



## 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 – October 16, 2018

Next Meeting: November 20, 2018 (Third Tuesday of each month)  
Audrey Moore Rec Center, Senior Center Lobby

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#### **Present:**

Bill Corfitzen, Dave Lincoln, Flint Webb, Suzy Foster, Philip Latasa, Kris Unger  
Anastasios Galatis – Welcome, Anastasios!

#### **Upcoming events**

- Trash Day of Action, October 30, 2018
- Mount Vernon Environmental Fair, Nov. 10, 2018
- Alban Road Meadow Planting & Gorge Walk, Nov. 10, 2018 (tentative date)

#### **Action Items:**

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

#### **FACC Subjects Discussed –**

##### • Represent FACC:

- *NVCC Experiential Learning Sept. 21, 2018*  
This event was aimed at internship-type experiences, as described by Philip. A number of students showed interest, but none have followed through.
- *NVCC Waste & Recycling Symposium Oct. 17, 2018*  
Styrofoam Mom will be there. Philip explained he met her at the Plastic Free Forum and she took some interest in FACC. She floated ideas for cooperation, Earth Day 2019 at NVCC, and a possible fundraiser for FACC. Philip asked if anyone was available to attend and build the connection, but there were no takers.
- *FLAP Potluck Dinner Oct. 19, 2018*  
Philip advised FLAP will be having a potluck dinner and all are welcome.
- *Stream Monitor's Potluck Oct. 28, 2018*  
Dan Schwartz is turning over the Northern Virginia Soil & Water Conservation District stream monitoring program to Ashley Palmer. Philip let us know the District will be having a Stream Monitor's Potluck 12:30 – 4:30 pm at Roundtree Park. They are providing hot dogs and burgers, so the potluck aspect is optional.

- *Robinson H.S. Meaningful Watershed Education Experience Nov. 19, 2018*  
Philip advised Danielle Wynne and Bradley Webster are doing a Meaningful Watershed Education Experience from 11 am – 3 pm and asked would anyone be interested in running a station located at a stream by the school in the Pohick watershed. No one was able to commit.
- *EQAC Public Hearing January 9, 2019*  
Philip brought up the topic of the annual EQAC public hearing, on January 9<sup>th</sup>. There was discussion of making a presentation. Kris encouraged any individual to speak as a representative of FACC.

- *Trash Action Work Force:*

Kris advised we still plan our action at Nestle USA headquarters on October 30<sup>th</sup> and have made a scouting trip to the area. Kris expounded on corporations that profit from bottle waste but lobby against deposit bills. Kris will follow up with EcoAction Arlington and the National Women’s Democratic Club.

Flint floated the idea of “checking the box” by meeting with Nestle beforehand. Kris saw little to be gained other than listening to standard evasions.

Philip reported we had a display table at the 350 Fairfax Plastic Free Forum September 22. 350 Fairfax will do the Forum again in 2019 so we should plan to participate again.

Philip advised Friends of Little Hunting Creek are the recipients of the Fairfax County 2018 Environmental Excellence Award. The presentation and reception are 7 to 9 pm Oct. 23 at the Government Center. They’ve suggested we should attend wearing our plastic costumes and ask the supervisors to include a plastic bag bill in the county’s legislative agenda.

Other awardees whom we know are Jen Cole of Clean Fairfax Council and Danielle Wynne of Stormwater Planning.

Philip made the attempt to share a Day of Action chant inspired by the recent news of [Jamaica’s ban on plastic bags, straws, and Styrofoam](#), but found the familiar tune more challenging than expected:

*Aruba, Jamaica, they don’t wanna take ya!  
Virginia, why don’t we go? So can we!  
Go like Jamaica, plastic free!*

- *INOVA Project:*

Kris remarked that the footprint of this former site of Exxon headquarters on Gallows Road has recently seen its developed footprint increase by about 1/3. Kris recounted how he had discovered issues about ten days ago, including an overflowing silt fence that may have been that way all summer. Kris has made reports to DEQ and also informed Supervisor Smyth’s office. Flint noted the INOVA Task Force is meeting October 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Suzy remarked that county inspectors rely upon citizen reports. Discussion followed on county- citizen interaction.

Suzy will take a look at the state of some ongoing developments around her neighborhood, Kena Temple site, Scout at Fairfax Circle, and The Enclave.

- 4104 Woodlark Drive:

Philip informed us the October 3 hearing of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance Exception Review Committee was reportedly extended and contentious. After committee members had critical comments the applicant requested a 70-day deferral. It seems they will need to redesign the proposed house. Kris mentioned the effective action of the Fairfax County Restoration Project on this issue. Kris also mentioned the nearby undermining of Route 236 he had reported and which VDOT has repaired.

- I-66 Project:

There has been no change, Philip advised. VDOT is still stalling on having a meeting, even though Delegate Kay Kory has also requested a meeting with us to be included. Philip pondered the value of involving one of the county staff responding to the INOVA violations, as that same person was involved in the similar [495 Express Lanes](#) case. Suzy will contact the DPWES person working with VDOT issues. Kris suggested better coordination of website updates such as this with our Facebook page.

- Blake Lane Park:

Philip observed this is a park in Vienna near Oakton High School. Although it is administered as a park, it was originally acquired by the county for a school that was never built. Now the county has decided to build that school, which will take up pretty much all of the 10 acres. The neighbors have formed a [Save Blake Lane Park](#) and appealed to us for support.

