



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

SUPPORT/DONATE
It's easy & free!

Present:

Dave Lincoln
Kris Unger
Sandy Collins
Philip Latasa
Beverley Rivera
Ted Welch
Julie Chang
Chip Krivell – Welcome, Chip!
Matt Zaragoza – guest
Larry Zaragoza – guest, Matt's dad

Upcoming events

- Trash Day of Action planning meeting, April 24, 2017
- Greenspring Earth Day Event, April 21, 2017
- Lake Accotink Park Master Plan Resources workshop, April 24, 2017
- NOVA Green Festival, April 25, 2017
- Springfest, April 29, 2017
- Potomac Watershed Cleanup, Saturdays in April, 2017
- Trash Day of Action/Battle of the Bottle, May 8, 2017
- Crook Branch Walk, May 1, 2017
- Earth Sangha Open House, May 7, 2017
- Lake Accotink Park Stream Monitoring, June 10, 2017

Action Items:

- *Everyone – Brainstorm grant application ideas*
- *Kris, Flint, Philip – Request MOM's donation day*
- *Kris & Kim – Develop new community grant application*
- *Kris, Suzy, & Philip – Prepare Accotink Gorge recommendations for Dominion*

FACC Subjects Discussed –

- *Matt Zaragoza/Budget Hearings:*

Matt recounted his recent [address to the Board of Supervisors budget hearings](#) on behalf of FACC. The group expressed its appreciation. Matt is an Eagle Scout candidate looking for projects. Philip will send our list of suggested projects.

• Represent FACC:

- *Greenspring Earth Day April 21*
Philip mentioned he and Elaine will staff a table. They will focus on the Battle of the Bottle and on the proximity of Greenspring to Accotink Creek and hope to find folks with time on their hands.
- *Blossoms in the Park April 22*
Elaine will be setting up a table for the Springfield Art Guild. She would like to also display FACC materials and would welcome anyone to join her. Philip will get materials to Elaine.
- *Teen Job Fairs March & April*
Julie is still planning to attend the April 28th job fair. She will be looking for tips on establishing a paid work program in connection with invasive removal in the Accotink Gorge. This led to general discussion of Dominion's approach to vegetation management in the Accotink Gorge.
- *Master Plan Meeting 4/24*
Philip said he will staff a table, but has procrastinated preparing a display focused on the park and natural resources, rather than FACC general topics.
- *Woodburn Homes Meeting 4/24*
Philip recalled this civic association donated to us last year and seems interested enough to do so again. Now they have asked us to speak at their quarterly meeting. Kris and Ted expressed their availability. Kris will contact Woodburn Homes.
- *NOVA's Annual Green Festival 4/25*
Julie advised she has been in touch with NVCC and a table is reserved for FACC and [Trash Day of Action](#). Kris mentioned a free lunch is offered. He noted the good relationship with NVCC. Julie will be splitting her time with a Farmers Market table. She suggested incorporating some sort of artistic activity for visitors such as writing their own messages and designing posters. Ted offered to produce a display of trash in a 5 gallon water bottle.
- *Springfest 4/29*
Dave advised he must back out. No one else was available. Dave will notify the organizers.
- *Crook Branch Walk 5/1*
Philip relayed the news from Sue that the county will hold a stream walk along Crook Branch in Mantua on May 1, at 5 p.m. County representatives and Wetland Studies and Solutions will talk about the proposed stream restoration. Sue will attend.
- *Earth Sangha Open House 5/7*
Elaine can set up and staff a table but will need FACC materials. Sandy will attend after noon. Philip will arrange FACC materials for Elaine.

• Americana Park:

Philip reported that Suzy's hopes for planting sumacs on the onramp embankment were dashed when the Dominion representative at the April 10th on site meeting noted sumacs exceed their height limits beneath power lines. Suzy will develop a new species list.

• *Potomac Watershed Cleanup:*

Philip let us know we have had 128 volunteers over two weekends, removing 116 bags of trash, plus 7 big bags of water bottles only for our Trash Day of Action.

