

Minutes from meeting of MET's Land Committee
Wednesday October 25, 2023
1:00 pm

Attending Committee Members: G. Burnett, M. Benjamin, A. Jones, C. Wells,
M. D'Arcy, C. Highfield
Attending MET Staff: J. Turgeon, J. Markline, A. Carlson, J. Pinkney
Attending OAG staff: T. Kovacs
Landowner: J. Stinar

Next meeting: Wednesday, January 24, 2024, at 1 pm

Agenda Item 1. Stewardship Program

- a) Stewardship Program Updates: J. Markline provided the following updates: Discussed status of new hires. J. Pinkney, Chesapeake conservation and climate corps member from Chesapeake Bay Trust, has been sending correspondence to new easement owners and scheduling initial monitoring visits. ESRI based ArcGIS Monitoring app to be finalized and launched soon and volunteers to be trained to use it for monitoring. Processing of Amendments continues, but requests seem to be winding down.
- b) Landowner request for easement 0034DOB.QUEE: J. Markline presented the request. **C. Wells moved to accept staff recommendation. M. D'Arcy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**
- c) Landowner request for easement 0664STI02.WASH: J. Markline presented the request. J. Stinar, landowner of 0664STI02.WASH addressed questions. **M. D'Arcy moved to accept staff recommendation. G. Burnett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Agenda Item 2. Easement Program

- a) Easement Program Update: A. Carlson provided the following update:
- A. Carlson along with A. Jones, were panelists at the session at the Maryland Land Conservation Conference on October 4, 2023. The session topic was "Drafting Conservation Easements for the Future". We received positive feedback on the session.
 - A. Carlson gave a presentation to a group of Baltimore County landowners on October 19, 2023. The Baltimore County Land Trust alliance organized a landowner outreach meeting about the various conservation easement programs available. 26 people attended. Thanks to M. Benjamin and A. Jones for putting on a great event. J. Pickney accompanied A. Carlson.
 - The Short conservation easement (60.829 ac in Caroline County) was approved by the Board of Public Works on October 25, 2023 and recorded in the land records on October 26, 2023.
 - Thus far in FY2024, 4 conservation easements have been completed protecting 713.85 acres (these number include the Short conservation easement recorded on October 26, 2023)
 - Recruitment for the Conservation Easement Planner is ongoing. We hope to have someone in place before the end of the year.

b) Easement Pipeline Report: - A. Carlson provided the following update:

- There are over 20 active projects. A. Carlson continues to field inquiries from landowners and local land trusts about projects.
 - The Green Point Farms - Windy Ridge and the West conservation easements will go to the Board of Public Works on November 8, 2023 to be recorded shortly thereafter
 - The Reed conservation easement will go to the Board of Public Works on November 29, 2023 to be recorded shortly thereafter.
 - The Bowden and Scheig easements should be finalized shortly and completed in early 2024
 - The Bambacus conservation easement is moving forward after a long delay due to the landowner's lengthy but successful efforts to acquire the mineral rights to their property. This Committee and the Board approved a conservation easement on the Property in spring 2020 conditioned on resolution of severed mineral rights.
 - Due to the robust existing pipeline and the limited staffing capabilities, we may not be taking on new projects for a short time.

Agenda Item 3. Conservation Easement Projects

- a) 33.44 +/- ac in Caroline County. A. Carlson presented the project. A. Jones moved to approve and place the project on the Consent Agenda. M. D'Arcy seconded the motion. **The Committee unanimously voted to approve and put it on the Consent Calendar.**

Meeting adjourned at 2:08 pm.