



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 – September 20, 2016

Next Meeting: October 18, 2016 (Third Tuesday of each month)
Audrey Moore Rec Center, Senior Center Lobby

Present:

Dave Lincoln
Suzy Foster
Kris Unger
Sandy Collins
Flint Welch
Philip Latasa

Upcoming events

- International Coastal Cleanup, September & October, 2016
- Fall for Fairfax, October 1 & 2, 2016
- Lake Accotink Park Stream Monitoring, December 10, 2016

Action Items:

- *Everyone – Brainstorm grant application ideas*
- *Ted - Contact Scout Store*
- *Sandy & Ted – Coordinate pharmaceutical scout project*
- *Dave & Kris – Plan October Accotink Gorge Workday*
- *Philip – Propose Master Plan eco-study workshop*

FACC Subjects Discussed –

- *Oracular Prognostication:*

Philip revealed that he had witnessed an omen of prophecy by the Oracle of the Accotink. This trash talks, foretelling an electoral home run by the “Trash Talker in Chief”!

- *Represent FACC:*

- *Virginia Environmental Assembly 9/9*

Dave attended and reported he had focused on several stream-related workshops, such as:

- Second Baptist Church grounds landscaping initiative in Richmond
- Trout Unlimited restoration on the upper Rappahannock River
- Piedmont Environmental Council collaboration with civic associations and on farm buffer easements
- Virginia Conservation Network legislative program
- Chesapeake Bay Foundation - Aquatic grasses in rivers are increasing and agricultural runoff is improving as suburban runoff worsens.

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- Wild Virginia is seeking improved regulatory numerical standards for nutrient stream impairment.
- *Springfield Community BridgeWalk 8/30*
Dave advised he and Philip had attended and received some interest in the cleanup flyers they passed out. Philip added that due to Dave's early departure he did not know there was a free barbeque buffet after the speeches.
- *Back to School Night Fairfax H.S. 8/30*
Kris described the event as worthwhile in terms of nurturing relationships with the school.
- *GMU Service Fair 9/9*
Kris conveyed his impression of the fair as interesting, but not so productive. We did make connections with PEREC ([Potomac Environmental Research and Education Center](#)), which does research in Gunston Cove and Accotink Creek on fish migration, habitat, and nursery areas.
- *National Public Lands Day Nottoway 9/24*
Philip noted this invasives workday with Friends of Nottoway will be preceded by remarks by officials, if anyone wishes to represent FACC.
- *Little River Turnpike Bicycle Study 9/26*
Philip noted improvements to bicycle and pedestrian access along much of Little River Turnpike are being considered. This is an opportunity to raise the chronic issue of the eroding connection to the Cross County Trail left after HOT Lanes construction. Philip and Dave will attend.
- *Mount Vernon Open House 9/26*
Philip remarked this seems to be a lesser event than the Mt. Vernon Town Hall we had a table at some months ago, but would be a chance to meet the supervisor and staff, if anyone wishes to represent FACC.
- *Choose Clean Water Coalition Webinar 9/27*
Philip pointed out this principles of fundraising webinar would be an opportunity to learn new strategies.
- *Chesapeake Watershed Forum 9/30*
Philip reported invasives management volunteer Julie Chang, a recent environmental science graduate, will attend both days, with a scholarship from the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay. We may expect her to report back at our October meeting
- *Fall for Fairfax 10/1&2*
Suzy reviewed FACC's participation last year. Plans for this year include a House of Environmental Horrors and a "dirty" Stormy the Raindrop. There were no commitments for participation this year.
- *Supervisor Cook Town Hall 10/15*
Philip observed this would be a general purpose meeting, but will include stormwater issues, if anyone wished to attend. Suzy suggested the Truro plant rescue could be a topic of discussion, particularly given the level of enthusiasm by that community and the fact the rescued plants had been relocated onto the same community property.

• *Grant at Little Run Elementary:*

Kris advised we had made a few good steps forward by booking educational activities and stream monitoring for fall. Planting workdays will follow in spring. Kris and others did a walk of school grounds with Danielle Wynne of Stormwater Planning Division looking at stormwater control issues.

Kris mentioned the monitoring is done with mesh bags and Sandy pointed out that [Hester-Dendy plates](#) could serve the same purpose. Ted opined we could easily build our own.

• Fairhill Elementary:

Kris reminded us that Joe Hirz, landscape design graduate student at George Washington University, has developed a design for stormwater capture on the Fairhill Elementary grounds. Joe and Kris walked the grounds with Danielle Wynne of Stormwater Planning Division. Bureaucracy and funding are issues, but the principal is positive. A meadow is a possible first project. Suzy expressed confidence that Stormwater Planning would have funds. Dave hoped this might become a model for other schools.

• Community Grant:

Kris will put together a grant proposal of up to \$5000 with a variety of projects and ideas we can sort out as we go along.

• International Coastal Cleanup:

Philip informed us our first cleanup was Sunday, September 18, with Temple Adat Reyim in Wakefield Park. Twenty-eight volunteers removed nine bags of trash and a lawn chair. Philip did a brief presentation on stream restoration during the cleanup while the volunteers viewed the work from the footbridge. Dave advised the Vietnamese Youth Buddhist Association is in flux and would perhaps rejoin our cleanups in 2017.

