



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 – April 18, 2017

Next Meeting: May 16, 2017 (Third Tuesday of each month)
Sue's place, 9202 St. Marks Place, Fairfax 22031

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Present:

Kris Unger
Philip Latasa
Ted Welch
Julie Chang
Chip Krivell
Sue Kovach Schuman
Gene Schuman
Elaine Sevy
Jeff Shearer – Welcome Jeff!

Upcoming events

- Park Federation of Friends Meeting June 8, 2017
- Lee H.S. Native Garden Event, June 8 & 9, 2017
- Lake Accotink Park Stream Monitoring, June 10, 2017

Action Items:

- *Everyone – Brainstorm grant application ideas*
- *Kris & Kim – Develop new community grant application*
- *Kris, Suzy, & Philip – Prepare Accotink Gorge recommendations for Dominion*

FACC Subjects Discussed –

• Represent FACC:

- *Greenspring Earth Day 4/21*

Elaine spoke about the many groups that had displays at this event at the Greenspring retirement community, including a climate change talk by a GMU faculty member. Philip mentioned the sophistication of the questions prompted by the talk. Elaine may be putting together nature journaling outings on the Greenspring grounds adjacent to Accotink Creek. Kris remarked on the ability of nature journaling to draw people in.

- *Master Plan Meeting 4/24*
Philip reported the Park Authority scheduled this public meeting at our request, on the topic of natural resources and combined it with the request of Friends of Lake Accotink Park for a meeting on the topic of historic resources. Public attendance was only in the neighborhood of 25 persons, roughly equal to the number of staff persons there from different agencies. Supervisor John Cook spoke of the park as a place we all want to preserve.

Staff has been conducting biological surveys and resource protection zones will be defined. The draft Master Plan is expected to be ready for public review in late 2017.

Both Friends of Accotink Creek and Friends of Lake Accotink Park had tables.

- *Woodburn Homes Meeting 4/24*
Ted recounted how FACC was allotted 5 minutes to speak and Kris did a good job in 15. One cleanup volunteer at the meeting donated a \$20 bill he had found. Kris noted that we might ideally build more relationships with homeowner associations.
- *NOVA's Annual Green Festival 4/25*
Kris explained he had served on a panel discussion and many groups had set up display tables. Philip noted the turnout was good compared to past years. Kris described meeting a geology professor interested in outings, perhaps to the Accotink Gorge.
- [Crook Branch](#) *Walk 5/1*
Kris described the walk as having outlined a standard stream restoration project. WSSI is doing the design and the earliest start is mid-2018. Kris let us know he might do a community stream walk funded by a Lands & Waters grant. Ted recalled the nearby Mantua Elementary School Bird's Eye View Project last April.
- *Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley Meeting 5/9*
Kris attended and reported the group is receptive to partnering on outreach connected to Little Run Elementary, churches, stream walks, etc. Ted suggested the value of trail signs inviting participation in stream walks.
- *FCCA Master Plan Meeting 5/15*
Philip summarized the meeting as a step done as part of national accreditation for Fairfax County Park Authority. The draft master plan should be out by late 2017, at which time more public meetings will follow. Philip indicated one thing we might seek in the county-wide plan is habitat corridors connecting natural areas. Chip observed corridors might be a good geodesign project.

The Friends of Audrey Moore RecCenter representative at the meeting mentioned their increased focus on the larger Wakefield Park, prompting Philip to express the value of more contact with them.
- *Park Federation of Friends Meeting 6/8*
Philip inquired who will attend the Federation of Friends meeting at Green Spring Gardens. Kris plans to be there.

- *Lee High School Native Garden Event 6/8 & 6/9*
Philip passed along the second-hand invitation, originally offered to Friends of Lake Accotink Park, and asked if anyone wished to participate as a guest judge of proposed designs for native plant gardens. There was discussion of the Lee H.S. campus' location mostly in the Accotink Creek watershed, Long Branch south tributary. Ted will attend.

- *Potomac Watershed Cleanup:*

Philip advised we concluded our spring cleanup season on April 29th. During the season, we had 242 volunteers who removed 244 bags of trash. Groups that joined us since our last meeting include the Virginia Water Environment Association, Excelsior College alumni, Rotaract Club, American Heritage Girls, and West End Rugby Team.

Asian American LEAD has requested a separate cleanup on May 20 at our Fullerton Road site.



Virginia Water Environment Association cleanup volunteers at Pickett Road

- *Ft. Belvoir Outreach*
Philip passed on a report from Dave that he has emailed Ducks Unlimited Pentagon Chapter but has heard nothing yet. Dave is also inquiring about access to North Base through a friend at National Geospatial Agency.

