



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 – January 15, 2019

Next Meeting: February 19, 2019 (Third Tuesday of each month)
Audrey Moore Rec Center, Senior Center Lobby

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Present:

Dave Lincoln, Anastasios Galatis, Sandy Collins, Beverley Rivera, Philip Latasa, Julie Chang, Kris Unger

Upcoming events

- Conservation Lobby Day January 30, 2019
- Mount Vernon Town Meeting, February 2, 2019
- Americana Drive Cleanup, February 18, 2019
- Plant NOVA Natives Partnership February 26, 2019
- Dyke March Vernal Pool Program, March 3, 2019
- Lake Accotink Park Stream Monitoring, March 9, 2019
- Fairhill Elementary 3R Planting, April 30, 2019

FACC Subjects Discussed –

• Represent FACC:

- *Community Foundation of Northern Virginia Dec. 4, 2018*
No one attended the event, but Kris observed it is good to have the Foundation on our radar, now that they are moving into environmental issues.
- *Lee District Annual Open House Jan. 12, 2019*
Kris conveyed Elaine's report that she "sang our praises" while attending as representative of the Springfield Art Guild. There was discussion of Supervisor McKay's [candidacy](#) for Chairman of the Board of Supervisors.
- *Drawdown Workshop - Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions Jan. 27, 2019*
Kris expressed interest in connecting with Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions and may be able to attend and staff an FACC table.
- *Conservation Lobby Day Jan. 30, 2019*
Kris may attend. Dave commented that in the past he has found the networking with other environmentalist good, but the value of the actual legislator contacts dubious.
- *Mount Vernon Town Meeting Feb. 2, 2019*
Dave will staff an FACC table and invites others to join.
- *IMA Appreciation Event Feb. 16, 2019*
Philip invited anyone interested to attend the IMA Appreciation Event on February 16th.
- *Plant NOVA Natives Partnership Feb. 26, 2019*

Kris will attend. He described this as a “good conversation” and noted the focus is on social media outreach. Dave recalled the native planting project at his church funded by a Plant NOVA Natives grant and reminded us these grants continue to be available.

○ *Vernal Pool Program Mar. 3, 2019*

Sandy confirmed we remain on track, although we have not heard back. Anastasios and Kris will also attend. There was discussion of the proposed revision of the [Waters of the United States](#) rules and of the status of vernal pools in Lake Accotink Park.

• *INOVA Project:*

Sandy described how Kris had brought about a meeting with INOVA and others January 8th featuring a “cast of thousands” (or at least 20 to 30). In addition to FACC and INOVA, Clark Construction, DFM inspections firm, Fairfax County Land Development Services, and more were represented. Kris mentioned the challenge of keeping track of who was who in this crowd. Sandy allowed that although the meeting was an INOVA PR measure for them to be seen as an environmental steward and good neighbor, the discussion seemed to be a good first step toward how to better handle any future problems.

Kris described how there had been much discussion of whether the original incident was a one-off or represented an extended period of neglect. He described how the five lawyers in the room all “came for me”. All parties on the other side seemed embarrassed by the truth they did not want to admit. Kris passed around a set of photos showing that truth. The description offered at the meeting of escaping sediment as “brown colored water” was discussed to much laughter.

Kris is most interested in a walk of the site with conservation-minded people with an eye to preservation and invasives control. It was with that goal in mind that he included the director of Northern Virginia Conservation Trust in the meeting.

In our meeting Sandy brought up the question of how Virginia standards compare to other states. Kris described practices in Maryland employing storm tanks to settle out construction sediment.

Kris expressed frustration at how Land Development Services defended INOVA. He commented on how the approach taken by Land Development Services sees the developer as the client, when it should be the people. Or does LDS actually stand for “Land Destruction Services”, Kris pondered.

Kris likened the process to dealing with cats – Love them until they love us back, but first they must be dragged from under the bed. He will write a response to the INOVA community relations director. He will also follow up with Land Development Services.



Before citizen report - Neglected silt fence filled beyond capacity, overflowing sediment into stream

- [Plastic Bag Bills:](#)

Several bills have been introduced. We need to try to support them. We have a page on our website, incorporating the information bill summary information on the [#LitterFreeVA](#) website. Philip presented draft comments to be sent to Accotink legislators, which were approved with edits and the suggestion they be sent to members of General Assembly committees that will hear the bills. Philip will send the comments and also plans to attend the January 16th Senate Finance Committee hearing to speak in support.

- [I-66 Project:](#)

There was a discussion of confusion over which agency had issued which permits for which wetlands disturbances. Sandy indicated it seems all wetlands mitigation will be done outside the Accotink Creek watershed. Philip suggested the idea of the I-66 project mitigation being applied to the still uncorrected wetland damage left by the 495 Express Lanes.

- [TMDL:](#)

Kris mentioned he is on the Salt Management Strategy (SaMS) Education and Outreach Committee. He shared the suggestion he had made of education outreach in the Long Branch (central) watershed at today's SaMS meeting, where the idea was brainstormed. Kris also shared his impressions of a University of Maryland presentation on the topic which drove home the seriousness of the issue. Dave mentioned how his outreach to Community Associations International had met a positive initial response, but their interest seems to have dwindled.

- [Lake Accotink Park Master Plan:](#)

Philip described a situation of no news on the fish passage and uncertainty what to do next. Philip also recalled the suggestion that we should prepare some specific proposals for the general master plan. There was general discussion of the fish passage concept.

