



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 – July 21, 2020

Next Meeting: August 18, 2020 (Third Tuesday of each month)

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Present:

Sandy Collins, Dave Lincoln, Flint Webb (by phone), Philip Latasa

• Represent FACC:

- No one has yet heard of any relevant events not cancelled by covid19. Flint mentioned the Federation of Civic Associations Environmental Committee meetings will go forward on the third Wednesday of each month.

• I-66 Outside the Beltway:

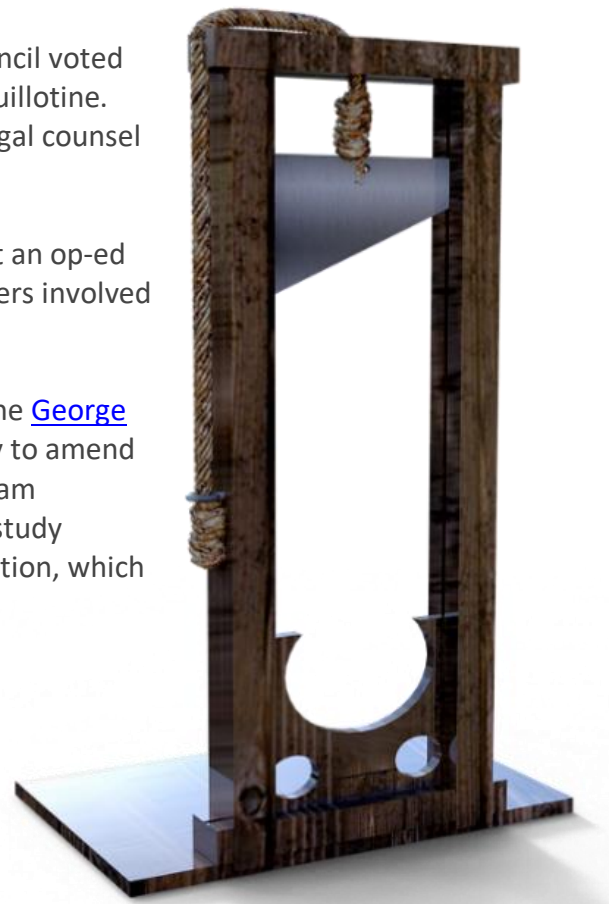
Philip has still been monitoring the I-66 project regularly and sharing reports with Potomac Riverkeeper. It's clear they've made some improvements in erosion and sediment controls, but it's clearly not a priority. We are still waiting for the DEQ Notice of Violation to be made available for public comment.

• Northfax West Development:

July 14th was Bastille Day and on that date, the Fairfax City Council voted unanimously to send the North Fork of Accotink Creek to the guillotine. There is some hope of an appeal if the Potomac Riverkeeper legal counsel considers it viable. The chances look slim, however.

Philip proposes to suggest to our group of allies that we submit an op-ed to the Washington Post and also appeal to the several developers involved to reconsider.

New horrors are lurking on the North Fork – We knew about the [George Snyder Trail](#) and the same Northfax allies will be asking the City to amend its plans. We've also just learned about the Stafford Drive stream restoration. It's only a proposal for study at this time, but the study language suggests combining flood control with stream restoration, which certainly means the stream and riparian buffer will become an afterthought to protecting structures built in the floodplain.





*The brook was thrown
Deep in a sewer dungeon under stone
In fetid darkness still to live and run—
And all for nothing it had ever done*

- Robert Frost -

Northfax West - The piscine peasants stormed City Hall on Bastille Day, but were repulsed.

- [495 Express Lanes:](#)

Flint was contacted by the McLean Citizens Association for advice on the air quality aspects of their resolution in response to the proposed Express Lanes extension. Their resolution also touched on tree canopy and erosion. Flint will let them know we are here if our support is desired. The Federation of Civic Associations also discussed the extension.

- [Long Branch central Project:](#)

There has been movement on the Long Branch central project. Stormwater Planning has a contract in place with [Biohabitats](#) to develop a plan. Stormwater planning is looking for participation in meetings and discussions. Sandy is interested.

