



Maryland DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

MARYLAND ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ARCHAEOLOGY (MACA)

September 7, 2022

Committee Members in Attendance:

Jane Cox, Don Housley, Marian Creveling, Stephen Brighton, Joy Beasley, Robert Wall

Staff in Attendance:

Matt McKnight, Patricia Samford, Elizabeth Hughes, Zac Singer, Dixie Henry, Nell Ziehl

The meeting called to order at 1:02 p.m.

Review of the June 15, 2022 MACA meeting minutes:

The June 15, 2022, minutes were reviewed and accepted in a motion made by Joy Beasley and seconded by Don Housley; the motion was passed unanimously.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Report from the Director — Elizabeth Hughes

Elizabeth Hughes reported that the operating budget for FY24 is being prepared for submission to the Department of Budget and Management. No reductions or increases are anticipated at this time. At the same time, the Maryland Department of Planning is preparing a transition document for submittal to the incoming administration. Thought should be given to new initiatives or priorities in the area of archaeology policy or practice that MACA would want to pitch to the next Governor.

Online submission of paperwork for re-appointments for members whose terms are expiring in 2024 will be due at the end of the year or sooner if possible. Members who do not wish to be reappointed for another term should let Dr. McKnight know in advance of the December meeting.

Chief Archaeologist Report — Matt McKnight

MHT is continuing to make slow but steady progress on our Standards and Guidelines revisions. Dr. McKnight has been focusing lately on the design of sidebar sections and figures for the final document. Matt will be transitioning from focusing on writing tasks (which other people are handling), into working with InDesign to layout the document.

MHT Press, which Lara Westwood has taken over primary responsibility for, is working with Dennis Curry to publish his *Canavest* manuscript (Heater's Island). Dennis has a fairly complete draft and Matt has been working with Lara to provide sample RFPs for design services, and work to get Dennis' Maps into GIS to enhance them for the final publication.

Our intern Luc Renaux's last day was 8/24. He has accepted a position with RC Goodwin providing GIS support for their maritime division.

Matt was able to get the March edition of *MD Archeology* out in June. Volume 55 (1) included an article on clay figurines by Silas Hurry, a report on the lithics from the Nursery site in MoCo, and an article on spotting fake projectile points by Zac Singer, updated article submission procedures, and three Curator's Choice pieces by folks from the MAC Lab. Volume 55(2) is due out at the end of this month.

Our deadlines for the FY23 Non-Cap Round came and went since the last MACA meeting. ITAs were due on 6/27 and the full applications were due on 8/1. MHT received 23 complete applications requesting a total of just under 1 million in funds (\$991K). A total of 7 projects are either for archaeological work or include archaeological components. The staff review panel meets later this month and will make a recommendation to the MHT Board at their October meeting.

Archaeology staff held a successful Workshop in Archaeology on Saturday, August 27th. Our keynote speaker was Dr. Laura Masur at Catholic University who presented her research at three Jesuit plantations in Maryland; work which was funded thru an MHT Historic Preservation Non-Capital Grant. Dr. Masur and her students have put together a webpage stillwespeak.org that highlights this research. About 70 members of the public participated in the various workshop sessions held throughout the building.

The hiring process for the Research Archaeologist position has moved forward. We were able to post the position description and call for applications on 8/9. The deadline was 8/23 and we have received a cert list with 30 individuals on it. We hope to be able to hold interviews in late September and early October and be able to make an offer by the end of October.

On 8/11, Matt visited the MAC Lab to meet with Dr. Lauren Lipiello (Frederick Community College) to look at the 2013-2015 Biggs Ford collection. Dr. Lipiello has established a long-term loan with the MAC Lab and will be using portions of the collection for teaching, display, and to build a "Digital Biggs Ford Museum" with her students.

On the fieldwork front, Matt was in the field for several projects in June, July, and August. On June 21, Matt, Zac and Luc returned to Barwick's Ordinary (Caroline Co.) to collect total station data and assist Washington College with buttoning up the site. From 7/25-7/27, all three worked with NPS staff at Piscataway Park to collect gradiometer and GPR data from some areas where prior MagSusc work suggested anomalous soils. Unfortunately, much of the disturbance seems to be largely related to a large drainage pipeline installed during the 1970s. Matt has a meeting with NPS in a week to discuss findings. And on 8/5 we collected GPR data at the former site of Laurel Cemetery in Baltimore; a historic African American burial ground largely destroyed by developers in the mid-20th century.

Underwater Activities Report — Susan Langley

Troy Nowak has been dealing with a steadily increasing load of compliance applications. Some of these have engendered the need for site visits and, occasionally, remote sensing survey. Archaeology Intern, Luc Renaux, participated on one survey.

In September, Troy will be making a presentation and co-chairing a session at a multi-day oil spill response training being hosted by NOAA.

