



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 19, 2016

Next Meeting: May 17, 2016 (Third Tuesday of each month)
Audrey Moore Rec Center, Senior Center Lobby

[DONATE/SUPPORT](#)

Present:

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

Guests:

Elaine Sevy, Springfield Art Guild
Betsy Martin, Friends of Little hunting Creek

Upcoming events:

- Next FLAP meeting, April 28, 2016
- Potomac Watershed Cleanup, April 2 – May 14, 2016
- Americana Park Meadow Restoration, April 29 & 30, 2016
- Creek Critters Stream Monitoring, May 7, 2016
- Lake Accotink Park Master Plan meeting, May 16, 2016
- Lake Accotink Park Stream Monitoring, June 11, 2016

Action Items:

- *Everyone – Brainstorm grant application ideas*
- *Kris – Solicit NVATU contribution to mussel survey*
- *Kris – Contact Choose Clean Water on plastic bag bill*
- *Kris, Ted, Philip – Plan Creek Critters event*
- *Ted - Contact Scout Store*
- *Kris – Prepare Fairfax Water grant*
- *Sue – Plan for Mantua Parade*

FACC Subjects Discussed –

- *Plein Aire Art:*

Elaine advised that the initial April 23 Plein Aire art workshop filled up fast. She is working to bring in more artists and the next workshop will be in July. Kris signed the SAG/FLAP/FACC cooperation agreement.

• Storm Drain Art:



Philip explained the idea for a storm drain art project, involving watershed educational messages, possibly done in sidewalk chalk.

Ted suggested the alternative medium of “**storm-watercolors**”. The discussion took an amusing turn with some confusion over whether the art was supposed to be outside the storm drains or inside. Dave pointed out there had

been a recent “art in the park” project at Lake Accotink Park, involving wrapping colored yarns around trees, sponsored by the Greater Reston Art Center.



• Americana Mural:

Philip noted we have at times discussed the possibility of a community mural project on the blank walls left by the 495 Express Lanes under Little River Turnpike adjacent to the CCT. Asian American LEAD indicated they could provide talent, if others provided materials and permissions. The North Face indicated they might wish to participate. Emails to the Braddock supervisor’s office have not been answered. Elaine will check with SAG on possible participation or advice. Ted suggested involving school art teachers, possibly at Mantua Elementary.

• Litter Initiatives:

Betsy inquired about ideas for reducing trash in streams. Kris offered the thought of making big assertive demands, such as a ban on Styrofoam, building pressure and power, without locking into specific solutions.

Betsy brought up the 2011 [Mt. Vernon Citizens’ Association Trash Action Plan](#). Kris noted FACC had endorsed the Plan. Betsy lamented that there had been no action by the Board of Supervisors or EQAC beyond a weak statement of interest in the legislative agenda.

Flint advocated finding the arguments of opponents and being prepared to address them. Dave pressed for benchmarking success stories such as bag bans in D.C. and Montgomery County, whose success he had personally observed in regular kayak trips on the Anacostia River.

Kris broached the idea of a Fairfax Trash Summit. Suzy suggested possible Fairfax County Restoration Project involvement.

Betsy noted DPWES plans a trash trap on Little Hunting Creek near Mt. Vernon Plaza.

There was discussion of county powers and Betsy described the Dillon Rule, requiring Commonwealth authorization for most county actions.

Ted quipped on the need for a “**litter-acy**” campaign. Ted also suggested the possibility of scout projects marking out streamside grids and recording trash findings over time.

• FACC 10th Anniversary:

Philip observed the tenth anniversary of the founding of Friends of Accotink Creek, December 15, 2015, had passed unobserved. A celebratory group photo belatedly marked the occasion.



• Potomac Watershed Cleanup:

Philip reported that, halfway through the cleanup season, 118 volunteers have removed 156 bags of trash and 19 tires. We also had a special private cleanup at Americana Park, hosted by Dave, with Asian American LEAD and adult mentors from Wells Fargo, where 33 volunteers removed 21 bags of trash and 4 tires.

Other groups that joined our cleanups include several Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops, Key Clubs, Kiwanis, The North Face, and Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church.

Other groups holding separate cleanups in the Accotink Creek watershed that we know of are Fort Belvoir, the Izsak Walton League in Fairfax City, the Fairfax County Health Department (also in Fairfax City, led by our friend Suzanne Dorick of FLAP), the Stonehurst neighborhood on Hunters Branch, The Friends of Oak Hill Park, the Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley, and of course Lake Accotink Park.

Philip mentioned he had met Amanda Rose Newton and Alexis Warden of the George Washington Community School at the April 2nd Lake Accotink cleanup. Amanda Rose has adopted Wakefield Run, has her Adopt-A-Stream sign in hand, and plans to monitor and do a cleanup in May.

• Whole Foods Funds/Mastenbrook Grant:
Mussel /Survey

Philip advised the final mussel survey has arrived and reinforces what we had already summarized, but with impressive graphs and terminology. We are awaiting one final edit to credit FLAP's financial contribution, which we may have to do ourselves. Beverly has sent the \$1,875.00 check in final payment. We now need to release the survey far and wide. This does affect deliberations on the future of Lake Accotink. Flint suggested a press release might be appropriate.

