



Steering Committee (SC) Minutes
Friday, June 10, 2022 10:00 AM – 12:15 PM
Virtual via Zoom

Participants: On record at Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition (MLTC) (58)

Hand-outs:

- **Minutes of March 11, 2022** (Members only: <https://massland.org/steering-committee-meeting-materials>)
- **6.10.22 MLTC Policy Update** (emailed and on Members only SC meeting materials site.)
- NOTE: Chat stream on record at MLTC

1. 10:03 Call to Order & Chair Report -- Kathy Orlando, Steering Committee Chair

- a. Kathy called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. All introduced themselves and noted their current position and organization.
- b. *Review of Minutes of March 11, 2022.* Buzz Constable moved and Christa Collins seconded to accept the minutes. Kathy called the vote hearing no discussion. **VOTE:** Unanimous
- c. *Next MLTC SC meetings:* Friday, September 23 2022 (in person at Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, Easthampton); Friday December 9th (virtual)

2. Presentation of Nominee(s) and Election, FY23 MLTC Board of Directors – Kathy Orlando

- a. Kathy thanked Bob Wilber for his service to MLTC as he has resigned from the Board due to his new role at the state as Director of Conservation Services (EEA).
- b. Kathy introduced Cormac Collier, current president and CEO of the Nantucket Conservation Foundation, as MLTC's new board candidate to fill the vacancy created by Bob Wilber's departure. Kathy explained the eligibility to vote by membership level and Robb Johnson posted the list of eligible voting organizations and launched the Zoom poll to vote. Rita moved that Cormac Collier be elected the board and Buzz amended the motion that the SC recommend Cormac Collier to the Board of Directors for election to the board. By a voice vote that friendly amendment to the motion passed. Hearing no further discussion Kathy called the vote on the amended motion. **Poll VOTE:** 82% in favor; 0% opposed; 18% abstained.
- c. Buzz thanked everyone and noted he is stepping down as MLTC Board president/chairperson but not from the board, and thanked Cynthia Henshaw for agreeing to become the new president.

3. MLTC Staff Report -- Robb Johnson, Executive Director (see Attachment A)

- a. Robb provided updates as outlined in Attachment A:
 - i. *2022 Land Conservation Conference (MLCC):* was a success and Robb acknowledged all of Barbara Chrenko's work with the new platform.
 - ii. *2023 Land Conservation Conference:* Robb reviewed the planning process for the next MLCC, which will be live as of now, and is looking for volunteers to serve on the ad hoc MLCC Planning Committee which usually meets 2-3 times before December. Robb requested that those interested in volunteering to please contact him ASAP.
 - iii. *Stronger Together Series:* Robb noted the success of the series thus far and reviewed plans for the upcoming Stronger Together programs.
- b. *Statehouse Lobby Day:* MLTC is participating, consistent with our strategic plan and Robb invited people to sign up to participate in legislator meetings, either live or via videoconference. (see Attachment A).
- c. *Land Trust (LT) / State Agency (SA) Retreat:* is being planned for late fall and Robb asked for those interested in working on the LT/SA Retreat Planning Committee please chat/email Robb ASAP. Probably 2-3 meetings beginning this summer/fall.

- d. *MLTC's 5-year Strategic Plan*: Robb thanked everyone who participated in the process. Pending the Board's vote to approve it this afternoon, a link to the final plan will be posted in eNews and on the MLTC website.
- e. Robb's report included a Land Trust Alliance (LTA) update as Jen Plowden; LTA's New England Program Manager could not attend. Robb reviewed announcements including an upcoming webinar and Advocacy Days report (See: Attachment A).

4. State Agency Updates –Kurt Gaertner, Assistant Secretary for Environmental Policy and Bob Wilber, Director of Conservation Services (EEA)

