



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 – March 20, 2018

Next Meeting: April 17, 2018 (Third Tuesday of each month)
Audrey Moore Rec Center, Senior Center Lobby

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Present:

Lisa Turcios, Philip Latasa, Dave Lincoln, Kris Unger, Flint Webb
Kent Sands – Welcome Kent!
Shane Shroeder – Welcome Shane!

Upcoming events

- 2018 Lobby Day, March 21, 2018
- Federation Plastics Presentation March 29, 2018
- Teen Job Fair, April 28, 2018
- Potomac Watershed Cleanup, weekends in April & May, 2018
- Flag Run Stream Monitoring, May 19, 2018
- Lake Accotink Park Stream Monitoring, June 9, 2018

Action Items:

- Philip – Arrange Americana Northside project
- Kris – Coordinate with M.O.M.s
- Lisa – Arrange NVCC Green Festival participation
- Shane, Philip, & Kris – Place newsletter article

FACC Subjects Discussed –

• Vernal Equinox:

Philip observed the sun crossed the equinox just past noon today. Spring is here, though it is snowing right now.



Equinox

• Meetup:

Philip celebrated our having broken 500 on our Meetup membership. We have 517 members as of today. Kris indicated he is behind in presenting invoices for payments he has made to maintain our Meetup membership. Shane suggested placing our Meetup events on Facebook would increase the ease of sharing them.



• Represent FACC:

- *Plant NOVA Natives Grand Partnership 2/27*
Kris attended this meeting, which mostly focused on social outreach. He advised us Fairfax County has a native plant policy for its own properties, which is only semi-implemented. A discussion of silos in county government followed. Shane and Dave brought up some other native plant resources, such as Vienna/Mclean garden tours, Vienna Landscaping Group, and Audubon-at-Home. Philip mentioned the Audubon-at-Home faith community native plantings grant of up to \$1250 available through May 1.

- *SaMS SAC Meeting 2/27*
Dave discussed how this chloride TMDL stakeholders' meeting dealt with information and resource gathering. More substantive meetings should begin with the March meeting. The process is expected to take two years.

Kris observed that a broad range of interest groups were in attendance and DEQ is trying to achieve consensus solutions.

Flint related the query he had raised when this topic was discussed at the recent Green Breakfast of "Why Accotink Creek?" The answer is that there is more data on Accotink Creek because impairment begets data, which begets attention and more data.

- *Road Salts in the DC Region 3/6*
American Water Resources held a conference on the road salt topic for the wider D.C. region at the Council of Governments, which Lisa attended. In addition to USGS data presentations, Virginia DEQ also made a presentation based on the Accotink TMDL. It appears DEQ is open to changing the process and may take up to three years.
- *Braddock Road Meeting 3/20*
Representing FACC today at a meeting with Fairfax County DOT were Kris, Suzy, and Philip. In the meeting, they mostly advocated for reconsideration of the realignment of Danbury Forest Drive and for study of consolidating stormwater controls with the proposed Lake Accotink forebay. It is possible VDOT will take over the project. In response to Shane's query if FCDOT was receptive to the upstream forebay concept, Kris opined that they were, but it is still early. The next step is to arrange a meeting with Supervisor Cook.
- *2018 Lobby Day 3/21*
Kris and Lisa will attend and meet with Representatives Connolly and Beyer and Senators Kaine and Warner.
- *Federation Plastics Presentation 3/29*
Flint expects a good presentation (7:30 at Mason government Center). There will be three segments:
 - Plastic in the Environment, by Kris
 - Recycling and the recyclables market in Fairfax County
 - Waste-to-energy plant handling of plastics and treatment of flue gases

- *NVCC Green Festival 4/25 & 4/26*

We have tabled at the NVCC Green Festival in past years, Philip reminded us. This year we were also specifically invited to the April 25 event at the Alexandria Campus as well as April 26 at the Annandale Campus. Lisa is available.

- *Trash Action Work Force:*

Kris advised the next Trash Action Work force meeting is March 21, and the next action is May 5, 1 – 4 pm, at the International Bottled Water Association, with possible excursions to the National Association of Convenience Stores and a march to the Potomac River. Kris mentioned a global action against [Starbucks March 21](#), the day of their shareholder meeting. Flint cited figures from the Clean Fairfax Council of 290 million plastic bottles used each year in Fairfax County, with only about 20% recycled.

- *M.O.M.S.:*

There was no news to report since the last meeting. Philip lamented that MOM's is having a 5% Give Back Day to benefit Project Clean Stream April 4th at stores in Rockville, Herndon, and Merrifield.

