



## 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 15, 2017

Next Meeting: September 19, 2017 (Third Tuesday of each month)  
Audrey Moore Rec Center, Senior Center Lobby

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#### **Present:**

Julie Chang  
Sandy Collins  
Ted Welch  
Chip Krivell  
Dave Lincoln  
Philip Latasa  
Kim Schauer - guest

#### **Upcoming events**

- Lake Accotink Park Stream Monitoring, September 9, 2017
- Springfield Bridge Walk, August 29, 2017
- International Coastal Cleanup, weekends in September and October, 2017
- [Trash Day of Action](#), October 26, 2017

#### **Action Items:**

- *Everyone – Brainstorm grant application ideas*
- *Elaine – Arrange Bridge Walk participation*
- *Philip – Coordinate staging area restoration with Sierra Club*
- *Philip – Coordinate Accotink Gorge workday*
- *Dave & Julie – Verify need for registration with Virginia Department of Agriculture*

#### **FACC Subjects Discussed –**

##### • *Park Encroachment:*

Kim Schauer, Naturalist, Fairfax County Park Authority, elaborated on her park encroachment presentation at our July meeting. Kim is organizing a pilot project at three parks, Lake Accotink, Cub Run Stream Valley, and Difficult Run Stream Valley to curtail encroachment through use of soft power and peer pressure. Kim gave a demo of the “Find Your Borders” mapping app. To create a baseline of the problem, Kim asks that we report via app (not yet active) and encroachment we encounter.

- Native Plantings:

Kim passed on the information that Stormwater Planning Division has funds for informational signage for native plantings in stormwater control features. Dave suggested the meadow in Americana Park. Philip suggested the stormwater ponds of the [Braddock Road](#) project and also tied this issue back to encroachment, complaining that the project will cause a greater encroachment upon Lake Accotink Park and Wakefield Park than all the neighbors.

Kim also mentioned that the [Conservation Assistance Program](#) of incentives for watershed projects on private property has been funded again.

Kim briefly described the Environmental Improvement Program for county employee initiatives on county property.

- Represent FACC:

- *Lee HS Native Garden Event 6/8 & 6/9*

Ted let us know he had attended this event both days. Teams of students prepared project proposals focused on plantings on the school grounds. Ted praised the outstanding works by some student teams that took the initiative to seek advice from the nearby Earth Sangha. The designs will be presented to administration for implementation as funds become available.

Sandy commented that these kinds of projects get kids to take ownership.

Philip suggested Stormwater Planning may be able to provide funding to support the projects that enhance stormwater control. Kim suggested Audubon at Home may be a resource.

Ted mused about getting Lee H.S. students involved in stream monitoring on Long Branch south.

- *Accotink/Braddock Friends Meeting 7/20*

Philip recounted that the Friends of Lake Accotink Park hosted the tribes of Accotink Creek at Braddock Hall. Groups represented were FLAP, Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley, Friends of Audrey Moore, and FACC. There were about 25 attendees, including Park Authority staff, two Park Authority Board members, and one representative of DEQ.

The meeting began with a presentation from DEQ on the status of the Accotink Creek TMDL.

Park Authority representatives discussed the proposed draft of agreements with friends groups. It was clear the negative feedback they received will be sending them back to substantially revise the draft.

The Park Authority representatives also advised the County-Wide Master Plan will be presented to the Park Authority Board on July 26th, followed by more public meetings, aiming for a final version by February, 2018.

On the Lake Accotink Park Master Plan, by late 2017 there should be a package ready for public presentation. The Park Authority is meeting with DPWES regarding responsibility for maintenance of the lake.

The [Braddock Road project](#) was also brought up, especially the egregious proposed Danbury Forest Drive realignment.

The joint meeting devoted a few minutes to discussing the status of freshwater mussels and their imperiled status in Accotink Creek.

In passing, Philip noted he had heard elsewhere that Park Authority Executive Director Kirk Kincannon has been appointed acting county executive.

○ *Environmental Showcase 7/22*

Philip passed on that Sue and Kris attended the Showcase for FACC. Sue sent word from afar that the Showcase seemed a good idea for the showcase, but she found it hard to tell exactly what the environmental focus was. She mentioned the Solarize Fairfax campaign was prominent.

○ *Friends Meeting 7/15*

Julie recounted that the original draft was taken badly, as being too legalistic and not transparent. There were suggestions to shorten the draft agreement, but there was no consensus. A task force will create a template for a new agreement. We should communicate with the Park Authority if we wish to meet individually before the task force forms.

Philip commented that substantial revisions of the draft removed most objectionable parts, but insurance is still mandated. Julie added that a Park Authority insurance expert offered guidance. The next meeting will cover insurance only.