There was discussion of periodically repeating the quantitative (grid count) portion of the mussel survey. Kris indicated a possibility of public walks for mussel awareness. Ted noted he has four traffic cones awaiting conversion to bathyscopes for underwater viewing. The discussion wandered to the topic of damaging invertebrates by too much monitoring.

Philip reported a ballpark figure from Daguna Consulting of \$2500 to survey the lake itself.

Kris conceded he had not yet contacted NVATU regarding a donation. There was much joking about the need for everyone to call Kris to remind him.

• Represent FACC:

- *FLAP presentation to Park Authority Board 4/13*
Dave described his [presentation in support of FLAP](#), which included a mention of possible retirement of the dam. Philip pointed out the dam is actually hollow and speculated about touring the interior.
- *Parks Count Open House 4/14*
Philip passed on his observations, remarking that there was little new, just an in person presentation of what is available online. Protecting natural resources was the highest priority of survey respondents, but the most desired facility was new paved trails, a contradiction.
- *Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund 4/15*
Kris talked about this gathering brought together by Chante Coleman of the Choose Clean Water Coalition. Kris offered the opinion that this grant program is not a good fit for FACC at this time.
- *Mantua Elementary MWEE 4/18*
Sue related that she, Ted, Suzy, and Beverley had attended and assisted in the habitat walk portion of this somewhat chaotic first effort at this school. Sue indicated the habitat walk was granted access to the Cox property, several open acres along Crook Branch. The stream is bounded by 10-foot erosion cliffs. There was discussion about inclusion of this property in the proposed Crook Branch stream restoration and a possible conservation easement.
- *Little Run Elementary Stream Monitoring*
Kris recounted the stream monitoring session with 5th & 6th grades put together by George Kralovec, a retired engineer engaged in science volunteering with Fairfax County Schools. Kris believes this school is a candidate for FACC to obtain a grant from Fairfax Water for a “Follow the Water” program similar to that at Daniels Run Elementary. Kris stated he will be meeting with Fairfax Water this week, and that the application is due by May 15th for the grants of up to \$15,000.
- *Green Inspirations Film Festival 4/30*
Kris invited anyone interested to attend and support Fairfax County Restoration Project.
- *Lake Royal Mussel Rescue 5/??*
Philip passed on the news that the mussel rescue should happen sometime in early May, possibly weekdays, on short notice. Volunteers should bring buckets. It is still not clear if any mussels can go to the Accotink watershed.



○ *Mantua Parade 6/11*

Sue urged all to brainstorm ideas for FACC participation in the Mantua Parade. Discussion of ideas covered decorating Sue's car, wearing our FACC vests, and wearing our cleanup frog and turtle hats. Philip offered the possibility of carrying fish windsocks and also shared a photo of a possible windsock alternative from a local Asian market.



○ *Host House Party for Coalition for Smarter Growth ??/??*

Philip offered the opportunity for anyone interested, of responding to an appeal from the Coalition for Smarter Growth, to host a house party for transit and walkable streets, and suggested the focus might be on Braddock Road. Suzy will consider.

• *Accotink Gorge:*

Kris locked in April 26th, 10 – 1, for the first invitational wisteria workday. Dave has obtained written permission for access from Boston Properties and verbal permission from Costco. Kris remarked on the need to plan future gorge walks.

• *Americana Meadow:*

Suzy advised the ½ acre meadow extension had been seeded today after multiple tilling to prepare the soil and eliminate invasives. Seeding was done by drilling and hand broadcast, using Earth Sangha seeds. About 1000 plugs will be planted April 29th & 30th. Discussion followed on the need for additional volunteers.

• *495 Express Lanes:*

Philip informed he did a long-overdue survey of lingering erosion and sediment control issues from the 495 Express Lanes project and reported 36 issues to VDOT via their website. Of the half-dozen upon which they took action all were simply labeled “investigated and addressed”. Amy Gould attracted the attention of Sen. Dave Marsden, who spoke to the deputy secretary of transportation. A proposed walk to have them see the situation in person has not materialized. Kris mentioned Mark Thomas of Chairman Bulova's office is also involved.

• *Scout Projects:*

Philip shared two upcoming Eagle Scout projects:

- ✓ Stuart Lowe will work April 23, repairing kiosks in Lake Accotink Park
- ✓ Jonathan Bach will work May 7 in Americana Park, installing a boot brush station and removing invasives, mostly multiflora rose.

• *Kena Temple & Cravens Developments:*

Sue displayed plans for the former Kena Temple site on Bear Branch at Arlington Blvd. obtained in a community meeting with the developer. Stormwater detention will be underground and no building is planned in the floodplain. There are 17 – 22 units proposed for the 27 acres. Ted noted work has begun on the nearby former Cravens Nursery site.

• *Scout on the Circle:*

Sue described this proposed project of 400 apartments plus retail at Fairfax Circle as not looking green or walkable on paper. There was discussion of Fairfax Forward planning.