Minutes from meeting of MET's Land Committee
Wednesday September 2, 2026
1:00 pm

Attendees: T. Kovacs, J Turgeon, K. Bull, J. Markline, D. Skalos, M. Ludington, M. Benjamin, M. D'Arcy, C. Highfield, L. Lynch, C. McCann, L. Paterini

Technical difficulties with the meeting link caused a new link to be sent so everyone could join the meeting.

M. D'Arcy asked J. Turgeon to give a staff update, and he turned it over to D. Skalos, who announced he had left MET employment to return to California.

Turgeon announced that M. Ludington will be promoted to Easement Program Manager.

Benjamin motioned to approve the previous Lands Committee meeting minutes. Highfield seconded. All in favor.

Ludington gave easement program pipeline updates.

2bi. Donation to MET by Daniel Stotts and Laura Mitchell- Lynch motioned to place the item on the consent agenda for the BOT to approve. Benjamin seconded. All in favor.

2bii Donation to MET and the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy by Henry Greenewalt- D'Arcy asked whether the house would receive historical protection. Ludington responded no. D'Arcy asked if the fields would remain in meadow perpetually or if a future owner could revert the meadows to agriculture in the future. Ludington responded the meadows could be returned to traditional agricultural usage, but the work the current owners have done is fantastic and has created a lot of bird habitat.
Lynch motioned to place the item on consent agenda. Benjamin seconded. All in favor.

Ludington presented the new scoring system to determine whether a property qualifies for acquisition to the MET program.

D'arcy how long does it take to run a property through this system? Ludington-under 5 min D'Arcy-this is all done by desktop. Ludington- yes but we will do a site visit when necessary. Lynch-Will the easements be scored relative to other project's status? What if we do not have any other projects in the pipeline. Ludington- if we are lacking in properties, we can always reevaluate. This system is designed to provide a quantifiable, transparent way to explain the determination to a landowner and provide justification for why a property was or was not accepted.

J. Markline gave Stewardship program updates. Markline talked about L. Paterini looking to bring on a college intern for GIS work, and K. Bull is working on getting an FSP written for the

Tricounty fee simple property MET owns Charles county. K Bull is also working with the City of Annapolis and SHA on a trails project on the Weems Creek Easement located at the offramp from Route 50 SB to Rowe Blvd. J. Chapman was hired contractually to help with monitoring, W. Foster has substantially built the volunteer program back up since last year, and M. Grafton has made significant progress coordinating the submission of co-holder monitoring reports. J. Turgeon presented the MFR numbers sharing the monitoring stats for fiscal year 26.

J. Markline reported ESRI monitoring application changing from Workforce to Field Maps, causing only slight disruptions which largely resolve quickly with the help of DoIT. The I-97 expansion may involve MET easements, MDOT has been alerted and knows to contact MET if this occurs. D'Arcy asked if this will fall under eminent domain, unclear yet.

Stewardship Items
3bi. Request for 0636PET02.STMA
D'Arcy asked if the owners currently have people camping on the property? Bull responded he thought they were allowing camping, but that he had not visited the property on the ground to verify. Discussion was held as to whether the amount of money charged for commercial activities on easement properties factored into whether that activity would be classified as de minimis. Clarification was made that the cabin on the property is run down and not used by anyone, including the owners.

T. Kovacs stated that legal review has not occurred for any of the stewardship items. Benjamin stated that staff should visit the site prior to approval. D'Arcy asked if the owners could create more campsites in the future? Markline stated that they would not be allowed to unless they requested approval to add more sites. Turgeon discovered that the owners already had the property listed on hipcamp.com as a rental site for campground and RV camping. D'Arcy- it would be good to get out there now and meet with the owner to see the site and determine if the activity is appropriate and make it clear that the approval would be considered retroactive. Brief discussion on the time period, Bull stated this is a good starting point and establishes clear scope and time, as well as building a strong relationship with the landowners. Brief discussion on agri-tourism opportunity, including kayaking, oyster farming, and birding, and how this may apply.

D'Arcy motioned for approval conditioned upon, 1) Staff conducting a site visit to observe the proposed camping areas, 2) Legal review by the Office of the Attorney General for legal form and sufficiency, 3) No more than five unimproved campsites being allowed on the Property, 4) Receipt of the MET Agreement For An Approved, Temporary Commercial Activity signed and dated by the owner(s), and 5) This activity being approved for a two-year period as is typical of an initial request for commercial activity on easement properties. After the two-year period the owner will be required to request approval to continue the activity as long as all conditions have been met.

Highfield motioned. Lynch seconded. All in favor. None opposed.

3bii. Request for 1046MIL12.QUEE
Concerns were raised regarding the planting of a vegetative screen, which would block scenic views, especially if Leyland cypress were planted, which is typically not allowed on easements. Concerns were also raised regarding the fact that the original Grantor sold the easement to remove all of the rights and that this request by the new owners may not be in line with the original intent. C. Highfield asked a question regarding wording, whether the agreement required planting of buffer or maintaining afterward and to what time period. Discussion included the definition of "fast" or "fast-growing." J. Markline noted there is a recommended species list. Discussion continued around requiring approval of the vegetation plan before implementing.

The Committee requested that a more diversified vegetation plan be required and that additional information be provided by the owners to ensure the planting will be adequate to screen the structures (thick enough and high enough). Screening height is restricted to 35 ft.

No action was taken on agenda item 3bii.

3biii. Request for 0950KEN07.TALB
Discussion centered around the need for safety and clear ownership of the cut-through road, and how this proposal addresses these needs.
Benjamin motioned to approve. Lynch seconded. All in favor. None opposed.

Benjamin motioned to close the meeting. Lynch seconded. Meeting adjourned at 3:05pm.