



Friends of Accotink Creek Town Meeting
February 16 & 23, 2015
Next Meeting: March 16, 2015
Audrey Moore Rec Center, Clubroom 3
(Third Monday of each month)

Present February 16:

Kris Unger

Philip Latasa

Dave Lincoln

Peter Cary – Welcome Peter!

Joining by Conference call, or trying to:

(We shall endeavor not to get cut off next time.)

Liz Kirchner

Flint Webb

Steve Frehn

Michael (cut off before we got a last name) – Welcome Michael!

Snow on February 16 and the balky conference call prompted a makeup meeting February 23.

Present February 23:

Kris Unger

Philip Latasa

Flint Webb

Suzy foster

Robert Greenberg

Upcoming events:

- Next FACC meeting, March 16, 2015
- Snakehead Forum, Huntley Meadows Park, February 22, 2015
- Friends of Eakin Park discussion, February 25, 2015
- Coalition of Watershed Friends, March TBD, 2015
- Lake Accotink Park Stream Monitoring/Mussel Locating, March 14, 2015
- Potomac Watershed Cleanup, March 28 – May 2, 2015
- Green Inspirations Film Festival, March 22 - March 26, 2015
- Next FLAP meeting, April 16, 2015
- Americana Park Planting, April 17 & 18, 2015
- Earth Day/Green Living, April 22, 2015
- Kings Park Library presentation, April 23, 2015

Action Items:

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

FACC Subjects Discussed –

- Potomac Watershed Cleanup:

Philip observed the Potomac Watershed Cleanup is near. The final schedule should be posted online and registered with sponsors this week, after confirmation of the Americana Park planting date. As always, site hosts are welcome.

- Whole Foods Funds/Mastenbrook Grant:

- *Mussel survey*

Philip noted Sandy is working on a mussel survey protocol and reminded that an initial mussel-locating training will take place March 14, following stream monitoring.

- Represent FACC:

- *Anacostia trash trap visit*

Kris has been in touch with a potential host and will share with Ted and Sandy.

- [Joint FACC/FLAP meeting](#)

Kris described a successful meeting at the Lost Dog Cafe, bringing together people of varying levels of knowledge. He believes this is a good venue for future meetings.

- *EPA Trash Free Waters Jan. 22*

Kris reported the meeting was interesting, but focused on coordination and data collection at a different level than the direct action we usually engage in. Liz suggested we remain open to cooperation, if useful.

- *Mount Vernon District Open House Jan. 31*

Dave attended and related how the FACC table had been next to Friends of Dyke Marsh, among about 40 other displays. As follow-up, Dave is talking to a neighbor of the creek and Philip had an email exchange with the Mount Vernon harbor master. This led to a side discussion of a possible float/hike trip down upper Accotink Creek in spring.

- *Making The Ask Feb 21*

Kris will attend and perhaps Liz. Others are welcome. Kris expressed that value of this meeting as an opportunity to build better connections with the Fairfax County Parks Foundation, as well as benefiting from the topic matter of how to ask for funding.

- *Snakehead Forum Feb. 22*

Liz noted she will be contributing refreshments and FACC will occupy half a table. Dave has the display materials and will coordinate with Liz.

February 23: Sue, Liz, Flint, & Kris represented FACC. Flint & Kris noted the presentation indicated snakeheads are so far not threatening any native species.

- *Green Inspirations Mar. 22-26*

Kris advised the film festival is in some doubt, as the Fair City Mall management did not come through on their offers of sponsorship and time is very short to locate other sponsors. Dave recommended the environmental film series of the [Faith Alliance for Climate Action](#).

- *Friends of Eakin Park Feb. 25*

Philip mentioned a planned meeting to evaluate interest in a Friends of Eakin Park. This is motivated by proposed Park Authority projects in Eakin Park that are unfunded. Eakin Park is unique among Fairfax County parks in having an endowment established by the Eakin family, which also donated the land. It appears the Park Authority hopes to tap that endowment.

Peter mentioned he is friends with members of the Eakin family and would consider asking for a modest donation.

Philip presented a draft letter to the organizer of the meeting to suggest working through FACC. The group approved, with minor edits.

○ *Earth Day/Green Living Apr. 22*

Kris passed on an email from Sue, describing the event she has planned for Mantua Elementary, featuring an opportunity for an FACC display table, and presentations by experts on Monarch butterflies, green living, compost (Ted), and watersheds (Kris).