Kris has responded with suggested courses of action and a list of potential allies. He indicated an improved outcome may be possible, even if the project is not prevented. Anastasios added the idea of a school designed to high environmental standards.

- Chesapeake Stewards:

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation will be having its first [Chesapeake Stewards training course](#) in Northern Virginia over three weeks in November and December. Philip said there seems to be no particular goal stewards are expected to accomplish other than to raise awareness, but it seems it may be a good opportunity to make contacts. There is a service requirement of 40 hours on Bay-related projects of one's own choosing.

- Grace Church Native Planting:

Dave reported that of the 107 native plants recently installed by his church, only one had not survived. Kris mentioned the project was funded by a grant from Plant NOVA Natives that is building community around this watershed-friendly project that will capture stormwater. [Online video on the project](#)

- Alban Maintenance Yard:

Suzy reminded us of this grant-funded county project to convert a Department of Vehicle Services fill site into a pollinator meadow. Invasives control work has been underway for one year and seeding should take place in the next few weeks. Volunteer planting is tentatively scheduled for November 10, 10 am – 1 pm, and Supervisor McKay will be invited.

- Little River Turnpike Service Road Project:

Kris has not heard back from the county on his recent report of erosion and sediment control violations at this worksite.

- International Coastal Cleanup:

Philip advised we finished our cleanups on October 6<sup>th</sup>. We had a low total of 112 volunteers who removed 183 bags of trash and 21 tires.

One interesting observation Philip shared was that at Thaiss Park the main channel has shifted to follow a formerly dry channel. The previous main channel has now reversed course to carry a tributary to the new channel.



Freshwater mussel found during Lake Accotink cleanup, the first one seen in the lake for decades.

- Lake Accotink Park Master Plan:

Philip shared his thought that a fish passage could be incorporated into the trail flyway that is being planned to cross in front of the dam. It is rather late in the project planning, though, and he has no ideas on how to put together a meaningful proposal for the Park Authority. Tony Vellucci, however, has sent out some inquiries that sparked communication between DPWES and VDGIF that we hope will result in something.

- Follow the Water:

- Little Run Elementary

There is to be a student planting event next week and Kris will send out a message soon. [NOTE: Wednesday, October 24, 9am to 12pm]

- Canterbury Woods Elementary

Kris is involved in planning a Follow the Water program, possibly with planting and stream monitoring, but financial resources are tricky.

- West Springfield Elementary

Kris is awaiting response from the teacher.

- Accotink Gorge:

Philip passed on the news that Dominion recently completed work focusing on wisteria. Although they did not specify what they had done, we can presume it was targeted spraying.

Philip also advised Solitude Lake Management is not going to be able to do anything in October, possibly later in the year. There was discussion of a weekend cutting-only effort in the meanwhile.

Suzy offered the idea of combining the gorge work with the nearby November 10<sup>th</sup> Alban Road meadow planting. A consensus developed on the idea of making the time in the gorge primarily a walk, combined with light cutting or no cutting. Suzy & Philip will scout out a meadow-to-gorge walking route.

• Flag Run Plant Rescue/Monitoring:

Philip noted we have done one more plant rescue on Flag Run. We also did a [stream monitoring](#), with the typical poor results that were expected. We were surprised, however to catch one salamander larva. This is our last monitoring before the restoration project, but we will do a few post-restoration monitorings for before and after comparison.



Salamander found in Flag Run

• Wakefield Run Monitoring:

Philip reported we did monitoring of Wakefield Run on October 9<sup>th</sup>, completing the fourth year of our 5-year post-restoration monitoring. Although we caught an encouraging number of mayflies and a few beetles, the stream health score remains stubbornly low, getting only a score of 3.



Aquatic Beetle from Wakefield Run

• Virginia Constitutional Amendment:

Philip mentioned there is a constitutional amendment on the Virginia ballot this November that deals with [tax relief for flood protection measures](#), which is somewhat related to our mission. Advice from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation is that the measure is targeted at the Norfolk area and should be supported. Flint observed that this is related to sea level rise.



• FACC Elections:

With Kris planning to step aside, it's a wide open race for the title of Primary Conservator. Sandy has an early lead in the polls. Philip advised we will also be voting in December for Secondary Conservator and Chronicler, with no declared challengers so far.



• 8800 Richmond Highway:

Flint brought up the heated issue of this proposal for a residential development in the 100-year floodplain in the neighboring watershed of Dogue Creek, which requires a Comprehensive Plan amendment.

The Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Associations favors the proposal and the land in question is owned by the Council's representative to the Fairfax County Federation of Civic Associations. This made for a contentious Federation discussion. The Federation passed a resolution without specifics saying the Federation supports the Chesapeake Bay Act and Floodplain Ordinance and asking to avoid precedent setting action. Flint noted all county residents benefit from low flood insurance rates due to no building being allowed in floodplains. Flint also related that the recent FEMA reevaluation of the floodplain here, likely done in response to VDOT bridge plans, shows the floodplain is actually higher than the current designation. There is an October 24<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission rehearing.

• Federation Environmental Package:

Flint explained the Fairfax County Federation of Civic Associations environmental package focuses on:

- Clean energy
- Salt and fertilizer management
- Plastic Bag Bill

The Federation will vote on the package at the members' meeting October 25<sup>th</sup>.