



Friends of Accotink Creek Town Meeting

May 19, 2014

Next Meeting: June 16, 2014

Audrey Moore Rec Center, Clubroom 3
(Third Monday of each month)

Present:

Kris Unger

Philip Latasa

Suzy Foster

Heather Breiner

Liz Kirchner

Ted Welch

Flint Webb

Giulio Porta - Welcome Giulio!

Ron Wilcox – Welcome Ron!

Dave Lincoln – Welcome Dave!

Special guests:

Tony Vellucci, FLAP President

Angelo El Garal, Frost Middle School, + Erica Whitehurst-Gaballo, mom

Connor Dale, Frost Middle School + Olivia Gutes, au pair

Upcoming events:

· Next FACC meeting, June 16, 2014

· Next FLAP meeting, May 22, 2014

· Whole Foods 5% Day, June 11, 2014

· Lake Accotink Park Stream Monitoring, June 14, 2014

Action Items:

- *Everyone is to bring grant ideas to the next meeting*
- *Flint – Follow up on Fairfax City Parks plan*
- *Kris – Send budget letter*
- *Kris – Send Brookfield Park letter*
- *Philip – Propose cleanup sites to the Federation of Civic Associations*

FACC Subjects Discussed –

• *Frost Middle School:*

Our guests from Frost Middle School each presented a description of an Environmental Stewardship Project proposal.

Angelo noted the decline of native American ladybugs versus the prevalence of Asian ladybugs. He proposes to plant roses in his yard to attract aphids, then remove Asian ladybugs while encouraging native ladybugs.

Connor proposes to place baited insect habitat houses to study and record the insect activity.

- Dave Lincoln:

Dave contacted FACC to report the paved CCT near Hunter Village Drive has washed out due to water bypassing a large logjam. Philip passed the report on to the Park Authority, which was already aware and working with DPWES to remove the logjam, followed by trail repair.

Dave also mentioned the CCT bridge approach below Old Keene Mill is being undercut by overflow from a side oxbow channel. Tony suggested checking the Accotink Creek Watershed Plan for projects proposed in the area.

There was discussion of how Dave might advance the FACC mission in communication with the Daventry civic association and Fort Belvoir.

Dave will also contribute a Calamo Run description to our Accotink Walks webpage.

- Potomac Watershed Cleanup:

Philip reported we completed the cleanup season May 3rd with a record 458 volunteers who removed 351 bags of trash and 31 tires. There is no word yet on the possible stipend of \$2 per volunteer from our new partner, Project Clean Stream, an initiative of the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay.

Ted mused on the topic of engaging civic associations at cleanups which could become “the grain of sand around which to form an environmental pearl”. Suzy noted, with regard to civic association engagement, that the DPWES stormwater improvements at Mantua E.S. are in need of civic involvement. Suzy & Ron will confer.

Tony mentioned FLAP has discussed an “adopt a storm drain” concept with DPWES, but grating on storm drains causes VDOT objections.

Flint advised the Federation of Civic Associations wants to adopt a cleanup site each spring and fall, rotating through different parts of the county. Accotink is the objective this fall, and Difficult Run next spring. Philip will suggest possible locations.

- Wakefield Run:

Walk - Kris reported M.O.R.E. was working on trails across Wakefield Run during the May 4th stream walk, affording the opportunity to discuss possible collaboration. Kris noted M.O.R.E. has led large trail restoration projects in other parks, and there may be possibilities for collaboration on restoring trails in Accotink.

Dedication – Kris reported the May 17th dedication, hosted by Tony, included a number of attendees, including from DPWES, Dominion Power, Supervisor Cook, and Don Waye, who nominated the name “Wakefield Run”.

There was discussion of when we should resume biological and chemical monitoring of Wakefield Run. Liz is aiming at June. Suzy suggested involving the Green Atoms.

- Represent FACC:

Vienna Green Expo April 24th

Ted reported the Expo went well, but remarked on the need for an improved display.

Discussion postponed to next meeting.

Fairfax City Parks Action Plan May 14th

Flint will contact the Fairfax City residents who may have attended.

Senior Info Fair May 21st

Philip will attend

Kings Park Shopping Center meeting May 29th

Suzy will attend

- FY 2015 County Budget:

Philip submitted a draft of FACC comments on new FY2015 Fairfax County budget cuts that eliminate several environmental initiatives, including supplies and equipment for the Invasive Management Area program. There was consensus to send the letter, adding a dollar value to the volunteer hours mentioned. Liz reminded us to use our online form for individually submitting [budget comments](#).

Flint observed there is always some money left over at the end of each budget year and this may be used to restore funding.

Tony noted the Board of Supervisors needs to hear the school budget has been increasing disproportionately to the population and is not sacrosanct. The school budget is around \$1.8 billion, compared to the Park Authority's \$21 million.

Flint advised us the Federation of Civic Associations may propose a meeting of environmental groups on the topic of lobbying for the FY2016 budget. A possible referendum on a local meals tax would provide an alternative to property taxes.

- Whole Foods:

Whole Foods Springfield store (8402 Old Keene Mill Rd) offered to host a 5% day for FACC June 11th. We have arranged to split the proceeds with FLAP. Kris & Liz will attend. Dave may also be able to attend.

Whole Foods asks for possible uses of the proceeds. There was discussion of trail improvements, interpretive signage, and cleanups.

- Brookfield Park:

Philip noted the stormwater pond upgrade proceeding in Brookfield Park, adjacent to Lake Accotink Park, as well as the youth bicycle pump track proposed in an unused athletic field there by Trails for Youth. Philip presented a draft letter expressing our concerns that the track cause no harm. Kris will send.

This led to discussion of the BMX bike area along the CCT north of Americana Park and the destruction it is causing, and possibly contacting M.O.R.E. on the issue.

- Gateway Park Underpass:

The Northern Virginia Regional Parks Authority proposes to replace the closed Pickett Road trail tunnel in Thaiss Park with a trail routed under the Accotink Creek bridge, requiring new paving along the creek. Rather than miss a deadline, Philip submitted comments on behalf of FACC requesting reconsideration or mitigation. There was agreement the text was acceptable.

- Lake Accotink Park Master Plan:

Tony noted the master plan meeting is still aiming at June, although no date is set.

- Nazi Vandalism:

Philip and Ted reported The North Face is providing a donation to cover the cost of materials to replace the clear plastic windows on the Americana Park kiosk damaged or destroyed by the recent vandalism.

- FCRP Film Festival:

Kris reported Amy had done an admirable job of organizing. Although the first year attendance was low, next year should be much better.

- Scout Projects:

Ted reported a scout project we thought had fizzled out in fact went on without us after we got the scout started. Michael Torruella removed 500 tires from the dump in Elklick Preserve (outside our watershed) and thereby motivated the Park Authority to remove another 1000. Ted will contact Michael for details.

- Mussel Rescue:

Philip reported how the recent heavy rains had washed many of Accotink Creek's dwindling population of freshwater mussels out onto the banks and presented slides of stranded mussels rescued from sandbars as the waters receded. <http://www.accotink.org/2014/MonitoringTales2014.htm>
