



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 – May 19, 2020

Next Meeting: June 16, 2020 (Third Tuesday of each month)
Audrey Moore Rec Center, Senior Center Lobby

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The meeting was skipped for lack of participation, but here are some items to report:

- [I-66 Outside the Beltway:](#)

Since our last meeting, the Potomac Riverkeepers have been giving support by visiting the Chain Bridge Road cloverleaf and [contacting elected officials, VDOT, and DEQ.](#) Senator Marsden and Delegate Bulova have also requested action from VDOT and DEQ.

Responding to our Pollution Reports, DEQ inspectors visited points along the path of construction, found several violations and issued a [Notice of Violation](#) to the contractor. The Notice has been referred to the DEQ enforcement section for consideration of appropriate financial civil penalties.

We may hope this will focus the contractor's attention and adjust their priorities. By last weekend, there was a visible difference in maintenance of erosion and sediment controls. Most of the large soil piles had turned gray, indicating they had finally been hydroseeded after lying bare for weeks and months. It appears they are only responding in the one cloverleaf which we have recently reported, since there is no hydroseeding to be seen elsewhere along I-66.



The Gray Mountains of the Chain Bridge Road cloverleaf

- [Northfax West Development:](#)

Since our last meeting, Philip has continued working with Audubon Naturalist Society and a few interested individuals. Our online community meeting drew only about a half-dozen participants. On May 25th at 6:00 PM we will have another community [online information session](#) and must attract more people if we are to have hope.

Now is the time for all who are concerned about the burial of this perennial stream to shout. Those who can shout the loudest are residents of Fairfax City. We should all scour our contacts for anyone who may know anyone in the City or who can make residents aware.

We have also made site visits, documenting the life in and around the North Fork. There are abundant fish and large numbers of salamander tadpoles. A spokesperson for the developer flatly denied there were fish or even invertebrates present while speaking before the City Council. This is part of a pattern of denigrating the value of this inconvenient stream. Since both the City Council and Planning Commission had working sessions on Northfax West in May, Philip sent in the [comments](#) we approved last month.

Time is short. A series of public meetings in June may seal the fate of the North Fork of Accotink Creek:

- June 8 – Planning Commission hearing
- June 9 - Transportation Farr Ave public meeting
- June 23 – City Council hearing

Philip plans to demonstrate on the street to draw attention to the issue with a sign that says “Save the salamanders! Don’t bury Accotink Creek!”? Are others able to join?



- [Natural Landscaping at County Facilities:](#)

Sandy submitted supporting comments on behalf of FACC. The measure was approved by the Board of Supervisors on May 14th.

- Potomac Watershed Cleanup:

We did not have cleanups this spring, but we did get the news that on April 23rd the County installed a trash trap in Little Hunting Creek behind Hybla Valley Mall. We may hope that makes future cleanups easier for the Friends of Little Hunting Creek.



New trash trap in Little Hunting Creek

Also, a group of homeless people living near Thaiss Park and calling themselves [The Homeless Angels of America](#) organized their own cleanup on April 28th. Philip joined them. They removed 30 bags of trash and random debris, aided by haul away services provided by a County trash truck.

The setting was something to see. There are 30-odd tents in an area that is almost a fairyland of mayapples, ferns and wildflowers.

- TMDL:

Attendees at the last Green Breakfast heard Fairfax County will start negotiating its next MS4 permit in the next few months. This is what the Accotink Creek TMDL has been waiting for to get a plan in place. How shall we coordinate with the County and DEQ?

- Public Meetings/Land Use:

There have been email threads about the Board of Supervisors pursuing land use decisions in a time of limited public engagement. The complaint is that this very much stacks the deck in favor of developers. This is connected to general complaints about a tilt in favor of developers in initiatives called the Gartner Report and the zMod process. Our board members approved signing FACC onto a letter urging the Supervisors to slow down. If anyone understands these issues, their wisdom would be welcome.

- Donations:

We received a PayPal donation of \$40.00 from Victoria Olson. We also received a PayPal Giving Fund donation of \$1.00.

- [Whither FACC:](#)

On April 25th, we had our ‘Farewell to Kris’ in the form of a walk along the trails in Wakefield Park. We were pleased to see the vernal pool Kris and Philip had discovered was full to the brim and populated with lots of lively tadpoles, which we believe were Wood Frog and Spotted Salamander.

Those who lingered to the last were treated to a parting serenade from an especially vocal Barred Owl. The serenade ended with an exchange of views between the owl and one of Kris’ crow companions. The two then flew off each on their separate ways, a seemingly symbolic and fitting farewell between the Accotink owl and Kris of the crows.



Kris presides as the walkers contemplate the life in the vernal pool