- a. Kurt provided the following staff and program updates.
 - i. Kurt welcomed Bob Wilber in his new role at DCS and noted the new EEA secretary Beth Card and Gary Moran, most recently the Deputy Commissioner at Department of Environmental Protection, as new EEA undersecretary for Environmental Policy and Climate Resilience.
 - ii. Kurt was pleased to announce that Irene Del Bono has returned to be the interim CR reviewer until the position is filled. Kurt noted that the selected candidate during the first hiring round accepted another job, and the CR position will be reposted soon. He requested word-of-mouth publicity for the opening.
 - iii. Kurt referenced Robb Johnson's email which forwarded a message from Kurt and was recently sent to land trusts re: delays in the CR review process, and the EEA's accommodation of extending CR deadlines associated with grant programs to accommodate the CR reviewer vacancy. Kurt thanked everyone for their patience. Robb asked anyone who didn't get this email to let him know so he can forward it.
 - iv. Kurt introduced Melissa Cryan and Vanessa Farny for state grant updates:
 - 1. The second round for the Conservation Partnership Grant; Landscape Partnership Grant; and the Drinking Water Supply Protection Grant will be announced soon and all applicants in round one were awarded. Melissa thanked everyone for their patience and participation.
 - 2. LAND and PARC grant applications are due at July 14th; Conservation Partnership Grant applications are due July 18th by 3PM. All applications are due electronically and Melissa requested everyone carefully review the process and procedure for both electronic and hard copy.
 - 3. The FY22 LWCF apportionment letter was received from the Dept. of Interior for \$5.7m and these funds have already been dedicated. More funds will be dedicated to the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership grant program and the Land and Water Conservation Fund has been increased. Procurements will continue going forward.
 - 4. The Massachusetts Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) will be updated as this process is linked to federal funding.
 - 5. Further discussion on CRs based on questions:
 - a. In response to chat questions on the Conservation Land Tax Credit (CLTC), Tom Anderson will continue to manage the process and will follow-up with current applicants. Regarding grant awards that require CRs vs. CLTC required CRs Kurt clarified that the prioritization will be driven by fiscal year deadlines for grants and calendar year deadlines for CLTC.
 - b. Vanessa Johnson-Hall questioned the recently released revision to the CR model and Kurt clarified that this includes no substantive changes, just administrative updates, including updating the Secretary's name. Kurt recommended submitting CRs ASAP to get them in queue so that workload can be anticipated and requested that deadlines be highlighted. Any additional updates and questions will be addressed in eNews on the CR process specifically concerning deadlines. There was further discussion on CR process and the challenges with the pandemic and need for live notarization, etc.. Contact Vanessa Farny with any questions on this process.

- c. Bob Wilber assured everyone that the CR process is in good shape despite challenge of vacant position. He thanked all DCS staff who've been covering the vacancy and asked for patience. He noted the critical importance of the CR reviewer position and the third party review of CRs has essentially eliminated the sham CR/Conservation Easement issues occurring elsewhere in the country.
- d. Kathy Orlando asked for clarification as to whether the CR Reviewer has to be a state resident. Kurt clarified that the CR Reviewer position must be either living in the Commonwealth or be within commuting distance from an office for in person workdays (currently 1/week). Kathy Orlando also thanked Tom Anderson for all his work on the CR process and Vanessa Johnson-Hall also thanked Kurt for the CR update email.
- v. Kurt referenced the Policy Brief summary concerning the budget and noted that the capital budget for conservation (land acquisition and stewardship) has actually increased vs. what is shown in the budget due to advance spending of FY23 funds in FY22.
- vi. Recommendations for FY 23 conservation spending will be done using current priorities with the exception of new cranberry bog acquisition projects (line item in FY23 budget) that includes a CLTC option for cranberry bog renovation that is going live today.
- vii. Two regulations being released today on electric bicycles.
- viii. Kurt acknowledged the recent letter sent to the Senate President concerning the Public Lands Preservation Act submitted by a number of LT constituents, including MLTC, opposing an option to provide cash-in-lieu of replacement land. Kurt noted that he believes that Commonwealth has been working to protect Article 97 lands in its application of EEA's current "No net loss" policy. For the benefit of listeners less familiar with the topic, Robb clarified that negotiations are underway between the House and Senate to resolve differences in the version of PLPA legislation each house passed. The key difference concerns a "cash in lieu" provision for Article 97 lands coming out of conservation. It was noted that such cash-in-lieu arrangements have been occurring under EEA's administration of its current policy. Robb noted that, while MLTC had worked with MACC and CRWA and EEA to improve and tighten language concerning the "cash in lieu" provision in the Senate version of the bill, since that time coalition partners and House leaders have expressed strong opposition to the "cash in lieu" provision and MLTC has decided to join others is opposing the provision outright. Robb apologized to the EEA about the shift in position, but cited the impact of new information, the untimely death of passionate PLPA advocate Phil Saunders, and shifting political dynamics. Kurt clarified EEA's commitment to seeing the entire bill needs to pass as an important piece of legislation. Robb also agreed but emphasized need to address the "cash in lieu" and Buzz clarified that everyone is working in good faith. Kathy O asked for those who wish more information to please contact MLTC and she thanked Bob, Kurt and everyone who is working on this challenging legislation and noted the value of these SC meetings. Volunteer Phil Saunders, who passed away on May 17th, was acknowledged for his legacy work in support of this legislation for the past 25 years.
- ix. Robb referred attendees to chat references posted for federal grant options.