- [Blake Lane Park:](#)

Philip reminded us that Fairfax County Public Schools will hold a public meeting Jan. 16 to review plans for the Blake Lane school. Philip will attend. Kris observed it will be good to stay connected on this one.

Philip recounted his exploration of both alternate school site parks last week. Sadly for Blake Lane Park, it is decidedly the lesser of the two in environmental value. Towers Park is almost entirely wooded, while Blake Lane Park has only tiny patches of woods dominated by invasives. Of course, preservation of both parks is the preferred goal.

- [Follow the Water:](#)

- *Fairhill Elementary*

DPWES is planning watershed-friendly plantings with students in March or April. There will be a walk-through on January 17th. Kris will be there.

- [Conservation Leadership Project:](#)

Julie said Katie's Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Districts project presentation is due by the end of March. The proposal is for invasives removal at Daniels Run Elementary school, planning two workdays coordinated with faculty and Lands & Waters. The focus locations have been chosen. Kris suggested the idea of an invasives walk with students as a buildup to the workdays.

- *Americana Drive Cleanup:*

Americana Drive has been a favorite dumping spot for years. Several of the neighborhoods along Americana drive are cooperating on a volunteer workday on ~~January 21st, Martin Luther King Day~~. Kris let us know he'd just received notice of weather postponement to February 18th, Presidents Day. James Walkinshaw, candidate for Braddock District supervisor has said he will attend. Amy Gould of Fairfax County Restoration Project is a main instigator.

Amy is trying to organize donations for food for volunteers. Philip told her FACC could receive online donations and pass them on. There was discussion of FACC contributing to the food fund, with a consensus to suggest a donation of \$100 (or max \$200), and an expressed preference for coffee and donuts over pizza or sandwiches.

- *Gallows Road Retirement Development:*

Philip reported the Planning Commission hearing has been postponed again, to January 30th. He asked if we wish to speak or submit written comments, and the consensus was in favor. Philip will submit.

- *Friends of Parks:*

- *Insurance*

Beverley offered how she had long wanted to suggest FACC be insured, pointing out board members' personal assets are at risk. Beverly has quotes pending for liability and directors & officers coverage which she will share when received. Sandy agreed general practice recommends nonprofits should have such coverage. Julie recalled the incident of the dog park group that was sued and did not have insurance.

Beverley emphasized we cannot afford not to have insurance. Philip responded with the question of whether we have sufficient income. He noted this past year we took in about \$1000, about \$200 of which goes to website hosting, Meetup, and the State Corporation Commission, leaving little for policy premiums. Philip's question of our willingness to pass the hat around the table to pay for insurance was met with affirmative response.

Kris opened a discussion of Land & Water's effective fundraising (receiving many thousands) through their annual newsletter. Philip wondered what we were missing, since we already send an annual fundraising appeal and a monthly bulletin. There was interest in emulating the Lands & Waters example, but no plan was formed.

Kris offered the idea of extending our insurance umbrella over Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley, which is not in a position to incorporate.

- *Flag Run Stream Restoration:*

Philip shared comments he had drafted after our November meeting, which were approved for submittal without objection.

- *Wakefield Park Mainstem Stream Restoration:*

Philip advised there will be a Wakefield Park Stream Restoration meeting January 18. Philip will attend. Sandy and Julie may also attend.

• Donations:

Philip detailed donations received recently:

\$75.00 from our own Sandy Collins (which will soon be met by a company match)
\$25.00 from our own Elaine Sevy
\$25.00 from James Walkinshaw, aide to Congressman Connolly and Braddock supervisor candidate
\$25.00 from our friend Jeanne Kadet
\$25.00 from Kurt Rausch
\$50.00 from Laura Anderko
\$40.00 from Jeffrey Leach

Total \$265.00

- *In memory of Audrey Moore*
\$250.00 from Roger Gray
\$200.00 from Bill, Gayle, and Steve Watkins, owners of New Directions Dog Training and Supplies in memory of their aunt
\$100.00 from Judy Perry & Robert A. Perry family
\$40.00 from Anne Andrews
\$50 from Mr. & Mrs. Robert Donargo

Total \$640.00

Philip mentioned donors who had requested we please notify the family, but was unsure of how best to do so. Those in the group more familiar advised placing a notice on the funeral home website.

- *FLAP*
Philip advised we received \$1,048.00 from Metro Run Walk to hold for FLAP until they obtain their own bank account. He questioned whether we should open a separate account for the FLAP funds, recalling the fiasco of FACC funds held by Northern Virginia Trout Unlimited that were not properly accounted for and not returned. The consensus was that we can reliably hold the funds in our one account for the brief period until FLAP has its own account.
- *Change of Car Donation*
Philip described how a recent car donation inquiry prompted him to look into our car donation agency, followed by the felicitous discovery that the old agency had been taken over by a new one, [C.A.R.S.](#), whose level of service and clarity to both donor and nonprofit seems much superior. As Primary Conservator, Sandy signed the agreement with C.A.R.S., which Philip will forward. Philip also shared the customized letter of thanks C.A.R.S. will send to any donors.

• Website Renewal:

Philip shared invoices showing he had paid \$13.96 for domain name and \$119.40 for website hosting renewal, total \$133.36. Beverley issued a reimbursement check.