- [Long Branch Stream Valley Trail Paving:](#)

Philip is awaiting confirmation, but he received a report from the Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley that the Park Authority has begun paving the trail there. The Braddock Supervisor's newsletter only mentioned "maintenance". In 2016 there were [public meetings](#), and the neighbors were opposed, so it seemed to have been dropped.

- International Coastal Cleanup:

It is time to make decisions about fall cleanups. Clean Virginia Waterways has recommended proceeding with cleanups of no more than 10 persons. Philip also received suggestions for somehow spacing out the arrival times or putting out individual cleanup kits of bags and gloves. Philip expressed doubts about the practicality of doing anything except to have masks, gloves, and sanitizer available and reminding volunteers to maintain distance.

Discussion favored proceeding with the cleanups absent any objection from the Park Authority or Fairfax City. School waivers of community service requirements may limit the number of volunteers.

- Lake Accotink Park Master Plan:

Philip noted restrictions are ending and we may anticipate public meetings will resume in upcoming months. Any ideas on how we may most effectively advocate for natural resources are welcome.

Philip mentioned he had not heard anything further about the pipeline, but it seems likely somewhere wheels are spinning. Dave wondered whether covid-related revenue shortages might affect the dredging plans. Philip observed the lake will fill up if nothing is done. Sandy will enquire with the Braddock Supervisor's office.

- Vernal Pools:

Dave had no news from the Park Authority regarding repairs to the pool on the south side of Lake Accotink other than that they are 'looking into it'. He noted the other pond undergoing repairs along the park entrance road had not been drained as of about a month ago. Philip presumed that gave this year's tadpoles time to get out.

Dave noted the pools in the woods below the dam stayed moist this year and floated the idea of small drainage adjustments to improve water retention.

- Virginia Conservation Network:

Philip inquired if we had paid the \$100 annual membership fee. Dave will check with Beverley. Dave will also check in with Virginia Conservation Network as our contact, although he noted not getting traction for getting our issues onto their agenda before.

- Plastic Bag Tax:

Philip understands that Supervisor Storck is moving to have Fairfax County adopt a plastic bag tax by next year. Sandy will contact the Supervisor about the status and how we can support.

- Virginia Lakes and Watershed Association Grant:

Philip reminded us the Virginia Lakes and Watershed Association gave us a grant of \$2,000 for Follow the Water which has not been used. We need to decide on a course of action. Dave suggested Kim might have the skills and interest to step into the role Kris had fulfilled. Philip will relay the idea to Kim.

- Donations:

Philip advised we received a PayPal donation of \$300.00 from the Environmental Sustainability Committee of the City of Fairfax. The irony of receiving City of Fairfax funds after the Northfax West vote was not lost on the group. Flint noted the ESC itself had been active in opposition to Northfax West.

- [Whither FACC:](#)

The last two months our meetings did not reach the informal quorum of four attendees, leading Philip to again raise the gloomy prospect of disbanding. The idea was rejected.

Philip brought up the question of who will step into some of the specific roles Kris fulfilled:

- Primary Facebook curator – Philip expressed his general distaste for Facebook. No one stepped forward to post regularly, but Dave offered to post whatever anyone else wishes to suggest or when there are website updates.
- Contact point (with Philip) for messages sent to our webpage – Dave will take this on.
- Choose Clean Water representative – Sandy will get in touch with Choose Clean Water.

Philip listed some other roles Kris fulfilled that he hopes others will try to step into:

- Boots on the ground – just being out in the field seeing what was happening and calling it to the attention of others.
- Networker – being outgoing enough to make connections wherever, whenever, and with whomever it might be useful.
- Gadfly – the motivation to push an issue to where it needs to be pushed.

Flint stated he would provide something of the role of gadfly via the Federation of Civic Associations. Dave mused whether Kim might be the right person. Philip clarified that there is no need to closely follow Kris' model. Dave indicated he is ready for ad hoc assignments.

Dave will shake the tree of previous active members to see if any can be stirred from slumber.

Our next meeting place was discussed, with most in favor of staying online for now. Flint will set up a meeting via Skype.
