

Notes from meeting of MET's Land Committee
Wednesday 10.20.2021
1:00 pm

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

Next meeting: Wednesday, January 26, 2022, at 1 pm

Agenda Item 1:

- a) **Easement Program Update:** A.G. Carlson provided the following update:
- 10 interviews scheduled over the next two weeks for the Conservation Easement Planner position. J. Chapman, J. Turgeon and A.G. Carlson will be conducting the interviews.
 - Program manual is coming along. A.G. Carlson plans to have a solid draft ready before the new planner starts.
 - On October 21, 2021, A.G. Carlson will join A. Jones, M. Benjamin and other Baltimore County land conservation folks in an outreach meeting to landowners.
 - A.G. Carlson attended Land Trust Alliance's 2021 Rally conference (virtual) for continuing education on topics related to conservation easements such as drafting, appraisals, tax case issues, climate resiliency, conservation justice, etc.
- b) **Easement Pipeline Report:** AG Carlson presented the pipeline.

Agenda Item 2: Stewardship Program

- a) **Program Updates:** J. Chapman provide the following program updates:
Staff have performed 42 ground visits to easement properties since the start of the fiscal year, 9 of which were with successor owners. Volunteers have performed an additional 16 visits. Concurrently, 113 aerial (Lens) reviews have been conducted and processed, though a significant number of additional aerial reviews await processing while staff perform ground visits and address landowner requests and compliance issues. Staff is following up in response to two reports of clearing on easement properties in the Critical Area, in Somerset and St. Mary's County, respectively. Staff continue to assist Lower Shore Land Trust staff with their implementation of Lens, which is being funded by LTA and The Nature Conservancy. MET Staff also continue to work with MD Department of Information Technology and the Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative on the development of a replacement field data collection tool for use in monitoring. Staff also are coordinating with Land Trust Assistance Manager Michelle Grafton on a land trust roundtable seminar to be presented in November on commercial events and activities on easement properties. This program will be presented in cooperation with staff from MET, the Rural Legacy Program, MALPF, two county Planning departments, and ESLC.
- b) **Request for approval of separate transfer of non-density parcels – Baltimore County** J. Chapman presented the proposal and Stewardship staff's recommendation

to the Committee. The Committee discussed the existence of “extraordinary circumstances.” J. Jitkoff moved to accept the staff recommendation as set forth in the memo (“Based on cited extraordinary circumstances allow the exception to common ownership of Parcels 48-51 with the balance of the Black Rock Farm easement parcels and allow the future transfer of the subject parcels to a new owner of the Clear Brook Farm (as LLC or as individuals). Require conditions including (1) Rural Legacy Program approval, (2) an overlay easement restricting separate transfer of the newly consolidated Clear Brook Farm parcels, (3) a plat with hatching depicting encumbrances and plat note indicating requirement for common ownership.”) and that Staff must visit the property to verify [the conditions that support] extraordinary circumstances, and that MET accept the Hardwood’s offer to include viewshed protections in the overlay easement. M. Benjamin seconded this motion. The Committee voted to make this recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

- c) **Request for approval of amendment to permit different sized subdivision – Queen Anne’s County** J. Chapman presented the proposal and Stewardship staff’s recommendation to the Committee. M. D’Arcy suggested that Staff share MET’s events policy with the landowners. The Committee discussed that future requests for subdivision and residence locations consider the impact of the viewshed of the historic home (if the historic home still exists). J. Jitkoff mentioned that a larger amount of acreage around the historic home might contribute to maintaining the historic integrity. J. Jitkoff moved to accept the staff recommendation as set forth in the memo (“Staff recommends approval of the Wood request to subdivide a 13 ac parcel for the historic Poplar Grove using one of the reserved rights for either a minimum sized lot or the large parcel; that unless extinguished, one of the three reserved residences be located on the remainder of the agricultural parcel; and that the location of further subdivisions and home sites be located outside of the Critical Area. Further, require an appraisal developed by grantees and paid for by the owner, to assess economic impact of proposed changes.”) A. Jones seconded this motion. The Committee voted to make this recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

2022
<i>LANDS COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE</i>
January 26
April 20
May 25
August 31
October 26