• Litter Initiatives:

○ Day of Action

Dave advised there was no news to share. Philip shared a recruiting handout (below) and observed that we would need a crowd to make the action work. Suzy suggested the Northern Virginia Community College Environmental Film Festival October 31st as a recruiting venue. Ted recommended we reach out to kindred groups, as far as the Friends of Sligo Creek in Maryland.

Flint pondered the value of first meeting and negotiating, as direct action could alienate the public. Kris responded we are at the provocation stage, bringing the topic to public attention and providing a photo op.

Flint noted the Virginia Conservation Network Lobby Day in Richmond is January 23rd and presents another approach to advance the trash issue. Dave added the VCN General Assembly Preview is December 3rd.

Ted proposed the Latin American option of decorated Tyvek painters' suits, in this case decorated with trash. Flint and Sandy offered the idea of sandwich boards. Ted mulled over the notion of "Flash Trash" appearances at shopping centers where much trash originates.

Philip brought up Dave's idea of ballooning trash up to the 6th floor windows of the Association, prompting Flint to remark on world helium scarcity. When Philip indicated the alternative possibility of making hydrogen, the discussion turned to a mirthful consideration of 'Hydrogen and balloon scenarios – What could go wrong?' →



DIRECT ACTION!

Battle of the Bottle

Clash of Trash

Rubbish Day of Rage

What: Persuasion through performance. Demonstrate for bottle deposit bills at the source of the problem. Place the disgrace where it can no longer be ignored and forgotten.

Why: Our streams are filled with trash. Water bottles are a principal culprit, floating down to the seas to drift for centuries. Bottlers preach profit without responsibility.

Where: Bottled Water Association headquarters

When: Late spring, 2017

Who: You! Organizers, ideas, and energy needed!

contact@accotink.org



• Wakefield Run Monitoring:

Philip advised that he and Ted, with two faculty and three students of George Washington Community School, did biological monitoring September 16th. An impressive number of damselfly larvae showed up in the nets, but there was not enough variety to raise the stream health score above 3. Luckily, the stream was running in spite of the prolonged dry weather. Ted installed the school's new Adopt-A-Stream sign and they plan a much-needed cleanup in November. Ted recounted how impressed he had been when he visited the school and pointed out it is heavily populated with kids with varying levels of autism/anxiety.

Suzy mentioned that new replacement tree planting along Wakefield Run is planned.

Ted observed the new asphalt on the Cross County Trail just upstream from Wakefield Run is eroding again and noted that many passing cyclists had complained about paving. Ted had advised all of them to write and call the Park Authority.

- [Conservation Assistance:](#)

Philip passed out the [Conservation Assistance brochure](#). He described Conservation Assistance as something that could evolve into importance if it can be made widely known and becomes a trend. Dave is working up an application with his homeowner's association grounds committee.

Ted brought up the house under construction by his neighbor, who is pursuing green building methods and is interested in native plantings. Kris recommended the neighbor contact Northern Virginia Soil & Water Conservation District and Audubon at Home for advice.

- [Accotink Gorge:](#)

Kris mentioned he had walked the gorge with Dave and Flint to inspect locations for a workday/walk and did identify a likely spot. As expected, there is resprouting from vines cut in April. Planning continues.

- *Friends Agreement*

Philip shared an inquiry from the Park Authority regarding the inclusion of fundraising as a possibility in our pending "Friends" agreement concerning the gorge. After discussion the consensus was to request that fundraising be retained in the agreement. Philip will pass on the message.

- [Alban Maintenance Yard:](#)

Suzy described the county vehicle maintenance yard adjacent to the I-95/286 cloverleaf as having an acre overgrown with Bradford pears which is being considered for conversion to meadow. There may be an adjacent second parcel as well. Kris indicated we are open to partnership. Suzy will advise further after a meeting planned in two weeks.

- [TMDL:](#)

- *Road salt discussion*

Philip recapped an email exchange with the TMDL coordinators, where he expressed the view that nothing will happen on the salt issue because we keep paving at will, this new pavement demands ever more salt, and at the TMDL meeting it was emphasized that "safety first" was paramount. Kris offered the hope of progress through measures such as cleaning up excess salt. Flint talked of other options out there, including other forms of salt. Sandy lamented the salt buildup in groundwater.

- *Vermont Law School Research Paper*

Philip shared the abstract of a recent [Vermont Law School study](#) concerning the Accotink creek TMDL. The study concludes that stormwater controls must precede stream restoration. Philip thought it sounds like a job for Conservation Assistance.

- [Lake Accotink Master Plan:](#)

Philip related that at the September FLAP meeting Gayle Hooper said workshops on trails and facilities were planned and suggestions for other workshops are welcome. Philip proposed a workshop on the

results of ecological studies done in preparation for the Master Plan. The consensus was in agreement. Philip will convey the request.

- *Federation of Civic Associations Survey:*

Flint urged all to participate in the Federation's [2017 Legislative Survey](#) as soon as possible. The results will be voted on by the Federation and sent to area legislators.
