace problematic KOB0 tool developed by Chesapeake Conservancy gratis (and therefore is not continuing to be supported)
- Coordinating with Michelle Grafton on organizing LT roundtable to be presented in November on commercial activities and events on easement properties
- Participating in Riparian Forest Buffer Advisory Committee with MD Forest Service and will be participating with the Heart of MD Enhanced Stewardship Committee to promote restoration activities on protected lands in the Antietam and Catoctin Creek subwatersheds.
- o Staff received appraisal for Old Colony Cove second amendment request - one of several conditions for approval; appraisal shows a reduction in value resulting from amendment. Need to review in depth and consult with Scenic Rivers' Sarah Knebel and MHT staff before approving.
- Have received request from SHA to impact less than 5/100 acre of a Rural Legacy easement in St. Mary's County for Right of Way expansion to address damage to bridge abutment. Are coordinating with DNR's LAP/RLP and PTWLT on approval.

- Addressing long term issues with erosion and buffer encroachment on Robinson CE property in Howard Co., and proposal to sell property to an agribusiness venture.
- Waiting for St. Mary's Co. Planning and Growth Management review of a proposal to make an outparcel into a developable lot on "Patuxent View B" CE property, where grantor reserved a right for development on this highly sloped property
- Staff reviewed a proposal from a Baltimore Co landowner to transfer several parcels between 2 Rural Legacy (RL) easements and overlay them with an amendment binding a third CE held by Baltimore County and Land Preservation Trust; staff responded that we could not proceed with the request because it would be contrary to both MET and RL policies on easement permanence to remove any land from an easement as removal would impact the perpetual nature of the easement. Further, insufficient evidence was presented of a compelling reason to initiate such a transaction, and there was an insufficient offer of increased conservation value other than to prohibit more than de minimis commercial recreation
- Staff reviewed a proposal to construct a combination agricultural processing and marketing building on the Hackerman Hidden Waters property on Old Court Road in Baltimore County. Staff confirmed that it was allowed per the easement language.

b) Request for Residence Replacement, Frederick County J. Chapman presented the proposal to replace the current one-story residence with an enlarged two-story residence. Property owners, Aronows, were in attendance online and spoke briefly about the property and their desire to protect it. M. D'Arcy moved to recommend approval of the Staff recommendation and delegate to the Director. J. Jitkoff seconded the motion. **The committee recommended approval of this proposal and to delegate to the Director.**

Meeting adjourned at 2:15 pm.

2021 LANDS COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE
January 20
April 21
May 26
September 1
October 20