



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 April 20, 2015

Next Meeting: May 18, 2015 (Third Monday of each month)

Audrey Moore Rec Center, Clubroom 3

Present:

Kris Unger
Philip Latasa
Steve Frehn
Suzy Foster
Sue Shuman
Sandy Collins

Special Guests:

Peggy Stevens, Northern Virginia Conservation Trust
Andrea Reese, Northern Virginia Conservation Trust

Our Hosts:

Alfred Thompson III
Alfred Thompson IV
Robert Kupczek
Sophie
Lucky
Thomas
Steven Willard (quadcopter pilot)

Upcoming events:

- Potomac Watershed Cleanup, March 28 – May 2, 2015
- Commonwealth transportation Board public hearing April 28, 2015
- I-66 Providence District hearing, May 11, 2015
- Cross County Trail paving meeting, May 12, 2015
- Lake Accotink Park Stream Monitoring/Creek Blitz, June 13, 2015
- Professional freshwater mussel survey, Summer, 2015
- Next FLAP meeting, July 16, 2015

Action Items:

- *Sandy & Ted – Arrange Anacostia trash trap visit*
- *Kris, Philip, & Suzy – Work on Merrifield historic marker*
- *Kris – Develop workshop ideas*
- *Sandy & Philip – Develop mussel survey plan*

- [Walnut Hill Farm](#)

The Friends convened at Walnut Hill Farm, a 10-acre parcel of open space along the Bear Branch tributary which we hope may be preserved from the spreading asphalt. We were recorded from overhead by Steve's copter.

The gathering began with the delivery of fresh compost materials from M.O.M.'s Organic Market produce section. Everyone helped themselves to a quick repast of the perfectly good fruits and vegetables that had sadly been deemed unfit to sell.

A tour of the vegetable gardens, farm pond, and Bear Branch followed.



The aerial view of the group gathered around the edible compost

Alfred Thompson III arrived to convey something of the history of the property:

- The Thompsons are 8th generation Virginians, with ancestors including Revolutionary War veterans.
- The owner, Alfred Thompson II, was born on the farm in 1915.
- All that remains of the two story farmhouse is the stone foundation and cellar after it was lost to fire a dozen years ago. Like many houses in this area, the well was located in the cellar.
- The property was 90 acres in the 1960's, until 30 acres was sold to Kena Temple, beginning its reduction to the present size.
- The Thompsons operated a truck farm raising corn, tomatoes, green beans, and squash which were sold to customers from a truck or right on the farm.
- The farm once had horses cattle, pigs, and poultry as well.
- The farm pond is spring fed and the emerging cold water can be felt with feet while swimming.

- Drinkable springs once found on the farm have now declined in quality after nearby housing developments. Even Bear Branch itself was drinkable in Alfred II's day.
- American chestnuts were found on the property before being wiped out nationwide by imported blight in the early 20th century. There was a noted decline of bear, deer, and small game after loss of chestnuts as a food source.

The Northern Virginia Conservation Trust representatives were able to introduce themselves and invite future discussion with the Thompsons.

Most of the group scattered for home as the sky opened and rain began falling.

FACC Subjects Discussed –

- *Whole Foods Funds/Mastenbrook Grant*

Sandy reported the quote from Daguna Consulting for the mussel study was \$3375, higher than the \$3000 we had expected. Sandy will go back to Daguna with a request to adhere to the quote. Sandy will also ask for suggestions on how we may lower the quote, such as offering lodging or increased volunteer labor.

Philip Latasa

Friends of Accotink Creek