5. Policy Update & MLTC Policy Committee Update – Linda Orel (Trustees) and Emily Myron (TNC). Referencing the Policy Update, Linda and Emily provided the following update:

- a. Emily noted the budgets which were the focus of work noting that all requests were accepted and overall the Green Budget was funded well.
- b. The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) was reviewed. About half of Massachusetts allotment has been allocated, and thus far very little has been allocated to environmental programs. Advocates are working to see that more of the second tranche goes to our priorities, but timing of allocation that is uncertain at the moment. It may get pushed to the next legislative session.
- c. Emily gave the State's Legislative update by each bill and actions be taken as described in the Policy Update and she asked to be contacted ASAP with any questions or concerns. Emily also asked everyone to contact their legislators about the CLTC increase.

- d. Linda summarized the Act Establishing a Massachusetts Flood Risk Protection program; noted that the PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) bill needs Senate Ways and Means review; work ongoing to establish the Office of Outdoor Recreation under EEA and will pursue with new administration or legislative action.
- e. Heidi Ricci noted that Act providing for the public health by establishing an ecologically based mosquito management program in the Commonwealth is on hold as the sponsor is not running for re-election. The goal of the legislation is to revise current practice for ecologically sustainability.
- f. MLTC is supporting the S.2147 / H.3306, An Act to Improve Outdoor Lighting, Conserve Energy, and Increase Dark-Sky Visibility. Robb noted this bill is in our “Also support” category so our involvement has been mostly limited to “signing-on” in favor.
- g. State Administrative Update was reviewed as outlined in Policy Update.
- h. Heidi and Linda encouraged all to review the Mosquito Control Task Force update.
- i. For the MA Clean Energy and Climate Plan, individual LTs and organizational letters are being written on targets and goals.
- j. The Resilient Land initiative is still pending but consensus of support was noted. Emily thanked everyone at the EEA for reconciling the draft based on incoming comments. Kurt noted that final Plan should be released by the end of the month.
- k. Solar Energy Siting. Linda noted the tremendous amount of work on this and thanked Heidi for her work. Heidi provided an update on the conference committee’s progress working on improvements to update a document. Link to sign-on for support:
<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=FL2s4J3Wqk6PAn7P8ogjL8OuHlBxx3xGIQjERK-L5sZUM1M3MDBST05HRVVQUThYskVSN1ZISTNWRy4u>
- l. Emily reviewed the Federal Policy Update and referred all to review the Policy Update. She noted that Recovering America’s Wildlife Act (RAWA) would direct significant funding to states for action. Even though a bi-partisan bill, there is significant work required to finalize. Emily asked for support of this legislation by contacting your congressional delegation.
- m. Emily noted that the “gubernatorial candidate conservation briefing book” has been drafted by a consultant and it is currently being circulated to all candidates for major statewide office. Meetings with candidates are being scheduled to discuss environmental priorities. Emily thanked MLTC’s Jack Clarke and others for their work on this.
- n. Everyone was encouraged to participate in Funding for Nature & Climate Beacon Hill Lobby Day, June 22nd cosponsored by Mass Audubon, MLTC, AMC, MACC, and MassRivers.

