



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 – August 17, 2021

Next Meeting: September 21, 2021 (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: Sandy Collins, Philip Latasa, Katie Lau, Edward Lee, Beverly Rivera,, Dave Lincoln, Flint Webb, Gwen Blotkamp, Kim Schauer, Alana Heng, all via on-line meeting, due to COVID 19 closures and precautions,

Forthcoming Opportunities to represent FACC:

International Coastal Cleanup:

The schedule our fall stream cleanups., starting Sep 18, 2021, is posted on the [FACC calendar](#). There will be an additional cleanup on Americana Drive on Veteran’s Day, November 11.

Cinder Bed Road Bikeway:

Sandy and Philip described meeting with Supervisor Lusk again on August 12th, where FCDOT again confirmed they had no studies or data that would provide any estimates of actual usage of the Bikeway, or how many car-miles of travel might be avoided, or what net benefit there might be in reduced carbon emissions. The so-called “alternatives” are not alternative routes, but simply alternative approaches to paving the same route. Philip showed updated videos on the [Bikeway](#) and on [alternate routes](#) and also a video documenting [severe erosion](#) being caused by the existing trail in Island Creek Park.

FACC pointed out the time for business as usual is gone, given the urgency of climate change made plain in the recent [IPCC report](#) . Business as usual in this case is cutting down trees in favor of asphalt.

Supervisor Lusk has proposed a third meeting, so perhaps he is listening. We also have a meeting scheduled with Supervisor Storck August 26th, arranged by Betsy Martin.

Philip urges everyone to use the hashtag [#SaveCinderBedWoods](#) in any communications and to share any of the postings we have with that hashtag.

We need to do more about contacting civic associations and media. Flint will look into contacts through the Civic Association Federation. Avril will plan to attend the Tree Commission meeting on September 16, to do a presentation on the project. Sandy will look at contacting Kingstowne HOA.



Accotink Gorge:

Fall Cleanup: Philip will set up a Fall date for invasive wisteria eradication, and will try to get FCPA support, which will enable use of herbicide.

August 20th Visit with IMA: Katie Lau has set up a visit of the Accotink Gorge, with Gloria Patricia of FCPA Invasives Management to explore possibilities of making the Gorge a target area for the IMA program. She has been trying to reach out to journalists to see if any of them would do a story on it. She has communicated with a journalist from the local ABC news, finding that it's been hard to schedule something with him and he said he doesn't think his bosses will approve the story. There have also been some discussions about programs such as the Accenture Corporate group, which is working with Fairfax IMA, and another suggestion about a Fairfax Leadership program.

Native Tree Campaign:

Katie reported (in writing, due to audio difficulties during the meeting) on attending the [Plant NOVA Natives tree](#) campaign zoom meeting on July 27th, which we discussed in the July FACC meeting as an opportunity to bring attention to the invasives attacking trees the Accotink Gorge. They had planned speakers, and at the end they asked for any spare questions/ideas/comments. Katie took the opportunity to speak quickly about Accotink Gorge. She also sent a few messages about what we're doing in the Zoom chat, and she answered resulting questions. Stacy Yike followed up with Katie and said that in the case we have any events, we can let them know so they can publicize it to their members by adding it to their calendar.

Elly Doyle Award:

The 2021 [Elly Doyle Award](#) winners are not yet announced, but we have received confirmation by email. The award ceremony will be online November 19th, at 7:00 pm. We won the same award in [2015](#). Channel 16 filming tentatively will be on September 18th at Beverley's Lake Accotink Invasive Management site and perhaps at one of our cleanups. Beverley nominated FACC for the award. She also nominated the group of Latter Day Saints volunteers who have helped her each Saturday and they also won.



Litter Legislation:

The Board of Supervisors will have a public hearing on a proposed [plastic bag tax ordinance](#), scheduled for September 14, 2021, at 4:30 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center. In discussion of who will speak for FACC, Flint noted that he will speak for the Civic Assn Federation. Philip said that if nobody else will speak, he will speak for FACC.