Dr. Langley worked with Suzanne Mbollo and Anne Raines to prepare an application to the National Park Service (NPS) for Maritime Heritage grant funds. Funds are limited nationally but MHT plans to use any monies received to fund subgrants for Preservation Projects that address the effects of climate change, or address the threats of climate change to preempt damage. This has been submitted and NPS has stated State Historic Preservation Offices will be notified by January 18, 2023.

Susan continued to work with National Geographic and expressed her appreciation to Tricia, Nichole, Scott, and all the staff at the MAC Lab who graciously permitted the interruption of their work and general disarray for a day.

Susan led a paddling tour of Mallows Bay on Aug. 20 for the Potomac Riverkeeper's annual Riverpalooza and it was also NOAA's Get Into Your Sanctuary Day. She also noted that the US Post Office has issued a set of commemorative stamps of all NOAA's National Marine Sanctuaries.

Susan also taught a colonial textile workshop at the Maryland Center for History and Culture and both Troy and Susan have been participating in myriad meetings and responding to a number of citizens' requests and questions.

Terrestrial Activities and Synthesis Report — Zac Singer

Between June and September, Dr. Singer reviewed two applications for Terrestrial Archaeology permits.

Zac reported that the MHT Volunteer Archaeology Lab has been regularly meeting on Tuesdays from 9AM-3PM. Lab days have regularly attracted 5 to 8 volunteers. The lab recently finished artifacts from the Maiden's Choice I and II sites for curation at the MAC Lab. The lab volunteers are currently helping rehouse and catalog materials generated from the 1969 excavation of the Middle to Late Woodland Reeves Sites.

Zac also reported that he is serving on the MHT Easement committee, the MHT Annual Meeting committee, the Non-Capital Grants FY23 Review committee, and the Research Archaeologist selection committee.

Zac is also drafting guidelines for successful ground penetrating radar surveys on archaeological sites and cemeteries in Maryland. This guidance will be incorporated into the revised *Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Investigations in Maryland*.

On June 21st, Matt, Zac, and Luc visited the Washington College Field School at Barwick's Ordinary to conduct total station mapping work. During the visit, a cache of more than 10 contracting stemmed projectile points was recovered from the Plowzone/Subsoil interface.

Zac gave a public talk for the Gate House Museum in Sykesville on June 23rd. The talk was titled "The Past in Your Backyard: What You Should Do When You Find an Artifact" and focused on preserving the context of archaeological discoveries and reporting discoveries to professional archaeologists.

On Saturday June 25th, Zac lead a Certified Archaeological Technician (CAT) workshop at the MHT Archaeology Lab where he taught the Lithic Technology workshop and the Pre-Colonial Ceramics workshop. The MAC Lab supplied the hands-on teaching materials from the Type Collection.

On June 30th, Zac and MHT Summer Archaeology Intern Luc Renaux conducted a ground penetrating radar survey at Pindell Bluff in the Jug Bay Wetland Sanctuary in Anne Arundel County to assist Anne Arundel County's Cultural Resources Section and the Lost Towns Project in investigating a 17th-century colonial site.

On Friday July 1st, Zac and Luc visited Dr. Laura Masur at the Bohemia site in Cecil County to learn about the progress of the FY21 Non-Capital Grant excavations of Jesuit sites in Maryland.

Zac met with geologist Mark Tucker at the MAC Lab on Wednesday July 6th to conduct a macroscopic toolstone sourcing study of rhyolite projectile points in the MAC Lab's type collection. Mr. Tucker has characterized many outcrops of rhyolite from the South Mountain area. Preliminary observations indicate that many of the rhyolite projectile points in the MAC Lab's collections fit the macroscopic characteristics associated with South Mountain rhyolite. Zac and Mark will be presenting the results of this study at the Eastern States Archaeological Federation (ESAF) Annual Meeting at Shippensburg University in November.

On August 31st, Zac received the final version of the technical report for Historic St. Mary's City's FY21 Non-Capital Grant for a remote sensing survey for the Mill Field area. With major development proposed for the Mill Field tract over the next two decades, the 2021 geophysical survey was designed with the objective of supplying additional information about subsurface cultural resources that could guide planning decisions.

Zac received permission from DNR to conduct an archaeological survey at Seneca Creek State Park's River Road Hunting Area. Zac will be working with volunteers to investigate the bluffs area, which have yielded at least 3 fluted points reported by avocational archaeologists.

MAC Lab Activities Report — Patricia Samford

The MAC Lab completed their first Public Archaeology season at the circa 1660-1690 Melon Field site, located at JPPM. One of the several subfloor pits revealed through this summer's work was 25% excavated. In addition to an inventive Instagram post showing a time lapse excavation of the multiple layers in the feature, we also shot footage on how to draw a feature profile for an Open Educational Resource video. This video will supplement the four other educational videos on conservation, lab and curation methods produced earlier this year.

The lab is nearing the end of the design phase of the expansion project and we are working out the details in the construction documents. Marshall Craft Associates has provided an option to create a new curation structure joined to the lab by a short hyphen.

Gloria King Research Fellow Matt Borden, an MA student at the College of William and Mary is working on a study of ceramic accumulation as a means of studying demographic patterns in the Upper Potomac, and visited the lab for his fellowship in August.

