



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 – December 17, 2019

Next Meeting: January 21, 2020 (Third Tuesday of each month)
Audrey Moore Rec Center, Senior Center Lobby

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Present:

Sandy Collins, Dave Lincoln, Sue Kovach Schuman, Daniel Wu, Philip Latasa

Upcoming events

- Daniels Run Invasives Workday, December 21, 2019
- Stream Monitoring Lake Accotink Park December 21, 2019
- ♥ [Whither FACC Strategy Session, January 20, 2020](#) ♥

FACC Subjects Discussed –

• Represent FACC:

- Sustainable Environmental Advocacy Dec. 5, 2019
Philip reported representatives of several groups, as well as individuals came together. Virginia Conservation Network, Friends of Huntley Meadows, Sierra Club, and maybe a couple others, met to consider formation of a local umbrella environmental group. This effort includes an attempt to create an even larger umbrella by including an anomalous mix of social advocacy interests. He lamented that similar previous efforts have come to little and offered no optimism for a different outcome. The group meets again January 13th, when all are asked to bring ideas and a friend.
- Fairfax Delegation Legislative Listening Session Jan. 4, 2020
The Fairfax County delegation to the General Assembly will hold its annual public comment hearing before the 2020 session on Saturday, January 4 at 9 a.m. in the board room of the Fairfax County Government Center. Philip advised anyone wishing to speak to sign up now.

Sue called our attention to the news of the [Governor's recent announcement](#) of increased environmental funding.
- Virginia Conservation Lobby Day Jan. 28, 2020
Philip announced Virginia Conservation Network's 2020 Conservation Lobby Day in Richmond is January 28th, a Tuesday. Dave and Julie have participated in the past. This, of course, may be the year when many environmental bills will be enacted. For those interested, registration is \$25. Dave recommended participation, based on his past experience.
- Freshwater Salinization Workshop Date?
We received an invitation to participate in a workshop focused on the impacts of freshwater salinization on ecosystems and drinking water. This is being organized by the Virginia Tech Occoquan Watershed Monitoring Lab in Manassas. It appears to be aimed at professionals in water management. Philip asked if anyone would care to pursue. Dave will follow up.

- 50th Earth Day Partnership April 22, 2020

We were asked to join Earthday.org as a partner for Earth Day 2020. There are no costs and no requirements for participation; just send a logo and schedule an event. Philip noted it is a Wednesday so we have Klub Kudzu scheduled, or could instead do this at Elaine and Beverley's new invasive management site by the Lake Accotink marina or at Daniel Run Elementary, or both.



- Daniels Run Workday:

On November 23rd, Daniel gathered a group of volunteers and continued the clearing of invasives in Katie's project area around the vernal pool. He plans another workday Saturday, December 21st from 11 to noon.

Daniel and Sue engaged in a discussion of ownership and responsibility for a parcel of land on the border of the City and County adjacent to Mantua Swim Club. The area is seriously affected by exotic invasive species.

- Long Branch Project:

On October 16th Braddock District Council heard a presentation from DPWES on the Long Branch project. Philip observed the project may be farther along in planning than we had understood. Actual work could begin as early as next spring or summer. The downstream end of this phase would be the mouth of Long Branch. The upstream end would likely be in the vicinity of Guinea Road.

- Keith Avenue Stream Restoration:

Unbeknownst to us, Fairfax City has been planning a stream restoration on the unnamed tributary that enters from the north just upstream of Chain Bridge Road. Phase I construction is likely to begin in spring and extend about 200 yards on property of the Rustfield community. Phase II will extend another 600 yards to Keith Street and is pending easements from homeowners.

- Fort Belvoir Restoration Advisory Board:

Dave shared a letter from Fort Belvoir which advised stakeholders who had expressed interest that there was not sufficient response from community members to form the advisory board. It seems they are looking for about 50 members. Dave suggested flooding Fort Belvoir with letters next time this comes up. The topic the board would have addressed is cleanup of contamination.

Sue noted the Museum of the United States Army will open soon on Fort Belvoir. Philip confirmed this is in the Accotink Creek watershed and comes at the loss of a previously wooded area. Sue will be attending an early preview through her historian connections and will let us know of any environmental pros or cons she observes.

- INOVA/Fairview Park:

- Inova Recommendations

Today, representatives from Friends of Holmes Run and Philip met with Inova to discuss the list of recommendations developed following the campus walks in August and October. There is little new to report, other than that the attitude was generally receptive to the ideas, but that is not the same as commitment. Inova is planning to hire a landscape architect to develop conservation plans and we will join a “kickoff” meeting with the architect.