6. Committee and Working Group Updates

- a. *Young Land Professionals (YLP)* – Maggie Brown (Greenbelt). The last meeting in April at Blue Hill’s Trailside Museum was a great success with 20 attendees. YLP is currently seeking two new members for the YLP Organizing Committee and ideas are being reviewed for the next event. Maggie encouraged organizations to remind their new staff about YLP and being added to the email list through YLP page on MLTC website. Maggie also summarized YLP mission to provide a network for professionals in the first ten years of their career in conservation.
- b. *Valuing Nature’s Services*: Final products and dissemination ideas -- Christa Collins (Sudbury Valley Trustees) summarized that the project was a three year effort by MLTC to develop the toolkit to be used by LTs working with their municipal staff and residents on the economic argument for conservation. See the MLTC webpage for the 30 page white paper on the economic benefits for conservation; the PowerPoint presentation template which can be customized to specific community; a handout and a user guide. Goal is to get word out on the value of this tool. Encouraged to use this on Lobby Day and with networking with other groups for dissemination. Christa welcomed questions.
- c. *Amicus Committee*: Buzz Constable (MLTC) and Jenny Hansell (BNRC). Jenny gave an update on the (Berkshires Natural Resource Council) Trails litigation case in Richmond concerning abutter complaints on land parcel access road issues due to increased use especially during the pandemic. She provided an update and noted that case is now in Land Court. The Richmond Annual Town Meeting passed overwhelmingly a local Zoning Bylaw update to guarantee general public access to open space and conservation land. Core issue is that the access road is not designed for high volume use and may be

ruled a private road. Buzz noted that further discussion on this is a matter of legal counsel and a legislative solution to the issue is unlikely. The conserved parcel is relatively new, abutter issues have evolved since acquisition and were aggravated by dramatic increased use during the pandemic. Brings up issue of perceived “private road” issues vs. actual public roads. Rita Grossman suggested that the MLCC have a workshop to talk about abutter issues and access/use of conserved lands. Buzz suggested that all LTs check their Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws to assure that public education and passive recreation is part of the LT’s work. Please contact Jenny with questions.

- d. Agriculture – Kathy Orlando (Sheffield Land Trust). Kathy noted that work is continuing on the statewide Farmland Action Plan and that the APR program is looking for applications.

7. Announcements

- a. Cormac Collier thanked everyone for their vote of support for his nomination to the Board.

12:15 Meeting Adjourned: Hearing no further requests for discussion, Kathy asked for a motion to adjourn. Alain Peteroy so moved and Rita Grossman seconded the motion. Kathy called the vote. **VOTE:** Unanimous.

ATTACHMENT A: MLTC Staff Update



Steering Committee Meeting
June 16, 2022
via Zoom

Next Meetings

- Friday September 23: Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, Easthampton (stay tuned for possible call in option)
- Friday December 9: Via Zoom

Thank you to founding MLTC Trustee **Bob Wilber** stepping down due to his new role!



MLTC Trustee, 2011 - 2022

We're grateful for your **past and future** service to the conservation community!

Special Board of Trustee Election

We'll use a Zoom Poll for a vote on the proposed slate, with the options "In favor", "Opposed" and "Abstain".

Per MLTC bylaws, only land trusts & land conservation organizations that are current MLTC members at the \$250 level or above are eligible to vote.

If there are multiple representatives of your organization here today, please message each other to agree which of you will vote.

If not voting, you can ignore the poll.

FY22 MLTC Members Eligible to Vote

Acton Conservation Trust	Grafton Land Trust	Raccoon Neck Conservation Trust
Andover Village Improvement Society	Griston Conservation Trust	Princeton Land Trust
Arlington Land Trust	Groton/Lake/Laurens	Richmond Land Trust
Attleboro Land Trust	Harvard Conservation Trust	Seabrook Land Conservation Trust
Barnstable Land Trust	Harwich Conservation Trust	Sheffield Land Trust
Berkshire Natural Resources Council	Hilltown Land Trust	Shoeborn Rural Land Foundation
Berkshire Open Space Foundation	Hingham Land Conservation Trust	Sipson Island Trust
Berkshire Trails Assoc./Berkshire Open Land Trust	Ilwaco Land Trust	Southborough Open Land Foundation
Brewster Conservation Trust	Land Preservation Society of Northern Inc	Southern Valley Trustees
Buzzards Bay Coalition	Lincoln Land Conservation Trust	The 300 Committee
Carroll Conservation Foundation	Littleton Conservation Trust	The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts
Chatham Conservation Foundation	Marshfield Conservancy	The Natural Conservancy
Chelmsford Land Conservation Trust	Mass Audubon	The Trust for Public Land
Colchester Conservation Trust	Minnetonka Land Trust	The Trustees of Reservations
Common Ground Land Trust	Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust	Upper Charles Conservation Land Trust
Concord Land Conservation Trust	Nantucket Conservation Foundation	Walden Woods Project
Dover Land Conservation Trust	Nantucket Land Bank	Wareham Land Trust
Dudley Conservation Land Trust	Nantucket Land Council	Westfield Conservation Trust
Dumfries Rural Land Trust	Native Land Conservancy	Westport Land Conservation Trust
East Quabbin Land Trust	New England Forestry Foundation	White Oak Land Conservation Society
Essex County Greenbelt	Newton Conservancy	Wildlands Trust
Franklin Land Trust	North County Land Trust	
	Opicum Land Trust	
	Ottum Conservation Trust	

