



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 – November 21, 2017

Next Meeting: December 18, 2017 (Third Tuesday of each month)
Audrey Moore Rec Center, Senior Center Lobby

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It's easy & free!

Present:

Kris Unger
Philip Latasa
Julie Chang
Flint Webb
Dave Lincoln
Katie Lau – Welcome Katie!
Maggie Lau – Welcome Maggie!

Upcoming events

- “The Anthropologist” Screening, December 6, 2017
- Lake Accotink Park Stream Monitoring, December 9, 2017
- Christmas Bird Count December 31, 2017
- General Assembly Delegation hearing January 6, 2018
- EQAC Public Hearing, January 10, 2018

Action Items:

- Kris – Check on Merrifield farmers market space
- Philip – Arrange Americana Northside project
- Sandy - Obtain information on Frontier Drive
- Dave & Julie – Contact Virginia Conservation Network regarding General Assembly Preview

FACC Subjects Discussed –

• Represent FACC:

- [Chesapeake Watershed Forum 11/3-5](#)

Julie attended this forum organized by the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. Highlights included:

- ✓ [EPA Surf Your Watershed](#)
- ✓ Chesapeake Bay Trust grant to reinvigorate Maryland watershed group [Eyes of Paint Branch](#)
- ✓ Some good news reported from Chesapeake Bay Program on improvements in Bay clarity, crabs, and aquatic grasses (Which Dave pointed out is only a relative improvement, as in from 90% bad to 75% bad.)
- ✓ [Integrity Team USA](#) is increasing its activities in Virginia in support of watershed groups
- ✓ Grant application guidance is available from [Grant Space](#)
- ✓ Restoration case studies mapped at [Municipal Online Stormwater Training](#)
- ✓ Combat Communications for Conservationists Sessions - [1](#), [2](#), [3](#)

- *GIS Day 11/15*
Julie noted the program included five short presentations on current Chesapeake Bay-oriented GIS services and products, followed by a table top information fair and a post event happy hour. The program included presentations from: City of Annapolis; US Geological Survey, Chesapeake Bay Program Office; Maryland Environmental Service; Chesapeake Conservancy; Chesapeake Environmental Communications; Chesapeake Commons. Presentations at: <https://www.backcreekconservancy.org/817-2/>

- *Trash Summit 11/16*
Kris attended with Eleanor and Betsy of Trash Action Workforce and hosted two roundtable discussions. He lamented the singular focus on personal responsibility. We lack a strong advocacy partner. The summit organizer, Alice Ferguson Foundation, is talking about doing more in Virginia, but is not focused on advocacy. Corporate Accountability International is considering its D.C. investments and their national Park Service anti-bottled water petition presentation was small scale with little follow-up. Dave noted Virginia Conservation Network is more focused on advocacy. Julie observed that much action occurs outside such formal conferences.

Flint recalled a previous summit had useful meetings on pushing legislation, specifically contact with big box stores on bag bills.

- *General Assembly Preview 12/2*
Julie may be able to attend. Flint will forward the Federation of Civic Associations legislative package to Julie.

- *["The Anthropologist" Screening](#) 12/6*
Julie confirmed Friends of Accotink Creek will be a partner with Sierra Club Virginia on an upcoming screening and Q&A on the film, "The Anthropologist". Flint advised the film deals with climate change and the narrator is locally active in climate groups and issues. Kris opined that the value is in making a new partner.

- *Christmas Bird Count 12/31*
Philip let us know the Fort Belvoir area Christmas Bird Count, including Lake Accotink, is Sunday, December 31, 2017. Contact Kurt Gaskill at kurtcapt87@verizon.net

- *EQAC Annual Public Hearing 1/10*
Philip noted each year EQAC holds a hearing to obtain public input on environmental issues. It is scheduled for January 10, 2018. Dave will plan to attend and speak. Dave has the draft EQAC annual report and Flint indicated we should comment thereupon. Philip suggested coordinating with Audubon Naturalist Society and 350 Fairfax. Flint offered the topic of asking the county to eschew bottled water.

- *General Assembly Delegation Hearing 1/6*
Philip asked who might attend the Fairfax County General Assembly Delegation annual hearing for public comment on the upcoming legislative session. Julie can attend. Philip suggested coordinating with Senator Petersen regarding a bag bill or using Virginia Conservation Network points.

- Americana Park Northside Project:

Philip reported Suzy provided figures on the earlier Americana Park meadow projects which indicate costs of \$5000 to \$8000 might be expected on the northside. We are awaiting OP3 to arrange a meeting of interested parties. Kris inquired if the county was onboard and Philip indicated there are no MS4 points to motivate them. Kris offered the idea that the project could lead to a conversation on changes to VDOT practices.

- Trash Action Work Force:

Kris described a turnout for the October 26th [Trash Day of Action](#) about equal to our previous event. The costumes went over well. We will be continuing actions in the future. Flint mused on the need for more and different approaches. Kris expressed the need for regular TAWF meetings.



Don't trash America!