• *Americana Park Meadow:*

Philip remarked that the planting project should be finalized this week for April 17 & 18. Kris mentioned that FACC will be reaching out to other groups to provide volunteers. There was a discussion of the background of the project being prompted by paving of the Cross County Trail in Americana Park. February 23: Suzy recapped the meadow plan, noting that the site will be prepared by deep mechanical tilling to improve infiltration, a method the county may use at future sites. There was discussion on species meeting the permissible height for planting beneath power lines.

• *I-66 Project:*

Kris observed that the [I-66 495-to-Haymarket](#) project is looking a lot like the environmental calamity of the 495 HOT Lanes and we may again engage in discussions mediated by the Fairfax County Restoration Project. We have been in touch with the Sierra Club and Coalition for Smarter Growth, looking for possible collaboration. Philip mentioned the Feb. 18th I-66 meeting hosted by Providence District Council. Dave wondered whether it would be useful to contact Congressman Connolly's office.

• *Bank:*

Kris announced we now have a bank account! The balance of our Community Outreach grant funds has been deposited and needs to be spent. Dave brought up the idea of snazzier display materials and will explore options with Liz. Philip noted the use of a repurposed cardboard box in our display was an intentional choice in keeping with our mission. There was discussion of options for online fundraising. February 23 – Suzy brought our newly arrived first checkbook, which we used to issue check # 001 for our Virginia Corporation Commission annual renewal.

• *Coalition of Watershed Friends in Fairfax:*

Planning Meeting Jan. 13

Kris noted the need for more networking of like-minded groups, but also noted there has been little response to his invitation to a March meeting.

• *Library Presentation:*

Kris said Liz & Karen are moving ahead with plans for an April 23 presentation at Kings Park Library focused on history. A second presentation may follow.

• *BioBlitz:*

Kris is awaiting follow-up on a proposed bioblitz along Accotink Creek.

• *Fall Canker Worm:*

Kris related the cutback in spraying from hundreds of acres to just 66 in response to blowback from the public.

• *Merrifield Park Historic Marker:*

Kris remarked that the conversation continues on markers describing the former freedmen's communities of Merrifield. FACC is willing to support a commemoration of the announcement of the Emancipation Proclamation.

• *Plastic Bag bill:*

Kris mentioned our letter to legislators had received no response. Philip advised the bill is still alive in the House of Delegates.

- Long Branch (south) Trail:

Philip related that the paving is on hold since the Lee District Land Use Committee had opposed the development whose proffer would have built the trail. The trail plan remains in place should future funding opportunities come along. There was discussion of the general negative effects of paving in parks, including runoff and spread of invasive species. Dave observed that the ongoing pond upgrade in Brookfield Park seems to be incorporating a pervious trail.

February 23: Suzy suggested working with the Park Authority to choose a better route for the trail.

- Trail Hikes

Kris is pondering the possibilities, perhaps including joint efforts with Friends of Lake Accotink Park and Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley. Dave suggested Brookfield Park and the southwest side of Lake Accotink as venues. Philip mentioned the latter route goes past an FACC invasive management site.

- Nottoway Park stormwater Project:

Philip advised that planning has begun for stream restoration projects in Nottoway Park, at the headwaters of the Hunters Branch tributary. The Friends of Nottoway will keep us advised.

- Port Royal Rezoning:

Philip noted that a rezoning application has been filed to put a heavy equipment rental and storage facility on Port Royal Road in the industrial park adjacent to Flag Run. Any redevelopment should conform to higher stormwater standards than in the past. The Braddock supervisor's office will have a public meeting in March.

- Fairhill Elementary:

Kris & Philip described a recent contact from Joe Hirz, a George Washington University Ph.D. candidate making a project of sustainability initiatives at Fairhill Elementary in Merrifield, where his own children attend. Joe sees a possible connection with [Walnut Hill Farm](#), just a few blocks from the school.

- WMATA Cinder Bed Road:

February 23: Suzy displayed plans for a new MetroBus parking facility near the Long Branch south tributary on a currently vacant and cleared industrial site. There was discussion of potential watershed-friendly enhancements to the plan.

- Wakefield Park Stream Restorations:

February 23: Suzy discussed the upcoming stream restorations in Wakefield Park. Work is expected to begin in April. Suzy will work on arrangements for a plant rescue.

- Wakefield Chapel Planting:

Philip explained FACC was contacted by Wakefield Chapel woods civic association for advice on a planting project they plan on Turkey Run with Fairfax ReLeaf. He has sought more professional advice from DPWES, as this is directly downstream from the ongoing Truro neighborhood stream restoration project.
