



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 – June 18, 2024

Next Meeting: July 16 (Third Tuesday of each month via on-line meeting: Login info will be posted with the meeting notice in the [Friends of Accotink calendar](#).)

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Present: Gary Bangs, Avril Garland, Philip Latasa, and Sandy Collins all via on-line meeting.

• **Represent FACC:**

- **Cinder Bed Road Bikeway:** Philip indicated that the Virginia Native Plant Society led nature walks through the Amberleigh section of the Newington Conservation Site on June 2nd and 8th. About two dozen Amberleigh residents attended. It is the Amberleigh community that will have to grant or refuse an easement for the Cinder Bed Road Bikeway. The group of the interested will be meeting with Supervisor Lusk in July, date to be determined.
- **George Snyder Trail:** Philip said that the cost of the George Snyder trail continues to rise. At the June 11th City Council meeting, the City Manager asked for guidance from the Council as to whether he should seek another \$2.5 million in transportation grants. Three of the six members expressed disapproval, but with one member absent, inertia may prevail again to carry the project forward.
- **Accotink Gorge:** Philip said that planning Commission member Mary Cortina received notice that the Costco application will be scheduled for a hearing. She will see if they would be willing to support the access to the gorge and parking and will make them aware of our wisteria control project.

He also said that Dave has an estimate from MowCow Landscaping, but some clarifications are needed, such as the meaning of some of the charges, how much area they might expect to clear in one day or any other metric of work, or any guarantee of effectiveness.

The quote appears to just be their standard \$1570 per day rate for a two person crew, plus \$ 593 for herbicide use. We don't seem to have been offered any discount for the environmental "cause" or any actual interest in the project.

- **Potomac Watershed Cleanup:** Philip said that we completed our spring stream cleanup season on May 25th. For the whole season we had 150 volunteers who removed 151 bags of trash and unusual items including a child's scooter, a backyard slide, a plastic samurai sword, and a full length mirror.
 - **MWCCA:** Avril said she joined the [Washington Metropolitan Chapter Community Associations Institute cleanup](#) at Thaiss Park in Fairfax City on June 8th. This is a spot we also regularly clean up, so we hope for some form of future coordination.

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- [Americana Drive Cleanup](#): Philip said that our June 1st Clean the Bay Day cleanup on Americana Drive had support from several different groups - Team Rubicon, Tzu Chi Foundation, Appalachian Mountain Club, and Boy Scout Troops 702 and 829. We were also joined by Delegate Vivian Watts.

Our 89 volunteers removed 163 bags of trash, 53 tires, a stroller, a bumper, a swing set, a skateboard, a bathroom sink, and roughly 1.5 tons of assorted construction debris. One thing we did not find was a toilet - the day is never complete on Americana Drive without finding a discarded toilet. Our most unique find was a 100,000 Indonesian rupiah banknote, worth about \$6.15).

[Annandale Today article](#) describes the event and challenges.



Soggy bear found in Accotink Creek



100,000 Indonesian rupiah banknote (worth\$6.15)

- *IMA Site Leaders Needed*: Avril said that we sent a letter to the Invasive Management Area director urging on the job training by established IMA site leaders to reduce the backlog of new site leader applications.

However Philip indicated that in conversation June 17, Gloria explained the backlog as a result of having a vacant volunteer coordinator position. But even when the position is filled, the person will be overworked. There are no funds for hiring a second volunteer coordinator, as these positions are funded by annual grant money instead of budgeted revenue. Philip suggested the possibility of a volunteer taking on volunteer coordinator duties, which Gloria will consider.

- [Accotink Gravity Sewer](#): Philip said that at long last, we have received responses to our inquiries about the impact the Accotink Gravity Sewer will have along the Hunters Branch tributary. He has sent them out to board members for any comments.

- [Lake Accotink Dredging](#): Philip said the May 22nd quarterly meeting of the Friends of Lake Accotink Park included a presentation from the Stormwater Planning Division on the state of the dredge. It was disheartening to hear the talk of undertaking yet more studies for years into the future without any suggestion of action. It was as if we had gotten into a time machine and returned to 2016. It was also as if all the diligent work of the citizen Task Force had been placed in a drawer to be forgotten. He spoke at the meeting to urge that the Task Force be kept active to guide the project toward some action. A letter has been drafted for board review and approval.

- [Fairfax City SPROUT](#): Philip said that the City of Fairfax's new SPROUT program is a grant-funded effort to control invasives. The program is soliciting citizen feedback on how best to get started. There is an online [Invasive Removal Survey](#) for City residents.

- [Vienna Herbicide](#): Avril indicated the City of Vienna continues to show no interest in her proposal for volunteer herbicide usage. Her proposal was to personally treat the lesser celandine infestation in Southside Park in Vienna. The time of the commercial pesticide applicator to provide instruction is about \$125/hr. The herbicide, Garlon 3A is about \$250 for 2.5 gallons, plus surfactant, \$40 and dye \$14, plus sprayer, PPE outfit, mask, gloves, goggles. But the latest is the City is looking into hiring someone to do this rather than use a volunteer.

Philip learned from Gloria that this is not even under discussion in the Park Authority, as they don't have the personnel to manage new tasks and the "direct supervision" provision was assumed to mean in person. He advised her of the definition of "direct supervision" in the Virginia Code and will send her that citation. He also suggested asking interested IMA leaders to pay for their own training and herbicide which might relieve some of her personnel and budget issues.

- [Fairfax Circle Small Area Plan](#): Philip said that the Fairfax Circle Small Area Plan draft report is out. Accotink Creek runs along the southern edge of the area and the draft promises substantial improvements in stream buffer and stormwater controls, although implementation will take decades and will depend largely on private redevelopment proposals.

A SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBORHOOD LINKED TO THE ACCOTINK CREEK

- [Ashby Pond Turtle Rescue](#): Philip said that the City of Fairfax has its own dredge project at Ashby Pond. It's a miniature version of the Lake Accotink dredge, but without the drama and headaches. Turtles living in the pond will be trapped and relocated before the dredge. After a meeting this Thursday, we should have some idea how volunteers can participate. [Participation information](#)