



Friends of Accotink Creek Town Meeting

January 19, 2015

Next Meeting: February 16, 2015

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

Present:

Kris Unger
Philip Latasa
Sue Schuman
Suzy Foster
Ted Welch
Flint Webb
Liz Kirchner
Sandy Collins
Dave Lincoln
Dedra Kirby - Welcome Dedra!
Renzo Cueva - Welcome Renzo!

Upcoming events:

- I-66 Widening Meetings, January 26 - 29, 2015
- Next FACC meeting, February 16, 2015
- Next FLAP meeting, April 16, 2015
- Joint FACC/FLAP/FLBSV meeting, February 9, 2015, 6-9 pm, [Lost Dog Cafe](#)
- Snakehead Forum, Huntley Meadows Park, February 22, 2015
- Coalition of Watershed Friends, March TBD, 2015
- Lake Accotink Park Stream Monitoring/Mussel Locating, March 14, 2015
- Green Inspirations Film Festival, March 22 - March 26, 2015
- Kings Park Library presentation, April 23

Action Items:

- *Sandy – Arrange Anacostia trash trap visit*
- *Kris, Philip, & Suzy – Work on Merrifield historic marker*
- *Philip & Sandy – Get mussel survey information*
- *Ted – Arrange Walnut Hill Farm visit*
- *Kris – Develop workshop ideas*
- *Kris & Philip - Pursue Merrifield Park marker*
- *Sandy & Philip – Develop mussel survey plan*
- *Ted – Locate I-66 stream monitoring data*
- *Kris – Create FACC Meetup account*

FACC Subjects Discussed –

- Whole Foods Funds/Mastenbrook Grant:

- Mussel survey*

Philip advised the January 8 conference call which Sandy had arranged with Partnership for the Delaware Estuary and Environmental Consulting Services, Inc. was a disappointment. No offer of action or assistance was forthcoming – rather a suggestion to go back to the beginning and survey the entire stream for signs of mussels. We have had no word from the two commercial surveyors who had some interest.

Philip offered the idea of asking spring cleanup volunteers to look for mussels to establish their absence in other parts of the watershed and this was favorably received, with a consensus in favor of a practice mussel locating session after our March 14 stream monitoring. Kris suggested a “Have you seen this?” flyer mentioning the Whole Foods funding.

Sandy had a more positive view of the conference call, believes the call participants may yet support us, and has taken the step of reviewing professional mussel survey manuals to prepare a protocol for our survey. She and Philip will conduct a reconnaissance of the area.

- Represent FACC:

- *Anacostia trash trap visit*

Ted and Sandy have had no response from the D.C. government, but will persevere.

- *EQAC Hearing Jan 21*

Kris will speak and will work with Flint on topics.

- *I-66 Meeting Jan. 21/Jan 26-29*

Flint explained the approach will be more HOT lanes and this will likely preclude extending Metro to Centreville. He noted the January 21 meeting is Providence District Council and the others are VDOT. Philip mentioned I-66 from Gallows Road west to Jermantown Road is in our watershed, crossing Long Branch north, Bear Branch, and Hunters Branch. He recollected seeing an earlier Environmental Impact statement saying there were no impaired waters affected, but surmised that was only for lack of data. Ted then wondered if we should collect our own data and Flint provided contact information for a past Long Branch stream monitor. Sandy noted officially recognized impaired waters are listed on the [Virginia DEA website](#).

- *Joint FACC/FLAP meeting*

Kris confirmed that date of January 26 at Lost Dog Cafe was agreed upon, but in light of the conflict with the I-66 meeting in Oakton, will arrange a new date. [Note: New date February 9, 6-9 pm, [Lost Dog Cafe](#)]

- *EPA Trash Free Waters Jan. 22*

Kris explained an EPA group is seeking trash-related projects in the D.C. area. Several persons from FACC will attend. Flint noted Sen. Chap Peterson has introduced a plastic bag bill in the current legislative session. [[SB 886](#)]

- *Waterways Reception Jan 28*

Philip informed of the current art exhibition and reception by NVCC professor and FACC member Giulio Porta.

- *Mount Vernon District Open House Jan. 31*

Philip advised that Glenda Booth of Friends of Dyke Marsh had suggested FACC attend and set up a table. Dave and Liz will follow up with Glenda.

- *CCT Hike Feb. 14*

Philip observed this [Sierra Club event](#) might be a good opportunity to make connections. There was no commitment in the discussion that followed, but there was general amusement over a momentary confusion between bluebirds and blue jays.

- *Making The Ask Feb 21*

Philip described this Fairfax County Parks Foundation workshop on fund raising techniques and observed it might be worthwhile for both its content and possible connections. No one committed, but Ted did advocate for the effectiveness of the TV preacher style of fundraising.

- *Snakehead Forum Feb. 22*

We can also set up a table at this event, which we are [cosponsoring](#). Liz, Sue & Ted are interested.

- *Green Inspirations Mar. 22-26*

Philip noted this environmental film festival will again be in our watershed at the Cinema Arts Theater. Any assistance to Amy would be welcome and any nominations for films, also. We need to set up a table and staff at least part-time.

