



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 – June 21, 2016

Next Meeting: July 19, 2016 (Third Tuesday of each month)
Audrey Moore Rec Center, Senior Center Lobby

DONATE/SUPPORT

Present:

Dave Lincoln
Kris Unger
Philip Latasa
Guest – Elaine Sevy, Springfield Art Guild
Guest – Donald Pless, Flag Run advocate

Upcoming events:

- County Environmental Vision Update meeting, July 20, 2016
- Water Chestnut Control Workdays, June 14 & 15, 2016
- Lake Accotink Park Stream Monitoring, September 10, 2016

Action Items:

- *Everyone – Brainstorm grant application ideas*
- *Kris – Contact Choose Clean Water on plastic bag bill*
- *Ted - Contact Scout Store*
- *Dave – Consult Sierra Club on Fairfax County Environmental Vision*

Our meeting venue was “al fresco”, in the pavilion overlooking Lake Accotink

FACC Subjects Discussed –

- *Wildlife Rescue!*

A small pre-meeting drama took place as Philip and Dave found a juvenile snapping turtle on the pavilion steps, its feet badly tangled in fishing line. With leather gloves, scissors, and nail clippers, they cautiously snipped away the line and released the turtle to the lake.



[Biodegradable fishing line, anyone?](#)

Fisherman, take it home! Everyone, take it home!

• Pleine Aire Art:

Elaine discussed progress presented a poster and schedule for the Plein Aire art classes along Accotink Creek. Many of the schedule dates are chosen to take advantage of sunsets and full moons. There are plans to add dates in a number of locations along the creek outside Lake Accotink Park, including in the Accotink Gorge. We discussed a possible gorge scouting trip with Elaine.

Elaine has a Park Authority Special Use permit through September. There was discussion of how flexible the permits are and whether separate permits are needed for locations outside Lake Accotink Park.

Elaine has been in touch with Fort Belvoir about using Accotink Bay Wildlife Refuge. Kevin Walters of the base staff was receptive, asking only that Public Affairs be notified in advance.

• Represent FACC:

○ *Lake Royal Mussel Rescue 5/19*

Philip informed us about 20 persons participated in the rescue of 455 freshwater mussels at Lake Royal. Unfortunately, none were permitted to go anywhere except Woodglen Lake and Huntsman Lake, both in the Pohick Creek watershed, and both drained in recent years. Philip displayed a unique object found in the mud of Lake Royal – a statuette of the Hindu deity Ganesha.

○ *Long Branch Stream Valley Trail meeting 5/26*

No one was able to attend this public meeting. There was discussion of Park Authority plans for new trails and paving along Long Branch central.

○ *Inspiring Connections 6/11*

Kris recounted this Sierra Club youth outing in Lake Accotink Park, now a tradition. One canoe overturned, prompting motor boat rescue, but with no harm done.

○ *Mantua Parade 6/11*

“We did it!” Dave offered in summary of the FACC participation in the Mantua Parade. After manning our well-received canoe float in the parade, Dave & Ted set up a display table, resulting in one or two interested names and a discussion with Congressman Connolly.



- *Nutley Pond Water Chestnut 7/13*

Philip advised that, due to slow growth, the date has been postponed to July 13th for the workday to stop this weed before it spreads in our watershed. All are welcome.

- *NVATU Funds:*

Kris approved and signed the donation appeal letter. It was placed in a stamped envelope, ready to mail. Kris observed even if the response is negative, we can appeal again for other needs.

- *Accotink Gorge:*

Kris mentioned he still needs to report our previous outing to the Park Authority. We can plan new tours when Kris returns from summer travel. Kris floated the possibility of a “Where Is Everybody” theme for a gorge symposium. Elaine mused on the advantages of a gorge lookout platform. Philip noted the future rebuilding of the Fullerton Road bridge might provide a lookout opportunity along the sidewalks.

- *Grant at Little Run Elementary:*

Kris confirmed he has made the final submission of the Fairfax Water grant. We should hear back in August.

Kris has conducted two Follow the Water activities with students, studying water movement on campus and in adjacent Long Branch central.

Danielle Wynne of Stormwater Planning is also engaged in watershed education at the school. She and Kris will meet to discuss collaboration.

- *495 Express Lanes:*

Kris related that Amy Gould of Fairfax County Restoration Project will be having a follow-up meeting with VDOT this week. Kris noted there is a Commonwealth investigation into contracting procedures, with VDOT featured.

- *Community Grant:*

Elaine mentioned a Springfield Art Guild member is interested in storm drain art, but after current projects. Philip suggested storm drain art might be incorporated into participation in community parades and festivals.

- *Litter Initiatives:*

Dave reported he has been in touch with Betsy Martin of Friends of Little Hunting Creek, who is trying to restart the [Action Plan for Litter Prevention](#). Dave encouraged her to focus more specifically. Much of the interest in Betsy’s group seems to be on water bottles. Philip mentioned a recent email from Glen Bell, visiting Prague, where the plastic bag fee is 22 cents.

- *Coalitions:*

Kris noted the Choose Clean Water conference calls have slowed down. There was discussion of asking the coalition about interest in a plastic bag or bottle bill. Kris opined we would need a text. Philip suggested using the Action Plan for Litter Prevention.

Philip passed along a request by Norbert Pink of the Great Falls Sierra Club to coordinate environmental group response to the Board of Supervisors Environmental Vision Update – then monitor future compliance. Dave will contact Norbert.

- Monitoring Results:

Philip lamented that our June 4th stream monitoring at Lake Accotink Park yielded the worst results yet for a stream health score for Accotink Creek. The mix of invertebrates did not seem notably different from the usual, but whereas we usually get a meager score of 4 on a scale of zero to 12, this time the score was a miserable 1.

Kris was prompted to mention that the grant for stream monitoring at Fairfax H.S. ends this year, but the science teacher is likely to carry on.

- Nottoway Park Restoration:

Philip let us know about the meeting June 20th, where Stormwater Planning described plans for 11 projects in Nottoway Park, to be built from fall 2016 through 2018. Projects will include bioretention basins, stormwater pond upgrades, dry swales, and stream restorations. Invasives control is included and will extend beyond the project limits. The Town of Vienna stream restoration bordering Nottoway Park is already underway. This all affects the Hunters Branch tributary.

- Master Plan Lake Accotink Park:

Philip presented drafts of comments to the Park Authority on the [lake sustainability](#) plans and requesting an [environmental baseline study](#). Philip will submit.
