

**Notes from meeting of MET's Land Committee**  
**Wednesday April 20, 2022**  
**1:00 pm**

Attending Committee Members: G. Burnett; M. Benjamin, J. Jitkoff, C. Wells  
Attending MET Staff: J. Chapman, A.G. Carlson, J. Turgeon, J. Markline, C. Hoffman  
Attending OAG staff: T. Kovacs

*Next meeting: Wednesday, May 25, 2022, at 1 pm*

Agenda Item 1 Easement Program:

- a) Easement Program Update:** AG Carlson provided the following update:
- The Bottiglieri conservation easement was recorded in late March. This is 44.97 acres in Harford County co-held with the Harford Land Trust.
  - The Patriot Point Conservation easement 290 acres in DORC is set to close in coming days.
  - The Masonville Cove easement is out for signatures. It goes to BPW next Wednesday and should be in the land records in May.
  - Thus far in FY2022, MET has added 7 new easements protecting 1130.61 acres.
  - On April 25, 2021, AG Carlson is presenting along with Jared Parks of LSLT at an Forever Maryland webinar on conservation transactions for their Building Better Boards series.
  - AG Carlson was asked by the Nature Conservancy and with John's approval is now a team member of the Core Teams developing easement language for Climate Change Resiliency provisions
- b) Easement Pipeline Report:** AG Carlson presented the pipeline and noted the following:
- We have 22 active projects on the list and 26 potential. We continue to field calls and make site visits on potential projects.
  - Recently, M. Mingus and AC Carlson have been on several site visits for potential projects in Frederick County, Prince Georges County and Baltimore County

Agenda Item 2: Conservation Easement Projects

- a) 85.17 +/- ac, the Martin project in Garrett County** A.G. Carlson presented the proposed conservation easement project. J. Jitkoff moved to recommend approval of the project for the Consent Calendar. G. Burnett seconded the motion. **The committee unanimously recommended approval of this project to the Board of Trustees on the Consent Calendar.**
- b) 152 +/- ac, Anne Arundel County (the Crownsville Hospital woods) project with Scenic Rivers Land Trust** A.G. Carlson presented the proposed conservation easement project. G. Burnett moved to recommend approval of the project for the Consent Calendar. J. Jitkoff seconded the motion. **The committee unanimously recommended**

**approval of this project, subject to the Staff noted change, to the Board of Trustees on the Consent Calendar.**

- c) **84.26 +/- ac, the Scheig project in Garrett County** A.G. Carlson presented the proposed conservation easement project indicating a condition of the recommendation that the mineral rights issue is resolved to the satisfaction of the Office of the Attorney General prior to MET signing the easement. M. Benjamin moved to recommend approval of the project including the Staff's condition as written in the memo for the Consent Calendar. G. Burnett seconded the motion. **The committee unanimously recommended approval of this project including Staff's noted condition to the Board of Trustees on the Consent Calendar.**

Agenda Item 3: Stewardship Program

**a) Program Updates**

i. Statistics

- Total 704 Monitoring Reports since July 1, 2021
- Majority (317) by coholders, of which 256 conducted On The Ground, (93 supplemented by drone), 61 Remotely using Lens Aerial monitoring system
- 111 by MET Staff 103 on ground and 7 by Remote/Aerial
- 162 by MET Volunteers 78 on ground and 84 by Aerial
- 106 by MET Contractor using Lens
- Total Remotely Monitored= 258 or 37%
- When data comparing Remote and OTG monitoring for 63 properties analyzed, we found that on avg, LENS saved 2.9 hours per easement or 93 % of travel and visit time combined. Loss of personal communication with landowners remains challenging.

ii. Field work

- Volunteers are on a roll! New 2022-23 volunteer coordinator Americorps position renewed for MET. Job posting is up. Current Volunteer Coordinator, Shannon Taylor, departs in August. New coordinator starts in September.
- Volunteer Appreciation to be held in person on Sat June 25<sup>th</sup> 11am-2pm at Crownsville HQ.
- Monitoring Field app development improving. Has been tested in the field. Desktop management, syncing to LOCATE data base and final product deliverable still need work.
- Staff still catching up to new landowner monitoring visits due to backlog from Covid and flood of easement properties changing ownership due to booming real estate market.

iii. Stewardship

- Updating policies and various manuals and instructions for things like entering data into LOCATE or using LENS to create aerial monitoring reports as some functions have changed a bit. The Records and

Technology manager has been working with IT to update LOCATE functions to make it work more efficiently for staff needs.

- Several requests from landowners for amendments, necessitating Amendment instructions and review and update of policies as there has not been a request for Amendment executed in years.
- Staff continuing to work with the OAG on resolving difficult stew matters. Are now meeting bimonthly rather than quarterly.
- Also working with OAGs closely to review and propose updates to Delegations of Authority to Director re: approvals of stewardship requests, signing easements and IRS Forms 990.
- Discussing best means for MET to legally document, using quit claim deeds or assignments, the assumption of all stewardship responsibilities for easements coheld with low-capacity land trusts, that no longer wish to hold easements (CMHL, Ches WL Heritage) or that have already dissolved (Carrollton Manor).
- Landowners have been requesting lots of resources, mostly tree planting resources. Waterfront easements want shoreline erosion protection. Staff have referring people to DNR Forest Service, Chesapeake Coastal Service and Soil Conservation Districts.

**b) Request to Approve Temporary Commercial Activities on 116 acres in Allegany County J.** Chapman presented the proposal to host more temporary commercial activities, including weddings, than currently allowed by policy. C. Wells moved to approve the request including the Staff's conditions as written in the memo for the Consent Calendar. M. Benjamin seconded the motion. **The committee unanimously recommended approval of this proposal including Staff's noted conditions to the Board of Trustees on the Consent Calendar.**

**c) Request to Approve Amendment on 48.96-acre easement coheld with Land Preservation Trust in Baltimore County J.** Markline presented the proposal to relocate the building area of the easement, add a new 4.415-acre parcel to the easement with its residential right extinguished, and enhance the 100-foot buffer with vegetation. Megan Benjamin moved to approve the request on condition that the OAG office review legal consequences of the amendment proposal. C. Wells seconded the motion. **The committee unanimously recommended approval of this proposal including Staff's noted conditions and no findings of legal consequences by the office of the OAG to the Board of Trustees on the Consent Calendar.**

**d) Request to Approve Amendment on 212.78-acre easement coheld with Eastern Shore Land Conservancy in Dorchester County J.** Markline presented the proposal to amend the easement changing the current subdivision requirement of minimum sized lot according to current zoning regulations to the subdivision of a 29-acre parcel, contingent upon an appraisal confirming absence of impermissible

private benefit and provision of significant conservation gain. Other conditions recommended by staff included restriction of the size of primary residence No. 2 to 3,000 sq ft; creation of a Forest Stewardship Plan and habitat management prescriptions; and restriction of tillage/row cropping to non-habitat areas documented with coordinates. J. Jitkoff moved to approve the request including the Staff's conditions as written in the memo for the Consent Calendar. C. Wells seconded the motion. **The committee unanimously recommended approval of this proposal including Staff's noted conditions to the Board of Trustees on the Consent Calendar.**

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| <p style="text-align:center"><i>2022</i><br/><b><i>LANDS COMMITTEE MEETING</i></b><br/><b><i>SCHEDULE</i></b></p> |
| <p style="text-align:center">January 26</p>   |
| <p style="text-align:center">April 20</p>   |
| <p style="text-align:center">May 25</p>   |
| <p style="text-align:center">August 31</p>  |
| <p style="text-align:center">October 26</p>   |