- *Americana Park Meadow:*

Suzy outlined Stormwater Planning Division plans to install a ½ acre native meadow in response to recent paving of the CCT in Americana Park, including removal of nearby woody invasives and possibly with an extension to the cloverleaf embankment. Earth Sangha will provide seeds and 1000 native plants. Volunteers may be needed mid to late April and Suzy will advise when and how we can participate. Liz lamented the lack of plans to remedy the damming effect the new CCT pavement is causing. Kris pondered the opportunity for a meadow restoration presentation.

- *Wakefield Park Stream Restorations:*

Suzy described hopes for a plant rescue operation before construction begins in April. The thought is to rescue and replant nearby the same day. There are, however, concerns about moving invasive species.

- *Coalition of Watershed Friends in Fairfax:*

- Planning Meeting Jan. 13*

Kris related the origin of the coalition idea in Joe Chudzik's efforts to remove a derelict barge in Belmont Bay, which prompted Glenda Booth to suggest the advantages to be had from cooperation. Kris observed the January 13th planning meeting had been loosely organized, with no single leader, which he counted as a good thing. Dave offered the idea of liaison, rather than leadership. Flint suggested the Green Breakfast as one model. The discussion of the purpose and focus of the coalition wandered to the topic of FACC and its focus and whether a focus was needed. Dave philosophized that "It is a garden, not a path."

Kris noted that FACC will host the next gathering of the coalition, which may draw in more participants and venue ideas are needed. Dave will check on using the Daventry community room.

- *495 Mowpocalypse:*

Kris described the relative victory for FACC in VDOT's plan to replace all planted trees cut by the mowing contractors and also replace any native volunteers that do not recover. Kris noted we had received no response to any of our letters on the topic, but our noise had its effect.

- *Library Presentation:*

Kris described the request by the Kings Park Library for a presentation on Accotink Creek. Since they expressed interest in history, Kris brought our collaborating blogger, Karen Ingebretsen, into the discussion. The date is April 23, but it may evolve into two separate presentations on different dates.

- BioBlitz:

Kris noted he had been contacted by Northern Virginia environmental advocate Stella Koch about the need for a venue for a proposed 24-hour bio blitz survey by naturalists and volunteers, with the Accotink Creek watershed as a possibility. Kris will keep us informed.

- Fall Canker Worm:

Philip reported having run into Jim McGlone of the Virginia Department of Forestry who says that, counterintuitively, studies show increased Lepidoptera diversity in sprayed vs. non-sprayed areas. Jim compared the canker worm to deer, which the actions of man have caused to be out of balance with their habitat. Nonetheless the discussion was in favor of the native canker worms. Without objection, the group approved the text of a letter which Kris will send to supervisors.

- Grant Proposal:

Workshop

Kris remarked on the pause in consideration of a restoration workshop at Walnut Hill Farm while the principal party is away until March.

- Meetup:

Kris proposed an FACC membership in Meetup, currently available at a discount price of \$45 for six months, to improve volunteer turnout. After an active discussion of the pros and cons, the group decided without objection on a trial membership. [Note: It is now live – [Accotink Meetup](#)]

- Merrifield Park Historic Marker:

Kris related how he had been in touch with historian Marion Dobbins on our proposed draft text for historic markers on the former African-American communities of Merrifield. A meeting with the Fairfax County African American History Society is the next step.

- Legislative Session:

Philip indicated the Virginia Legislature is in session and there is a link on the FACC front page to a convenient Chesapeake Bay Foundation [legislative contact form](#). [Note: As above, [SB 886](#) has been introduced on the topic of plastic bags.]

- Parks Count:

Philip noted [Parks Count](#) is part of the once-per-decade Park Authority needs assessment. Without objection the group approved the text of a letter for Kris to submit, based on our standing positions on the much-delayed Lake Accotink Park master plan review. Flint made a comparison to the current [survey](#) by the Northern Virginia Soil & Water Conservation District in connection with its new [Conservation Assistance Program](#).

- Long Branch (south) Trail:

Philip described his exchange with the Park Authority over plans to pave a trail along Long Branch south. The Park Authority's position was, in short, that such a trail is part of the Comprehensive Plan and must be completed. Philip presented a draft of a letter to supervisors. Dave suggested an additional mention of the frequent washouts of recently paved portions of the CCT. Without objection, the group approved the new text. Kris will send.

- Trail Hikes

Kris revisited his idea of regular trail walks, perhaps on Sunday afternoons, perhaps fitting into our project of community outreach. Kris will chew on this.

- Web Hosting Renewal:

Philip mentioned he had paid for website hosting (\$119.40) and Domain name (\$11.05) with his PayPal account and has already received reimbursement from our funds held by Northern Virginia Trout Unlimited.

- Wavy Leaf Basket Grass:

Philip reported the dreaded invasive species, Wavy Leaf Basket Grass, new to this continent in the past decade, has been found in Long Branch central stream valley. The Park Authority is addressing the occurrence, but hope is not high.

- Tire Dumping:

Philip presented a draft letter to supervisors supporting Joe Chudzik's position on reducing dumping by reducing legal tire disposal fees. It was approved without objection.

- Dedra:

Dedra gave a brief, but intriguing, description of her research in the rainforests of Panama and the National Aquarium.

Philip Latasa

Friends of Accotink Creek