- *Potomac Watershed Cleanup:*

Philip summarized preparations for the cleanup season:

- West End Rugby requested a separate cleanup on March 3. We will clean Wakefield Run and also do stream monitoring with them.
- Little River United Church of Christ will join our Woodburn Road cleanup. This is the church across from NCCC, behind the cemetery.
- Asian American LEAD suggested a cleanup on May 5, but nothing confirmed.
- Stream cleanups led by other groups in our watershed so far include:
 - April 7
 - ★ Hunters Branch
 - ★ Long Branch
 - April 8
 - ★ Fort Belvoir
 - April 14
 - ★ Hallman St, Fairfax by Washington Metro Chapter Community Associations Institute
 - April 21
 - ★ Country Club Hills, Fairfax

There was discussion of the filled up volunteer roster of 200 volunteers for Lake Accotink, which digressed to talk of involving schools in projects around the lake.

- *EPA Funding Letter:*

Kris and Lisa will ask Representative Connolly for information on the Pickett Road tank farm when they meet March 21st. Shane offered to contact his acquaintance, Representative Connolly's chief-of-staff.

- *Flag Run Restoration:*

Katherine and Philip did biological monitoring on Flag Run on March 11 at the Elgar Street crossing. The results were pitiful, with a catch of only 53 invertebrates and an abysmal stream health score of 1. The next outing is May 19th, with at least one more planned before stream restoration construction begins.

- Little Run Elementary:

Kris is pulling together the pieces to do additional workshops, which could be a model for schools in the Lake Accotink Park area. FACC was represented at the Little Run STEAM night, but it was not very productive for us.

- Americana Northside Project:

An Americana Northside meeting at last has been organized for March 26, according to Philip. Kris recalled the goal is to reestablish the milkweed patch that once existed on the site.

- Vernal Pool:

Mike Hayslett will return to Fairfax County for the vernal pool project in April, Kris advised. We have not yet planned out the events for his visit.

- Park Authority Friends Groups:

Philip recalled FACC has, from the beginning offered to help FLAP. FLAP has funds and needs an MOU and insurance, while we have no money but have 501(c)3 status. At the last FLAP meeting the idea came up to have FLAP pay for insurance while FACC buys. Discussion was favorable to the idea, so long as it is made clear to any insurer that FACC's position is primary.

- Accotink Gorge:

Kris recapped our March 16th workday in the Accotink Gorge with support from Solitude Lake Management and observed we had cleared a pretty good area. We have plans to return in fall. Philip suggested we invite the office park property manager to tour the gorge. He also noted The Nature Conservancy has 300 volunteers and wants to talk in May about possible cooperation, which we can suggest be focused on the gorge.



Sawing through a monster wisteria vine in the Accotink Gorge

- NVCT Lunch:

Lisa attended the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust lunch at Belle Haven. The Washington Post Weather Gang offered a presentation on climate change issues, predicting more 95+ degree days, and reduced, but more intense snow seasons. Several supervisors and Virginia legislators were present.

- Transit:

Lisa is working with the Sierra Club NOVA Transport Roundtable. Today the Board of Supervisors will be voting on approval of Embark Richmond Highway, a project with model environmental and stormwater control elements.

- Newsletter Proposal:

Philip described a proposal from Flag Run's staunch defender, Donald Pless, for FACC to establish a print newsletter, with an offer of funding. An alternative idea is placing ads in existing community newsletters, something Philip commented that he had suggested in our meetings before. Adapting our FACC brochure and Conservation Assistance brochure would be a simple way to generate the content of such ads. Donald had proposed the Ravensworth Farmer as a test case and provided a \$120 donation. He requires FACC to treat this as a formal grant with a written proposal including a formal financial plan.

Following his initial proposal, Donald later elaborated his ideas to request specific content. Philip quoted his requests for content dealing with "the poor environmental quality of the Accotink", followed by "advocating that Accotink be designated as a natural resource park".

In the following discussion, there was no enthusiasm for taking on the project. Shane proposed submitting articles to the Ravensworth Farmer instead of spending funds on ads. A consensus formed that FACC has no manpower to take on this work, but a one-time pilot article announcing our spring cleanups is good. Shane, Philip, & Kris will collaborate.

- Federation Budget Resolution:

Flint outlined the Federation of Citizens Associations draft resolution on the Fairfax County budget. The draft emphasizes the \$45 million the county receives in utility fees should go to energy projects. Items regarding open space and plastic waste may be added. The Federation will pass its final resolution this Thursday.

The public will be able to speak at budget hearings April 10, 11, & 12. The County budget comment period will begin April 12.

- Lake Accotink Park Master Plan:

Shane shared some impressive statistics on the progress of the Save Lake Accotink group: 2500 likes on Facebook, 2200 petition signatures (1700 in-county) with a goal of 10,000 by Memorial Day. Shane also mentioned he had heard of GMU engineering students doing projects of plans for Accotink Creek – he will check on more information. SLA will be requesting that the park put up the future of the lake displays at the April 7th Lake Accotink cleanup and is planning a get-together after the cleanup, possibly at Kilroys. Yard signs are available.

Discussion covered Dave's [alternate plan](#) for the lake, the negative results of dam removal in some Pacific northwest rivers, and the storm drain microturbine proposal discussed at the last Green Breakfast.

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