



Bulletin of the Proceedings of the Friends of Accotink Creek

Our meeting notes serve as bulletins of our activities, interests, and discussions, supplemented by your submissions.

Friends of Accotink Creek Town Meeting – September 15, 2015

Next Meeting: October 20, 2015 (Third Tuesday of each month)
Audrey Moore Rec Center, Senior Center Lobby

[DONATE/SUPPORT](#)

Present:

Philip Latasa
Ted Welch
Dave Lincoln
Kris Unger
Suzy Foster
Sue Schuman
Flint Webb
Beverley Rivera

We were joined by a Channel 16 film crew gathering footage in connection with the Elly Doyle Award

Upcoming events:

- Wakefield Park Plant Rescues, through September, 2015
- Professional freshwater mussel survey, September 22, 23, 24, 2015
- Daniels Run Back to School, September 28 & 29, 2015
- International Coastal Cleanup, September/October, 2015
- Next FLAP meeting, October 22, 2015
- Accotink Gorge Biotrek & Wisteria Workday, October 24, 2015
- Elly Doyle Award Presentation, November 20, 2015
- Lake Accotink Park Stream Monitoring, December 12, 2015

Action Items:

- *Kris – Develop Lanier bioretention plan*
- *Sandy & Philip – Develop mussel survey plan*
- *Philip – Coordinate Wisteria Workday with Park Authority*
- *Sue – Work on volunteer hours tracking system*
- *Beverley – Revise bookkeeping journal*

FACC Subjects Discussed –

Funds/Mastenbrook Grant:

Sandy explained that Daguna had been waiting for suitable conditions and plans to begin the mussel survey September 22. The survey should take 1 -3 days. Philip will be there to assist, and Kris may be there as well. Kris mentioned the Land Foundation grant may be used to cover any shortage of funds. Kris will also invite Northern Virginia Trout Unlimited to participate and ask them to donate.

• International Coastal Cleanup:

Philip reported the first day of the fall cleanup schedule, September 5, had 41 volunteers who collected 51 bags of trash. Next cleanup is September 19 at Lake Accotink Park, also at Long Branch Stream Valley Park. We will also have a private cleanup at Wakefield Park September 20 with Temple Adat Reyim.

Kris noted that American Eagle Distributing will again join us for a cleanup, at Lake Accotink Park October 17th.

• Represent FACC:

Mount Vernon District Candidate Forum Sept. 16

Philip related that the forum was taking place and it would be good to know the next Mount Vernon supervisor, if anyone cared to represent FACC.

Earth Sangha Open House Sept. 27th

Sue, Kris, & Dave will attend, staffing a table for FACC.

Daniels Run Back to School Sept 28 & 29

Kris will attend to share staffing a table with Lands & Waters. Kris mentioned the stream restoration project behind the school had left the stream in its straightened condition, but had created a “nice ditch”, at the cost of many trees. He also noted the principal’s support for the natural plantings on campus was boosted after hearing the [FACC interview on WAMU](#).

Supervisor Hudgins Bee policy

The group approved the draft letter of support Philip presented. There was discussion of how this related to residential pesticide use. Suzy noted she is on the committee considering the policy in her work capacity. Ted quipped that the issue is “**To bee or not to bee**”. Philip will send the letter to Accotink watershed supervisors, to the committee, and to the Fairfax County Restoration Project.

Fall for Fairfax Oct. 3 & 4

Suzy suggested FACC participate in Fall for Fairfax at the Government Center, and noted this would also be an opportunity to promote the bee policy. The reception was positive and there was discussion of “cross pollination”. Suzy, Kris, Ted, Sue, Flint, & Dave will work out details.

Elly Doyle Award Nov. 20

Dave, Ted, Kris, & Sue plan to attend the presentation and wear FACC vests. Philip will prepare name tags for the vests. There was discussion of going farther and incorporating wisteria branches into our outfits to promote a kind of “wisteria hysteria” around the Accotink Gorge. Kris mentioned the Channel 16 crew had filmed a recent outing in the gorge.