Julie outlined the new concept of capacity building grants from the Park Foundation to defray friends groups' administrative costs. Since eligibility requires the primary mission be supporting parks, FACC may be ineligible.

Philip recalled the mention in the meeting of something about needing Virginia Department of Agriculture registration to solicit donations. Julie's recollection was that we don't need to register with Agriculture. Dave and Julie will check on the need for registration.

Philip opined that the whole agreement concept may not apply to our casual activities, since we do no fundraising, and have no close relationship with the Park Authority. Kim suggested our relationship might be with the Accotink Creek Stream Valley Park. Dave theorized that our relationship is with the water and queried if it is not Stormwater which owns the water?

Ted discussed the approach taken at Hidden Oaks Nature Center with volunteers.

○ *College of the Environment 8/5*

Philip observed we had been unable to respond to the invitation to participate this year but put this out as something we may wish to do next year.

○ *Bridge Walk 8/29*

Philip passed on Elaine's message that she is requesting two tables in order to display more information and will invite FLAP. Dave will work with Elaine.

- *Merrifield Fall Festival 9/23 & Annandale Parade 10/28*

Philip proposed that FACC may wish to participate in these events. There was a discussion of similar tabling events and their purpose. Chip shared memories of viewing Annandale Parades past. Ted offered the idea of a bicycle-towed canoe float. Dave will inquire regarding the Merrifield Fall Festival.

- *Americana Park Northside Project:*

Philip reported he has yet to hear back from the Sierra Club, but will get in touch again. There was discussion of the proposal to revegetate the former construction staging area and stabilize the adjacent trail.

- *Trash Action Work Force:*

Dave explained the Trash Mob will form October 26, 4 -6 pm, again at the King Street Metro and International Bottled Water Association, featuring fun with Apocalypse costumes and a happy hour.

- *350 Fairfax*

Dave informed us 4 -5 FACC members attended the [350 Fairfax](#) meeting. He explained the “350” refers to 350 parts per million of CO2 in the atmosphere, a missed goal for climate change avoidance. This meeting, however, focused on one-time-use plastics, and we can expect good support from them in that effort. Philip remarked that 350 Fairfax seems to have good ability to get attention and contact legislators.

Dave noted that among the 350 Fairfax members are the [Virginia Green Baggers](#), a group which sews and distributes reusable shopping bags. Ted recounted the tale of towns in Greece making reusable bags from migrant life jackets.

- *International Coastal Cleanup:*

Philip advised volunteers have begun to sign up. Cleanups begin Sept 16 and continue through October 14<sup>th</sup>. Our usual private cleanup with Temple Adat Reyim will be September 17<sup>th</sup>.

- *Luther Jackson & Mantua School Tour:*

Philip recounted that on July 24 DPWES organized a tour of stormwater features for teachers involved in a summer program on watershed studies. Extensive stormwater upgrades are planned at Luther Jackson, including a pervious parking lot, bioretention area, and stormwater pond upgrades. Kris is discussing further student projects with teachers.

At Mantua Elementary, excavations are underway for installation of underground detention chambers. There are a number of small bioretention areas around campus. Ted brought up the stream restoration project planned along Crook Branch next to the school and wondered if there would be improved access to the stream for students in this privately owned

Philip mentioned that we learned during the tour that Elaine Tholen is leaving the Fairfax County Schools’ Get2Green program and has been appointed to the NVSWCD board.

- *Clean Water Rule:*

Philip presented a pared down version of the Choose Clean Water Coalition letter which Kris already made us a signatory to as a draft of [FACC comments on the proposed rollback of the 2015 Clean Water Rule](#). The draft was approved without dissent.

- *Fieldlark Branch Maintenance Yard Meadow:*

Philip spoke about what he had heard in passing about a proposed native meadow project at the Fairfax County vehicle maintenance yard at the intersection of the Fairfax County Parkway and I-95.

- *Restoration Biological Studies:*

Philip conveyed the information that Stormwater Planning Division ecologists are conducting before and after biological studies in connection with stream restorations. The goal is to document flora in place before stream restorations, for the purpose of improving the restoration results. There followed discussion of the need for extended invertebrate monitoring to assess the results of stream restoration. Philip mentioned our 5-year monitoring project on [Wakefield Run](#).

- *Accotink Gorge:*

The group discussed options for an October wisteria workday and arrived at October 10<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup>. Philip will coordinate with SOLitude Lake Management.

Philip shared the news of other movement against wisteria in the gorge by Dominion Energy, which has commenced mowing beneath the power lines, to be followed by future targeted spraying of resprouting wisteria. Philip remarked that mowing is not an adequate description, as the machine grinds everything to dust right down to the ground.