- Route 1:

Philip inquired if anyone had heard further from Audubon Naturalist Society regarding coordinating comments with Potomac Riverkeeper. The comment period ends December 6th. Kris will check.

- Braddock Road:

Philip presented Braddock Road comments for approval. The group [approved with edits](#). The last Braddock Road neighborhood meeting will be December 11.

- *Park Authority Friends Groups Task Force:*

Julie advised there are no big changes from the last draft agreement. The Park Authority seems to be making an effort to benefit the groups. The next meeting is December 1st.

- *TMDL Salt Management:*

Philip announced DEQ will soon convene interested stakeholders to help develop a Salt Management Strategy and asked if anyone felt able and willing to participate. Kris and Dave will complete the online survey to register as interested. Dave noted the chloride TMDL has commonwealth-wide implications and Flint affirmed Accotink Creek was the impetus. There was discussion of the nature of TMDL's and the earlier [TMDL lawsuit](#).

- *Frost Middle School/Get2Green Workshop:*

Kris led a Get2Green sustainable schoolyard workshop for teachers at Frost Middle School on November 6th. He shared partnering with Earth Sangha. The workshop covered successful and unsuccessful projects at Frost. Two more such workshops are planned with Get2Green. Julie mentioned the possibility of involving GMU students.

- *County Legislative Package:*

Philip found a draft online of the [county legislative package](#) for the 2018 General Assembly. It includes an item requested by the Park Authority to require labeling of invasive plants for sale. Staff recommended against, in favor of voluntary efforts. Philip inquired if anyone knew how to influence this process. Flint will check with the Northern Virginia Regional Commission, which has also been promoting native planting.

- *EPA Funding Letter:*

Julie described the Virginia Conservation network project to advocate in local media for EPA funding. There was discussion of EPA's direct impact on Accotink Creek. Kris will rewrite the suggested generic wording to reference the EPA's role in the [Pickett Road tank farm leak](#) for Julie's continued use.

- *Eakin Park Picnic Shelter:*

Philip let us know work is about to begin on a new picnic shelter at Eakin Community Park in Annandale, Virginia. Funding for the project is being provided by the Eakin Park Family Trust and a Mastenbrook Volunteer Matching Fund Grant. Philip lamented ever more pavement and our lack of funds. Kris remarked that previous contact with the Eakin Park Family Foundation has shown some interest, but their focus is in the direction of infrastructure, and the Park Authority points in that direction as well.

- *I-66:*

Kris spoke at a recent public hearing on the I-66 project. His remarks addressed how the impact will be apparent when the trees come down and appealed for support and partners. Kris was interviewed by TV news DCW50 and the [interview was broadcast](#).



- *Federation of Civic Associations March Meeting:*

Flint will be coordinating the Federation March, 2018, meeting. He shared his thoughts of a forum on plastics and waste in streams and the ocean featuring speakers from the county on recycling and incineration as means of removing plastic from the food chain.

There was discussion of whether FACC or TAWF should be a presenter. Kris observed this would also be an opportunity for promoting spring stream cleanups. Flint brought up the possibility of presenting to the [Fairfax Committee of 100](#). No decisions resulted.

- *Crestwood Nature Club:*

Assistant Park Manager Eric Malmgren is discussing formation of an after school nature club with teachers at Crestwood Elementary, according to Philip. Eric will be putting together a funding proposal, looking for grants.

- *Pollinator Garden:*

Philip conveyed that Lake Accotink Park staff is considering changes to the pollinator garden in the marina traffic circle to improve staff line of sight for security. The taller native plants would be relocated, possibly to the banks of Flag Run. Apparently there was an abundance of Monarch caterpillars this summer, but all were lost to collectors. It is uncertain if the proposed Master Plan would eliminate the circle anyway.

- *Drones in Parks:*

The Park Authority is currently seeking public input on updated drone use rules, Philip informed us. There is a [public meeting](#) December 11, 2017 at 7 p.m. at Oak View Elementary. Written comments may be sent to Parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov through January 11, 2018. FLAP discussed the issue at their last meeting and will submit written comments, emphasizing Federal protection of eagles and migratory birds. Philip shared a draft of FACC comments, which the group approved with [some edits](#).

- *Master Plan:*

Philip learned the draft Master Plan was briefed to Supervisor Cook in October. A public meeting in early January is likely. FLAP will request a briefing at their December meeting.

- *Metro Run & Walk:*

Philip mentioned Metro Run & Walk seeks volunteers to assist with its December 10th race in the park. A portion of proceeds will go to FLAP. Philip expressed envy of other groups' fundraising.

- *Park Authority Board:*

Philip announced the new Braddock member of the Park Authority Board is [Kiel Stone](#), replacing Tony Vellucci. It seems Kiel spent several years in positions in Supervisor Cook's office and is currently Outreach Manager at The Nature Conservancy.

- *Newest FLAP Member:*

FLAP President Meghan Walker, whom many of us know, gave birth to Ethan Joseph Walker October 11th!

- *FACC Election:*

Philip advised we will have FACC elections for Purser & Conservator-at-Large at our December meeting.