



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 – August 21, 2018

Next Meeting: September 18, 2018 (Third Tuesday of each month)
Audrey Moore Rec Center, Senior Center Lobby

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Present:

Dave Lincoln, Flint Webb, Philip Latasa, Bill Corfitzen, Elaine Sevy, Katie Lau, Ted Welch, Suzy Foster, Sandy Collins, Kim Schauer
Anna Schauer (Kim's daughter) – Welcome, Anna!

Upcoming events

- Lake Accotink Park Stream Monitoring, September 8, 2018
- Plastic-Free Forum, September 22, 2018
- International Coastal Cleanup, September & October, 2018

Action Items:

- Philip – Arrange Americana Northside project
- Kris – Coordinate with The Nature Conservancy

FACC Subjects Discussed –

• Fish Shadow:

An invasives control volunteer had “fish shadow” in their email address, leading Philip to look up the phrase and discover this lovely couplet he wished to share:

*“Light as the shadow of the fish
That falls through the pale green water” - Ezra Pound*

• Represent FACC:

- BridgeWalk Aug. 28, 2018
The annual Springfield BridgeWalk is August 28, 7:00 - 8:30 PM. Philip asked if anyone cared to represent FACC with a table. There were no takers, even with the inducements of a free barbeque dinner.
- NVCC Sustainable Symposium Oct. 17, 2018
NVCC is planning a “Sustainable Food and Waste & Recycling Symposium” for October 17th at the Annandale Campus,. The plan is to have exhibitor tables, panels, and films related to waste, recycling, food security, and food waste. Philip noted this is not exactly our area, but we may be welcome if anyone wishes to represent FACC. Katie will be available after school hours.

- *Mount Vernon Environmental Fair Nov. 10, 2018*

The Mount Vernon District Supervisor's Office will be hosting an environmental fair (still being planned) that is tentatively scheduled for Nov. 10. Philip asked if anyone wish to represent us. Dave is available, and suggested coordinating with Friends of Little Hunting Creek.

- *Alban Maintenance Yard:*

Suzy let us know the meadow planting date is being finalized. It is likely to be a weekday, so more employees may participate.

- *Americana Park Northside Project:*

This is a former staging area used during the 495 Express lanes construction, that now is experiencing continual washout of its gravel surface. Suzy explained that FCDOT is planning a bike path connecting the north side of 236 to the Cross County Trail and Stormwater Planning Division will collaborate to improve runoff.

- *Trash Action Work Force:*

Philip reported that Clean Virginia Waterways, Virginia coordinator of the International Coastal Cleanup, is attempting to coordinate interest by nonprofit groups in Virginia to discuss a bag bill (and other bills that will reduce litter). The new second-in-command at Clean Fairfax, Sam Rausch, is also making an effort to push legislation. Sam has mentioned a possible increase in the litter fee paid by retailers, now a nominal \$25 per year, up to the \$40 to \$80 range. He has also managed to get a trash line item into the annual Virginia Conservation Network legislative package.

Philip also reminded us of:

[Plastic Free Forum](#) hosted by 350 Fairfax September 22, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM Great Falls Library,

12th Annual [Alice Ferguson Foundation Trash Summit](#), Business Solutions for Plastic Pollution, October 16th, George Mason University Founders Hall.

- *4104 Woodlark Drive:*

The hearing on the developer's renewed request for exemption is coming up September 5th, or so Philip has heard, but nothing is on the Committee website yet. Philip emailed the staff Monday to ask the situation. Philip asked if anyone thought they would be able to speak, but there were no commitments.

Flint compared the situation to the case of [8800 Richmond Hwy](#) and suggested that floodplain restrictions might limit development of this lot. Kim will check on floodplain status.

- *I-66 Project:*

Philip observed the trees continue to fall and reported he has made some initial surveys of the erosion and sediment controls, which are posted to our website. So far, he has not spotted any control failures worth complaining about. Philip's requests to VDOT to discuss the stream and wetlands protections around the 123 cloverleaf have so far met with unfortunate silence. He mentioned the tributary-of-a-tributary passing through the cloverleaf is perennial and has fish present.

- *Gallows Road Retirement Development:*

Philip advised that, in order to address County staff comments, the applicant postponed their presentation before the Mason District Land Use Committee until September 25th 2018 at 7:30pm. This is the same location where the developer proposed to build townhouses last year, but was met with

concern over school capacity. Since the new proposal is for a retirement community, that objection is gone. Dave mentioned that 555 & up zoning gives a permitted density bump.

- Loisdale Road Development:

Philip described a Comprehensive Plan amendment request for a hotel, restaurant and self-storage development at the intersection of Loisdale Road and Newington Road. County staff is reviewing the proposal. The property is currently wooded with no buildings.

- International Coastal Cleanup:

Philip let us know our cleanup schedule is posted online. We will begin Saturday September 1st, and conclude Saturday, October 13th with the Lake Accotink cleanup. Flint mentioned he has put the schedule on the Leidos calendar.

Ted brought up his thought of scout participation via a merit badge coupled with joining a cleanup. Flint noted either a Conservation or a Sustainability merit badge is required to advance to Eagle Scout. Ted also elaborated on his inspiration for a shadow box of trash to be used for displays.



Philip shared this photo of an assemblage of trash found in the creek recently, and wondered if the creek is sending us a message in the form of a pictogram puzzle which we must solve. He noted our website's [stormwater page](#) includes the phrase "*Throw a life preserver to a drowning stream*", so perhaps that particular plea was heard.

- Lake Accotink Park Master Plan:

Philip wondered if we should act on Tony Vellucci's suggestion of a community draft plan which we heard at our last meeting. Discussion led to no conclusions.

- Follow the Water:

Kim is willing to assist with grant applications, but progress will have to await Kris' return.

- Mussel Rescue:

Philip reported that on July 28, we rescued 256 mussels, a record number several times higher than any prior rescue. On August 5, we rescued another 65, for a total of 321 mussels. Thanks to the efforts of Tony Vellucci, the rescues received attention in the Annandale Blog. We were also contacted by a channel 4 TV reporter interested in a feature on the next rescue.

Since it had rained heavily today, we checked the USGS gauge during the meeting. Finding it had passed the threshold of 2000 cubic feet per second, we scheduled another rescue for August 24th.



Philip asked for a suitable inspiring caption for this picture depicting the perseverance against obstacles of one mussel as it plowed through rocks seeking deeper water. Dave's suggestion – *"That's muscle!"*

On the topic of mussels, sadly, Philip pointed out that this month Congressman Todd Rokita of Indiana introduced H.R. 6668 to forever remove all species of freshwater mussels from the protections of the Endangered Species Act. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/6668/text>

- FACC Elections:

Pilip reminded us that in December, we will have FACC elections for three posts – Primary Conservator, Secondary Conservator, and Chronicler.

Our bylaws state "A Conservator may not hold more than three consecutive full terms". Since the initial election of Primary Conservator and Chronicler was March 2013, the incumbents will not quite have served three full terms by the end of the year. Philip left it up to the interpretation of the group as to whether the incumbents can or should be reelected for another full two-year term. After brief discussion it was decided without objection that reelection was permissible.

Dave joked about seeking a demotion to "Tertiary Conservator", but worried about the "pay cut". Ted reminded Dave of the great "perks" of his office.

- Federation Survey:

Flint explained the Federation of Civic Associations' annual survey of residents' legislative priorities will be out soon and our responses are needed.

- Groundskeeping:

Elaine inquired about any available guidelines or rules concerning how homeowners' associations manage common property. She is particularly concerned about damage caused by apparent herbicide overapplication in her community. Discussion included the suggestion of contacting the state forester.