[Dominion machines at work in the Accotink Gorge](#)

- *Olley Lane Stormwater Pond:*

Philip observed that a project has recently been completed in Surrey Square Park in the Long Branch central subwatershed combining sediment removal in the stormwater pond on Olley Lane with a stream restoration upstream. It seems there was no public notice of this project, perhaps because it fell into the category of maintenance

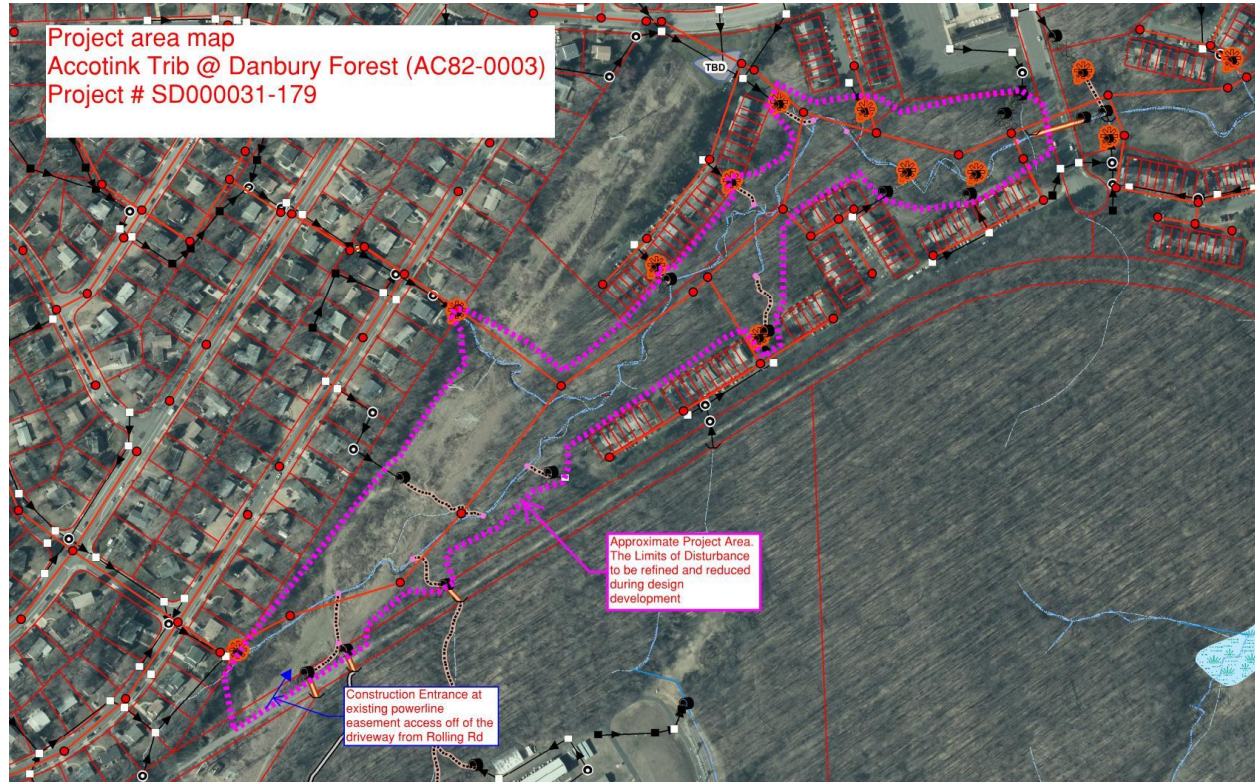
Philip regretted to inform us that he spotted a patch of the dreaded new invasive species, [Wavyleaf Basketgrass](#) (*Oplismenus undulatifolius*). This is not far from another known infestation along Long Branch.



[Wavyleaf Basketgrass](#)

- Danbury Forest Stream Restoration:

Philip noted the Danbury Forest homeowners association received notice from Stormwater Planning Division that early planning has begun for restoration of the stream that crosses the southern end of Danbury Forest Drive. This is on the western side of Lake Accotink Park and entirely on community association property. This restoration was the subject of an unsuccessful grant application in 2014 by NVSWCD.



- Eagle Scout Project:

Philip announced that Matt Zaragoza, whom some of us met at earlier FACC meetings, has completed his Eagle Scout project at Lake Accotink Park. Matt combined weeding of the pollinator garden at the marina with heavy duty invasives removal in the nearby native planting area next to the carousel.



Eagle Scout project crew with invasive vines they removed

- Trash Alert:

Chip reviewed his Trash Alert app and accompanying Accotink Overview. Trash Alert is currently only available for Android, but Chip is seeking a grant from NVSWCD for purchase of Apple equipment to make it available on iPhone.

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