Other Activities and Issues of Interest:

Lake Accotink Dredging:

Philip reported on public meetings on the options for dewatering the Lake Accotink dredge spoils took place July 24th in person and August 5th online. The options for a dewatering site have dwindled to four grim choices:

- Wakefield Park by the maintenance yard, sacrificing up to six acres of forest
- Wakefield Park by the power station, sacrificing up to six acres of wetlands
- Lake Accotink Park at the 1980's dredge disposal site, called Upper Settling Basin, again, six acres, but a marginal area that has never recovered
- Lake Accotink Park on an island (with option to expand to a peninsula), with a smaller footprint of 3 acres, due to drier dredge material

The Wakefield Park sites would involve pipeline options:

- Along the CCT, underground
- Along Flag Run to either Port Royal Road or 495 (unclear if all would be underground)

The Upper Settling Basin pipeline would follow a long stretch of the main trail, to avoid abrupt elevation change.

An [Annandale Blog](#) article covered the first meeting

The existing island option with rotation of truck traffic along different may be the least bad environmentally. The neighbors will not care for the truck traffic on their streets, but they are the beneficiaries of dredging to maintain the full lake. According to a recent [Braddock Buzz article](#), Howery Field has been dropped from consideration as a dewatering site.

Philip had sent out draft comments endorsing the island option, and the core group endorsed the input.



Virginia Tech Research:

We previously discussed a research project featuring Accotink Creek by Virginia Tech grad student Rachel Inman. The study is complete and the results are available online in the form of a [story map](#) with supporting information.

Nutley Street Shared Use Path / Hunters Branch Restoration:

On August 4th the Town of Vienna had a public online meeting about two unrelated, but close together projects, the [Nutley Street Shared-Use Path](#) and the [Hunters Branch Phase II Stream Restoration](#). The shared use path will run along Nutley Street for several blocks north of I-66. The area already has a sidewalk and no trees will be harmed, so it's the kind of project we can approve. It is somewhat annoying that the funding comes from the [I-66 widening project](#). The stream restoration is downstream from a segment of Hunters Branch that underwent a restoration project a few years ago. The stream here was straightened decades ago. The riparian buffer is narrow and almost entirely invasives. Philip wrote to Vienna Public Works urging that fish be rescued and offering a limited native plant rescue. He provided a [video of fish](#) in the stream for the Bulletin. The [Vienna Patch](#) had a story on the projects. -

John Mason Trail:

This City of Fairfax project may be a chance for us to be ahead of the curve, rather than our usual position far behind it. This proposed trail would link Daniels Run Park to both Pickett Road and Main Street through two branches following a narrow strip of City property along the north and west edges of the tank farm. The northern strip is narrower and only partly wooded, but the woods are good quality. The western strip is also good quality woods, with a surprising number of American Chestnuts struggling to sprout back after the blight that devastated their species. The western route is also entirely redundant, since an existing parallel on-street bicycle route is just one block away. On August 12th, Philip walked the area with a few concerned residents and Councilmember Tom Ross and tried to press the idea of reconceiving the project as a nature preserve.

Vernal Pools:

Philip said that Mike Hayslett has offered apologies for the delay of his report on the Vernal Pool visit, caused by unexpected employment demands. He says he will get our report to us in time for fall planning for next Spring.

Beverley has explored progress on the educational video, which is also running late. Philip suspects part of their problem is the difficulty finding the parts of the many hours of video of Mike's engaging talks that they wish to edit out.

Vernal Pools:

After our vernal pool exploration in March, Philip asked if others would agree it is time to ask the status of our written report from Mike Hayslett & video from the Master Naturalists. The consensus is in favor. Philip will contact Mike and coordinate with Beverley regarding the video.

Davison Army Airfield EIS:

Dave reported that the final EIS reflects FACC's recommendations that the restoration of vegetation will be based on a preference for native plantings.

- [Whither FACC:](#)

Outreach Enhancement:

Philip's daughter Gwen Latasa unlocked the mystery of linking our Facebook page and Instagram page. As long as both accounts are registered as professional business accounts, there is a "Business Suite" option on the left menu that allows posting to both at the same time. Linked posts only work if there is one single picture in the post. Anyone who posts on our Facebook should use this option to also post to Facebook. Experimentation continues with adding contacts to the pages.