- Lake Accotink Park Master Plan:

Philip advised we’ve gotten back some results from the eDNA survey done in collaboration with GMU’s Potomac Environmental Research and Education Center. He shared his fear that we may have wasted our investment, since the results are inconclusive and still not completed. The results indicating migratory river herring are present above the lake are not credible. Philip said we may have employed the most advanced science known to mankind just to tell us what we already knew, that there are gizzard shad residing in the lake.

Location	Sampling Period	River Herring DNA
Below lowest barrier	Beginning	ABSENT
	Middle	ABSENT
	End	ABSENT
Above upper barrier	Beginning	ABSENT
	Middle	ABSENT
	End	ABSENT
Below Accotink Dam	Beginning	PRESENT
	Middle	PRESENT
	End	ABSENT
Above Lake Accotink	Beginning	PRESENT
	Middle	ABSENT
	End	ABSENT

At our last meeting, we discussed a walk along the proposed pipeline route with some of the concerned parties. Philip should see Allan from Save Lake Accotink later this week and will bring it up.

Philip asked if anyone had any new thoughts on what we should recommend for the general aspects of the Master Plan, or how we can effectively advocate for conservation interests. The inquiry prompted a discussion of pervious pavement and the difficulty of maintaining it.



- **TMDL:**

- **Winter Salt Listening Session**

On December 3rd, DEQ hosted a listening session to hear public input about the awareness of salt issues and ideas for future actions. Besides DEQ, organizations represented with table displays were City of Fairfax, VDOT, Fairfax Water, Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin, and Friends of Accotink Creek. Sandy noted the rather limited participation by members of the public not connected with the participating organizations.



Participants in the Winter Salt Listening Session

Dave let us know a recommendations report is due out next spring or summer and that its approach has caused some cold feet among major salt users, even though there is no means of enforcement.

Sue raised the question of [what Montgomery County does](#), having heard a recent news report. Sandy remarked on VDOT experiments with beet juice as a salt alternative had the drawback of attracting deer onto roads.

- **General Assembly Preview:**

This gathering on December 7th was sponsored by the Virginia Conservation Network. The speakers were in Richmond, with video satellite stations in other cities. Julie and Philip attended the one in Alexandria. Speakers were largely focused on climate issues, but one item of watershed interest was implementing the [Chesapeake Clean Water Blueprint](#). Litter Free Virginia mentioned [taxing or banning plastic bags](#). Philip mentioned the short unhappy life of previous bag bills, but thought this year might be different.

- **Kena Temple:**

Sue described the new paved trail connecting the Cross County Trail to a new development called Woodson Reserve on Route 50, installed as part of the development of the old Kena Temple property.

• Donations:

Philip announced we received donations via PayPal of \$100.00 from Harry Jones and \$200.00 from Celeste Land. And finally, from an Anonymous Secret Santa, **\$3000**, earmarked for insurance premiums. Philip expressed his feeling that the earmark makes this donation all the more inspiring, because so many people are happy to plant a tree and take a picture, but few are willing to return over time to do the necessary work of watering and weeding.



\$3000!!!
WOW!!!



In honor of this exceptional donation, the group raised glasses of sparkling cranberry juice and toasted thus: "To our secret Benefactor - May this gesture of generosity be a sign of good fortune in the coming year for Accotink Creek and everyone in its group of Friends!"

• FACC Elections:

Two board positions were up for election, Purser and Conservator-at-Large. Absent any last minute declarations of other candidates, both incumbents, Beverley Rivera and Julie Chang, were reelected by acclamation.



- [Whither FACC:](#)

- [Annual Newsletter](#)

- Philip observed Beverley's inspiring newsletter seems to have achieved some results in the donations we have received. If anyone has not seen it, it is linked here and at the top of our homepage.

- [Fairfax Elections](#)

- Philip pondered sending letters of appreciation for the service of outgoing supervisors (Cook, Smyth, Hudgins) and also to remind them of Accotink Creek and, in case they have too much time on their hands, to come participate. Philip will send the letters.

- [Strategizing Session](#)

- At our last meeting we arrived at a consensus of meeting for a Whither FACC strategizing session 6-ish on January 20th at the [Dos Amigos](#) restaurant next to the Springfield Costco. The group concurred to confirm the date and time Perhaps appropriately, that is the Martin Luther King Day day of service. This is also the day before our regular meeting, perhaps giving the opportunity for a post mortem. Philip advised Dos Amigos is open until 10 pm and happy hour is until 7 pm.

Suggestions made last month for other invitees included:

- ✓ Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley
- ✓ Save Lake Accotink
- ✓ Friends of Nottoway
- ✓ Friends of Lake Accotink Park
- ✓ Save Blake Lane Park

Philip solicited additions or modifications to the list. Dave mentioned his notes from [Friends of Sligo Creek](#) and suggested we prepare an agenda.

Please review what is available on our [Whither FACC](#) webpage and bring your best ideas!