Groups that turned out include JMU Alumni, The North Face, and the Alpha Pi Delta professional sorority, doing service during their national meeting. We also inaugurated a collaboration with the Country Club Hills civic association. A surprise guest at our Fullerton Road site was Mt. Vernon Supervisor Dan Stork who performed a daring crossing of the creek hopping from boulder to boulder.



Philip shared a telling photo from the cleanups, depicting the misleading PR slogans on the back of a Deer Park water bottle, against a backdrop of bottle litter in Accotink Creek one-quarter mile from the Deer Park bottling plant, which uses, not a pristine waterfall, but rather water from municipal pipes.



○ *Ft. Belvoir Outreach*

Dave described our interest in access to the North Post/National Geospatial Agency area. Dave also mentioned his participation in the Fort Belvoir cleanup, working along the Accotink Bay shoreline, which he described as encrusted with years of accumulated trash. He is on the lookout for other groups interested in cleanup, such as Ducks Unlimited. Matt suggested his rowing group could help out. Ted mused on the possibility of a scout troop vs. scout troop competition.

• Virginia Conservation Network Membership:

Dave reported VCN had responded to our application and he sent payment. Dave has signed us up for three workgroup/phone-ins:

- Energy/Climate
- Healthy Rivers/Choose Clean Water
- Land Use/Transportation

• Litter Initiatives:

- Day of Action

Philip noted the day of the [Trash Day of Action](#) is near and asked all to spread the word.

Philip also shared a message from the Oracle of the Accotink in support of the Trash Day of Action –
A helium tank Sandy found in the creek with the words “Balloon Time” on it.
Clearly the Oracle is encouraging the balloon brigade we plan as part of the protest!



• Accotink Gorge:

- Dominion Power

Philip informed us he had contacted the Park Authority and SOLitude Lake Management regarding guidelines for Dominion to address wisteria control. The Park Authority seems OK with “just be careful” advice. SOLitude may come back with more. Kris is working on a walk-through with Earth Sangha, DPWES, and others.

• Fairhill Elementary:

Kris stated he is talking with Joe Hirz on a watershed walk from the school and also a second workshop. The first workshop was well attended by about 30 – 40 teachers (turnout possibly affected by donuts).

- PEREC Spawning Studies:

Philip explained PEREC stands for Potomac Environmental Research and Education Center, a part of GMU. Philip has accompanied PEREC researchers the past three Fridays to survey migratory fish in the lower portion of Accotink Creek on Fort Belvoir. The procedure involves stretching a net across the creek to direct migrating fish into a holding trap where they can be counted. One week there were no fish, one week the water was too high, and one week the trap caught a half-dozen alewives, a member of the herring/shad family. The only other migratory fish species commonly caught in Accotink Creek are the related Gizzard shad and Blueback herring. These are not swift water species and commonly will not migrate more than a couple kilometers above the tidal area.

- Illegal Dumping – Supervisor McKay:

Philip confirmed he had sent the letter discussed last time, applauding Supervisor McKay for highlighting the issue of illegal dumping in his Lee District newsletter.

The following discussion covered the chronic issue of dumping on Americana Drive (Braddock District). This prompted the observation by Ted that VDOT is using a nearby shed in the 236/495 cloverleaf for temporary roadkill storage.

Kris brought up a recent appeal on the Trash Action Workforce Facebook page for help with cleaning dumped tires along Alban Road.

- May Meeting:

Philip reminded us our next meeting, on May 16, will be at Sue's house, 9202 St. Marks Place, Fairfax. Sue asks everyone to bring something (anything) for potluck dinner/snacks, and if it is nice, maybe we can sit out back and watch the young foxes.

- Mapping Apps:

Chip displayed the mapping app he developed for recording trash occurrences and removal in Lake Accotink Park, with data points recently added along Flag Run. A wide-ranging discussion followed of apps, trash, streams and GIS mapping uses.

Philip was prompted to relate his tale of kayaking down Accotink Creek from Fairfax Boulevard in Fairfax city to the lake marina. Intended to last 4 hours to collect photos of trash logjams for the [Trash Day of Action](#), the trip turned into a 10½ hour marathon. [Photos here](#)



The passenger set sail that day for a four hour tour – a four hour tour!