



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 – November 17, 2015

Next Meeting: December 15, 2015 (Third Tuesday of each month)

Audrey Moore Rec Center, Senior Center Lobby

[DONATE/SUPPORT](#)

Present:

Philip Latasa
Kris Unger
Suzy Foster
Sue Kovach Schuman
Dave Lincoln

Upcoming events:

- Lake Accotink Park Stream Monitoring, December 12, 2015
- Next FLAP meeting, January 21, 2016

Action Items:

- *Kris – Develop Lanier bioretention plan*
- *Sue & Kris – Write annual summary of FACC activities*
- *Kris – Solicit NVATU contribution to mussel survey*
- *Kris – Solicit support and publicly air 495 landscaping issue*
- *Kris – Compose letter on 495 landscaping*
- *Philip - Draft spring cleanup schedule*
- *Sue & Kris – Collect plastic bag bill information*

FACC Subjects Discussed –

- [International Coastal Cleanup:](#)

Philip reported the last cleanup day was October 24th. For the season, we had a total of 192 volunteers who removed 206 bags of trash and 42 tires, most of them dumped behind the Costco; plus Dave found more dumped nearby. Dave will follow up on getting the property owner to clean up.

- [I-66 Project:](#)

Kris had little news. The next steps may come in six months when further plan approvals are required. Kris described discussions at a public meeting with a VDOT engineer who recognized the impact of our efforts on 495 Express Lanes erosion and sediment controls and was surprisingly supportive.

- [495 Landscaping:](#)

Kris described a Fairfax County Restoration Project inquiry to VDOT on the breach of the landscaping contract. Having received no response, FCRP is seeking legal advice. Kris will work on an “angry letter”.

- [Accotink Gorge:](#)

Philip talked about the October 24th Wisteria Workday. While there was no actual work, due to lack of timely Park Authority authorization, and our naturalists were not available, volunteers were pleased with tours of various parts of the gorge. Volunteers also contributed to an extended stream cleanup.

Fortuitously, the Park Authority has offered an alternate proposal to conclude a “friends of parks” agreement, which will not require FACC insurance coverage. Kris mentioned the Earth Sangha is supportive of the Accotink Gorge initiative.

• Goodsearch/Goodshop:

Philip urged all friends to support FACC by taking advantage of current Goodshop promotions:

[Goodshop Sunday](#) - Double donations November 29th

[\\$10 Donation](#) - On any purchase over \$25 until December 15th

Suzu brought in our first check of [Goodsearch](#) proceeds – where every online search for any topic earns a penny for FACC. The more of us who use [Goodsearch](#), the more those pennies will add up, so the next “big check” may also have a big number on it.



• Clean Virginia Waterways/Choose Clean Water:

Kris discussed Chesapeake Bay Trust Partnership Grant applications with Potomac Riverkeepers and Audubon Naturalist Society. Monica Billger of ANS is planning an advocacy workshop, and Kris has suggested as a topic empowering parents and communities to undertake green initiatives at schools. Sue observed the connection between this theme and the Elly Doyle award being given to Fairfax County science teachers.

Philip noted it is hard to keep up with the many conference calls and advocacy letters. Kris agreed and remarked that he has adopted a policy of automatic agreement to be a signatory. Kris observed many organizations in the groups are at a higher level than us.

Sue mentioned a contact with a George Mason High school science teacher at the Green Breakfast.

- Elly Doyle Award:

Kris encouraged all to attend the award ceremony November 20th. Philip distributed FACC vests for those planning to attend.

- Garfield Elementary School:

Kris related that Elaine Tholen, environmental coordinator of Fairfax County Public Schools, had put him in touch with a science teacher at Garfield Elementary in Springfield who is interested in a student stream monitoring project. Dave noted the “stream” in the park behind the school is a concrete channel.

- Daniels Run Elementary School:

Kris mentioned he will be doing watershed walks with Lands and Waters at Daniels Run on the next two Mondays, including class presentations with historic aerial photos.

- Ban the Bottle:

Philip described the presentation at the last Friends of Lake Accotink Park meeting by Diana Davies, 20-year resident of Danbury Forest and cleanup participant, who was astonished by the number of discarded water bottles. She proposes a pilot project to ban sale of water bottles in the park, selling refillable bottles instead, and converting the water fountains to serve as water bottle refill stations. Kris commented that Fairfax County Restoration Project would be supportive.

- World Water Monitoring Challenge Kits:

Kris alerted us to this grant making chemical water monitoring kits available to schools.

- General Elections:

Philip requested more information about the Fairfax League of Conservation Voters endorsement process. Kris indicated Tania Hussein may be a future guest, so discussion was deferred until then.

- Plastic Bag Bill:

Sue indicated Senator Chap Petersen intends to reintroduce his [plastic bag bill](#) again in the 2016 session. The bill may be limited to grocery and convenience stores. Sue will get the wording of the bill and share. She will also inquire with Sen. Petersen how we may best support the bill. Kris will check with Choose Clean Water for possible support. There was discussion of a possible trip to Richmond on the Virginia Conservation Network lobby day and of a meeting of interested groups with Sen. Petersen.

- Kathy Smith (Mrs. Gerry Connolly):

Sue observed that it may be possible to work out a promotional event with her neighbors, such as a walk with Rep. Connolly along his namesake Cross County Trail or a kickoff of our spring cleanup season. Philip will work on spring cleanup dates. Persuading the Congressman to wear an FACC vest and the frog hat were discussed as options.

- Trapa Natans:

Philip advised that invasive alien [Trapa natans](#), aka Water chestnut (but unrelated to the food), also aka Water caltrop, has been found in the stormwater pond beside the Vienna Metro. Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries is organizing a removal effort in the spring. We certainly want to support control efforts and keep this invasive from spreading downstream to Lake Accotink.

- Pollinator Garden:

Philip relayed a new Friends of Lake Accotink Park volunteer, Yvette Pena, will manage the pollinator garden cleanup and replanting. FLAP has \$500 for purchase of native plants. Volunteers are needed.

- FACC Elections:

Philip reminded that candidates for Purser and Conservator-at-Large at our December meeting should work to get their poll numbers up if they expect to participate in the top rank of the two tier debate.

- Accounting:

Philip solicited suggestions for a year-end donations appeal to accompany our December meeting reminder.