Candidate for the MLTC Board of Trustees for 3-year term beginning July 1, 2022



Corneas Callier moved to Nantucket in 2001 and began work with the Nantucket Land Council as their Resource Ecologist. In 2005 he took the helm as Executive Director, continuing their mission of advocacy, water research and land conservation. Since 2019, Corneas has served as President and CEO of the Nantucket Conservation Foundation, a conservation organization with over 27,000 acres in ownership – amounting to one-third of the island. After receiving a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies from the University of Vermont, Corneas got his hands dirty working on a number of organic farms around the country from Vermont to Oregon to Hawaii. He returned to environmental research and policy work at Oregon State University and the Cape Cod National Seashore before moving to Nantucket. He's an avid gardener who can be found tending to his vegetable and flower gardens when he's not walking, running and biking on Nantucket's open space or fishing the beaches of its south shore.

MLTC Staff Report

Massachusetts Land Conservation Conference

- Thanks to everyone who planned, presented and attended!
- Recordings available on conference portal through June 30th
- Planning to be in person again next March
- Let Robb know if you want to learn more about joining our **Planning Committee!**



Stronger Together Series

Two great Learning Collaboratives so far this year

- Succession Planning for Land Trusts (37 participants from 25 MA land trusts)
- Boot Camp for Land Trust Board Members (31 participants from 20 MA land trusts)

Planning underway for our next Learning Collaborative:

- Ensuring Conservation Permanence (Fall 2022)
- Collaboration with LTA -- **substantial discount for MLTC members**

Next Stronger Together Networking Call:

- Filling Land Trust Staff Vacancies in a Competitive Market Thursday June 16, 4 – 5 pm. See last eNews for registration.

Statehouse Lobby Day

- Co-Sponsored with Mass Audubon, Mass Rivers, AMC and MACC
- Focus: Funding for Land and Climate
- Live and Virtual Options
- Tues June 21: Issue Briefing and Rally (virtual)
- Wed June 22: Legislative Meetings (Beacon Hill and Virtual)
- Learn more and Register here: [Registration for Funding for Nature & Climate Lobby Day \(google.com\)](#)

Land Trust / State Agency Retreat

Likely a Thursday and Friday in early November

Location and Format TBD soon

Let Robb know if you want to learn more about joining our **Planning Committee!**

MLTC Strategic Plan

- Thanks to all who provided input
- Trustees will vote to adopt later today
- Watch this month's eNews for a link to the final plan!

LTA Report

Upcoming Webinar

June 21, 2 pm

How Land Trusts Can Better Serve the LGBTQ+ Community

- the intersection of LGBTQ+ and environmental issues
- incorporating the LGBTQ+ community into decision making
- how other organizations have found success

June 21, 2 pm. (\$70 members, \$100 non-members)
Info here: <https://www.landtrustalliance.org/webinar/how-land-trusts-can-better-serve-lgbtq-community>

Advocacy Days report

Held May 9 – 12 in DC

- First fly-in since 2019
- 100+ land trust leaders from 31 states participated
- Thanks to Colin Novick and Ray Lyons for representing us! (please fill out your debrief reports if you haven't already)

For more info. on LTA Policy Priorities, including the Conservation Easement Integrity Act, the next Farm Bill and a proposed Forest Conservation Easement Program, see: [2022 Policy Agenda | Land Trust Alliance](#)

Questions? Comments?