Work continues on cataloging of the Stearn's Site (18CV17), a Middle and Late Woodland shell midden and village site located on the park and dug by Laurie Steponaitis in the 1980s.

The park has been given the go-ahead by the National Park Service Civil Rights grant program to begin its' historical and archaeological study of the Wallville community during the late 19th and early 20th

centuries.

Volunteer Michael Block is taking high resolution photos of projectile points, and other artifacts at staff request, using a technique called Focus Stacking. This creates a composite shot of an artifact with extremely high detail using a macro lens at variable focal lengths. Michael hopes to help develop an AI-driven tool to identify likely point types from photographs using points in our collections as a reference library.

Filming for a National Geographic channel series *Drain the Oceans* took place at the park and lab in early August. The episode, which features Susan Langley, will be about the Colonial Marines during the War of 1812.

A STEM program was held in July with 300 Anne Arundel County middle school students—part of a program with PEARL.

Dr. Samford provided the committee with an overview of conservation activities being undertaken by the lab.

Patricia Samford and Sara Rivers Cofield both provided workshops for the Annual Workshop in Archaeology held last month.

Rod Cofield joined JPPM as its Executive Director on August 10th.

Review and Compliance Activities Report — Dixie Henry

The Project Review and Compliance Unit continues to successfully fulfill its Section 106 responsibilities, complete reviews, and provide technical assistance to program customers via hybrid office/telework, conference calls, virtual meetings/site visits, in-person site visits and meetings, and participation in interagency working groups.

Project review submittals remain at a steady volume – in August of 2022, the PRC unit reviewed a total of 552 state and federal projects (approx. 200 more/month than at the beginning of the summer).

Beth continues to work on our E-106 initiative with Greg Brown and the IT folks at MDP. The E106 team continues to meet regularly, and right now we are awaiting revisions by MDP IT staff to the MHT Reviewer pages to enable further testing of the system.

Dr. Henry has also continued working on drafting revisions/updates to the “Reports and Documentation” section of the *Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Investigations in Maryland*.

Beth and Dixie have participated in multiple interagency coordination meetings including: monthly JE meetings with MDE/COE et al., MDOT SHA quarterly coordination meeting, two coordination meetings with MEA, and meeting with the NPS National Capital Region Section 106 coordinator.

Beth participated in a virtual meeting with ACHP staff and a graduate intern to discuss MD SHPO perspectives on agreement documents as part of ACHP’s effort to update guidance and training on agreement documents. Beth sent follow-up emails to ACHP with examples from Maryland.

Beth and Dixie have had multiple coordination meetings with Zac Singer in his role as State Terrestrial Archeologist regarding coordination on compliance and easement project reviews, consultant issues, best practices, and cemetery concerns.

Beth and Dixie viewed Army webinars and participated in virtual public meetings regarding the Army's initiative to modernize their Army Civil Works policy priorities - focusing particularly on better serving the needs of underserved communities and pursuing potential rulemaking actions regarding the Corps' Regulatory Program's implementing regulations (Appendix C) for Section 106 of the NHPA. Beth and Dixie prepared a letter for Elizabeth Hughes' signature to the Department of the Army with MD SHPO comments – concurring that it would be beneficial to all parties to rescind the use of Appendix C and either rely on 36 CFR 800 or develop a Program Alternative that best ensures compliance with the regulations promulgated by the ACHP as well as improved Tribal consultation and consultation with other underserved communities.

Dixie reviewed the *Ellicott City Safe and Sound Flood Mitigation Project Archaeological Assessment* submitted under the existing Programmatic Agreement executed among the COE, ACHP, MHT, and Howard County, concurring that archeological monitoring and limited Phase I investigations are warranted for the Lower Main Street Terraced Floodplain project area and the Extended North Tunnel - Patapsco River Outfall Area. Dixie also concurred that protective fencing should be installed around an extant house as well as the site of an early 19th c. house/tavern in an effort to protect these areas from inadvertent impacts during construction near the 8777 Frederick Road Staging Area.

OTHER BUSINESS

Dr. McKnight provided an overview of the activities of SalvageArc; the Instagram handle and business of a privy digger and relic hunter that has been active in several historic districts throughout Baltimore. SalvageArc donates some artifacts to the Baltimore Museum of Industry (BMI), but damages and modifies many others and sells them online through the business' website. SalvageArc has been featured in several news pieces and has been highlighted on the Maryland Open for Business blog, which is encouraging the sale of Baltimore artifacts. The committee discussed the issue and agreed that Matt and Elizabeth should reach out to the BMI and Department of Commerce about the issues inherent in promoting the sale of any historical artifacts, which encourages emulation and the further destruction of archaeological resources.

Selection of Next Meeting Date — Wednesday, December 7, 2022, at 1:00 PM in the MHT Board conference room (or virtually).

After discussion of other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:04 p.m., in a motion made by Don Housley and seconded by Stephen Brighton; the motion was unanimously approved.