Legislative package

After a number of suggested edits, the group approved the draft letter supporting two items Tony Vellucci, Braddock District Park Authority Board member, submitted for inclusion in the Board of Supervisors legislative package to be sent to Richmond:

- A \$50 tax credit for donations to parks, as exists now for political donations
- A requirement that garden wholesalers and retailers label plants as native, invasive, or noninvasive

Philip will send the letter to the Accotink watershed supervisors.

• I-66 Project

Kris will attend the Commonwealth Transportation Board briefing on September 17. He noted that VDOT is cutting back on provisions for stormwater control to spare houses and allow a bike path. There was discussion of pervious pavement, where possible, including on the bike path. Flint suggested incorporating pervious paving into our position on I-66. Philip observed that the characters in the “Back to the Future” movie had travelled from 1985 to 2015 and they seem to be among us now, bringing the transportation solutions of the 1980’s.



• Fairfax Pickett Road Condos:

Sue described the proposed condo development in Fairfax City on a sloping site uphill from Thaiss Park. She noted she had spoken on the topic at a Fairfax City Council meeting and mentioned FACC. Sue & Kris will coordinate FACC participation in a proposed Mantua/City Parks visit to Thaiss Park.

• Wakefield Park Stream Restorations:

Philip noted construction is due to begin the first week in October, and plant rescues will continue until then. This led to discussion of the value of recording volunteer hours, especially as a way of supporting grant applications. There was also discussion of the survival rates of rescued plants, which Philip noted must be better than the zero survival rate of those left behind.

• Accotink Gorge:

Dave advised he has made arrangements for a staging area for the October 24th Wisteria Workday with Costco and will also speak with some adjacent businesses. Philip suggested also contacting nearby civic associations.

Philip pondered the future of the Accotink Gorge endeavor absent the botanical expertise and passion of Fritz Flohr Reynolds. He asked who will write letters, give presentations, lead tours, seek grants, and supervise contractors.

Discussion pointed toward reassessing the situation after October 24th, and perhaps after the Elly Doyle awards. Philip compared the daunting task of combatting wisteria in the gorge to the scenes of the prince in Sleeping Beauty fighting the vines around the castle.



Kris commented that other groups have taken interest in the cause of the Gorge and offered the truism that “If you want to get something done, you have to take good hostages” (meaning the gorge itself). Flint proposed the Green Breakfast as a place to promote the gorge undertaking. Kris will attend and also see about making our own Green Breakfast presentation.

- Reimbursements:

The group reviewed the Land Grant reimbursement invoice submitted by Kris, previously approved by the Board. Ted remarked on the desirability of a more formal process of specific proposals that are translated into actions. Discussion covered effectiveness measures we might consider and returned to the usefulness of documenting volunteer hours and the challenge of doing so accurately. Kris offered the thought that a paid volunteer coordinator could be funded from a grant. Sue will work on a spreadsheet or similar means for tracking volunteer hours.

Mentioning the invasive species playing cards as a possible project, Ted quipped “We have never played with a full deck.”

- Oak Hill Park

Philip informed that Glen Bell, protector of [Oak Hill Park](#), had received \$200 from the Fairfax County Cemetery Preservation Association for a historic marker for slave burial grounds. Since this is not enough, Philip had suggested he work with the Park Authority on options or we could put him in touch with Fairfax County African American Historical Society.

- Riverhugger

Sandy advised [Riverhugger](#) soap is on sale on Amazon and meets our standards, but it is unclear at this point if FACC will benefit from any proceeds.

- Accounting

Kris will send a letter to Northern Virginia Trout Unlimited, advising them of our disappointment over the funding disagreement, letting them know we have cashed their partial check, and suggesting they contribute to the mussel survey.

Philip presented a draft revenue and expense journal to keep track of FACC funds. Beverley will review and revise.

- General Elections:

Kris discussed his and Flint’s participation as FACC representatives with the Fairfax County League of Conservation Voters to develop a list of endorsements, based on a questionnaire sent to candidates for Board of Supervisors and for Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District. Our 501(c)(3) status allows less than 5% political activity.

- FACC Elections:

Philip reminded that FACC elections for Purser and At-Large board member will take place at our December meeting.

Philip Latasa

Friends of Accotink Creek
