

## **Notes from meeting of MET's Land Committee Wednesday October 26, 2022 1:00 pm**

Attending Committee Members: G. Burnett, M. Benjamin, J. Jitkoff, A. Jones, M. D'Arcy, C. Wells  
Attending MET Staff: J. Turgeon, J. Markline, J. Chapman, A.G. Carlson, M. Mingus  
Attending OAG staff: R. Medoff

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

### Agenda Item 1:

- a) Easement Program Update:** AG Carlson provided the following update:
- The Masonville Cove conservation easement was recorded on September 15, 2022
  - The Board of Public Works approved the Mt. Vernon conservation easement on (October 26, 2022)
  - Thus far in FY23 MET has recorded 2 conservation easements protecting 191.55 acres
  - Staff are working on a number of conservation easements that may be completed by the end of the calendar year. Staff hope that 8 conservation easements will be recorded between today, October 26, 2022 and December 31, 2022.
  - Michael and I continue to represent MET in several collaborative partnerships:
    - Michael attended LTA's Rally in September; he will attend in the next few weeks: the Blackwater Land Protection Partnership Meeting; Delmarva Restoration Conservation Networks' team meeting on Restoration & Resilience; Scenic Rivers' Conservation Easement Legal Briefing for Legal, Tax and Real Estate Professionals.
    - Ann attended the Nature Conservancy's Coastal Resilience Easement Advisory Committee meeting and continues to attend regular meetings of the project's "Core Team"; in November she will attend the Mt Vernon watershed partnership meeting
- b) Easement Pipeline Report:** AG Carlson presented the pipeline.
- 24 active projects. This means staff are actively engaged with these landowners on the projects.
  - 29 potential projects. This means landowners have contacted us and look like great easement projects but they are not moving forward right now for various reasons, such as: just purchased the property and are waiting to move forward after they do some upgrades; title issue they are working out; boundary issues; or just have not given staff the green light. Staff continue to check-in with these landowners.

### Agenda Item 2: Conservation Easement Projects

- a) 276 acres in Queen Anne's County. A. Carlson presented the proposal. J. Jitkoff moved to approve the proposal as written in the memo for the Consent Calendar. M. D'Arcy seconded the motion. **The Committee unanimously recommended**

- approval of this proposal to the Board of Trustees on the Consent Calendar.**
- b) 60.9 acres in Garrett County. A. Carlson presented the proposal. J. Jitkoff moved to approve the proposal as written in the memo for the Consent Calendar. G. Burnett seconded the motion. **The Committee unanimously recommended approval of this proposal to the Board of Trustees on the Consent Calendar.**
  - c) 128.5 acres in Talbot County with Eastern Shore Land Conservancy. M. Mingus presented the proposal. J. Jitkoff moved to approve the proposal as written in the memo for the Consent Calendar and requested staff discuss and confirm the landowner's intention is to reserve no dwelling unit rights; the Land Committee was amenable to the reservation of a single dwelling unit in the Building Area. G. Burnett seconded the motion. **The Committee unanimously recommended approval of this proposal to the Board of Trustees on the Consent Calendar.**
  - d) 31.98 +/- ac in Harford County with Harford Land Trust. A. Carlson presented the proposal. J. Jitkoff moved to approve the proposal as written in the memo for the Consent Calendar. M. D'Arcy seconded the motion. **The Committee unanimously recommended approval of this proposal to the Board of Trustees on the Consent Calendar.**

Agenda Item 4: Stewardship Program

- a) Program Update: J. Chapman provided the following update:

Monitoring is proceeding well, with a total of 168 monitoring reports having been processed so far. The majority have been generated by contractor Chris Honcharik who has completed 90 aerial reviews using the Lens system, followed by 39 On-the-Ground Visits by Staff (primarily Wendy Foster) and 22 by MET Volunteers. There have not been many Local Land Trust reports submitted, but we expect the vast majority to be reported in January following completion of late summer and fall monitoring activities.

As reflected in the number of items on the agenda, Stewardship staff have been very busy managing requests to exercise rights and to amend easements. Josette is very busy with clarifying request details, negotiating amendment terms as well as drafting amendments approved in previous meetings.

We remain busy with requests for copies of easements from potential property purchasers, clarifying easement terms, and coordinating with local government planning staff on development proposals. We are also actively working with contractors to develop the new GIS based field data collection tool, which is a bit of a challenge.

We continue to work with Michelle Grafton and a trio of Frederick County land trusts to guide the assignment of easements from low stewardship capacity land trusts to the Catocin Land Trust. CLT is willing to accept the assignment of 10 easements coheld with Central Maryland Heritage League and Mid-Maryland Land Trust Association, and be the primary monitors, if MET will assist by granting stewardship funds (\$5K for each). Land Trust Standards and Practices require LTs to have sufficient stewardship funds to carry out monitoring and stewardship, and MET can help in this regard.

Staff continues to work with the OAG on resolving a number of other difficult easement matters stemming from imprecise language, oversights, etc.

- b) Request to Amend Conservation Easement to Extinguish Rights, Talbot County (0950KEN07.TALB). **The Committee recommended approval of this proposal to the Board of Trustees on the Consent Calendar, recommending to accept an amendment with or without the reservation of a single development right and with the suggestion that a Forest Stewardship Plan be developed for the property.**
- c) Request for new Means of Access, Baltimore County (1043HEA12.BACO). **The Committee recommended approval of this proposal to the Board of Trustees on the Consent Calendar, including the condition that the allowed access also serve the two reserved residences which shall be located near the boundary with the benefitting property.**
- d) Request to Amend Conservation Easement to Extinguish Rights, Carroll County (0662HAC02.CARR). **Committee recommended approval of this proposal to the Board of Trustees on the Consent Calendar, including the suggestion that the two parcels be consolidated if cost is not prohibitive.**
- e) Request for Third Amendment to Conservation Easement to Clarify Record and Allowed Activities, Harford County (1138IWL19.HARF). **The Committee recommended approval of this proposal to the Board of Trustees on the Consent Calendar.**
- f) Request to Amend Conservation Easement (0995DUE09.KENT). **The Committee recommended approval of this proposal to the Board of Trustees on the Consent Calendar.**

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<b>Upcoming 2023 Lands Committee meeting dates:</b>	
January 25	
April 19	
May 24	
August 30	
October 25	