Philip also mentioned that at the Master Plan meeting, he met new Lake Accotink Park Assistant Manager Eric Lundgren, a member of Ducks Unlimited Pentagon Chapter which has done cleanups on Accotink Bay.

Elaine added that she is working with Fort Belvoir Public Affairs to arrange plain aire outings.

- Litter Initiatives:

- *Day of Action*

Kris described the [Trash Day of Action](#) as a good first effort, with many groups at the table. Clean Fairfax Council collaborated by handing out 200 reusable water bottles and flyers at the King Street Metro. Balloons carried our message up to the office windows of the International Bottled Water Association. Delegate Paul Krizek and delegate candidate Tilly Blanding joined the protest. It was satisfying to observe that the IBWA had hired extra security for the day of the protest.

There will be an “after-party” to discuss next steps. Kris observed Nestle is moving to Falls Church and may be a future focus.



- Accotink Gorge:

- *Dominion Power*

Philip indicated that, upon seeking advice from Fairfax County Park Authority, SOLitude Lake Management and other wise sources, we have come up with recommendations to Dominion Power for Chinese wisteria management in the Accotink Gorge unchanged from the suggestions offered by Dominion back in January. He shared a draft which met with approval.

FACC and Dominion will plan an Accotink Gorge walk in June to reevaluate what course Dominion will follow.

- Gallows Road/Libeau Proposal:

Philip related this is a proposed consolidation of several elongated wooded lots on Gallows Road just east of 495 on which a developer proposes to build 60 – 70 townhouses. There is considerable organized opposition from neighboring civic associations, who are meeting May 18th to review the staff report on the zoning change. Julie will plan to attend. [NOTE: The staff recommendation was negative, so this proposal will not proceed.]

- 495 Survey/Spring Restoration:

Philip pointed out new trees are being put in along the 495 Express Lanes as replacements for the inadequate first replanting attempt. Also, on May 22, we will repeat our survey of lingering erosion and sediment control issues, following up on progress made since last year. VDOT, Transurban, Fairfax County Restoration Project, and Senator Dave Marsden will participate.

• Long Branch Falls Stream Restoration:

Philip noted Supervisor Cook's newsletter announced that the stream restoration project in this park has been funded.

• Kena Temple

Sue brought up the Kena Temple development. The Planning Commission meeting is Thursday. The developer is expected to revegetate the parking lot and donate 13 acres along Bear Branch to the Park Authority, providing a connection to the Cross County Trail and preserving a historic millrace.

• Oakford Stream Restoration:

Philip advised work on this restoration, near West Springfield High School, will begin soon. Neighbors are organizing a rescue of native plants, which will be relocated to areas where English ivy was removed as part of the project.

• I-66 Update:

Philip relayed Flint's report from the Providence District Council meeting I-66 presentation that, having learned from the 495 Express Lanes debacle, VDOT will place a 50-year landscaping maintenance obligation on the toll lanes operator.

• Comments to EPA:

Philip let us know the EPA was seeking comments on the proposed reduction of regulations. The Choose Clean Water Coalition circulated the comments of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Since the due date was May 15th, Philip took the liberty of submitting a brief [comment on behalf of FACC](#), saying we second the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. The [Foundation's comments](#) are nine pages of citations and footnotes we attached to ours.

• M.O.M.S.:

Philip submitted a request for a 5% donation day, but has no response.

• Facebook:

Philip announced we have 598 Facebook friends, so we should be celebrating the 600 milestone next month.

• AmazonSmile:

Philip indicated we received **\$5.41** contribution from AmazonSmile, based on online purchases made on our behalf. He encouraged all to use [AmazonSmile](#) and [Goodshop/Goodsearch](#) to benefit FACC at no cost.



• Little Run Elementary:

Kris advised that the planting portion must be done by June 15th. He will send out dates. Funding will also be needed for a Filtrex sock around a drain, about \$40 - \$50.

• Tech Update:

Chip briefed us on a Lake Accotink Park volunteer tracking spreadsheet script he is developing. He is still testing the admin part of the park trash app. He is also developing a historic sign app, park asset app, and park "gems" app.

- Interns:

Chip brought up student internships and the value they can contribute. College credits are available for work on projects graded by faculty. Chip works with American College of Commerce and Technology and could also contact GMU. Philip mentioned our idea of a summer work/education project in the Accotink gorge and pondered how interns could contribute. He also suggested civic association awareness outreach by interns.

- Fundraising:

Jeff queried the status of FACC fundraising, asking what would we do with \$200,000? Philip responded that if Jeff knew how to raise \$200,000, we would have a special election on the spot to make him Primary Conservator. Discussion covered funding for the Accotink Gorge and for projects on the scale of the Anacostia Watershed Society.
