



# 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 – November 16, 2021

Next Meeting: December 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](#).)

**SUPPORT/DONATE**  
*It's easy & free!*

**Present:** Sandy Collins, Avril Garland, Kim Schauer, Beverley Rivera, Sue Kovach Schuman, Sherry Steely, Gary Bangs, Julie Chang, Philip Latasa  
Tom Carter – Welcome Tom!

### **Forthcoming Opportunities to represent FACC:**

Accotink Gorge Anti-Wisteria Expedition: November 24, 2021  
Biological Stream Monitoring: December 11, 2021  
North Springfield Civic Association: FACC presentation, February 2, 2022



### **FACC Topics Discussed:**

#### • [Crook Branch Restoration:](#)

Restoration of the Crook Branch tributary that runs through the Mantua neighborhood and joins Accotink Creek near Woodburn Road should begin late this month and is expected to be completed by July 2023. Planning has been ongoing since 2017. About 3,700 linear feet of stream will be restored. Revegetation plans include non-native invasive plant management and planting 2,000 trees, as well as 16,000 shrubs. Sue explained about 100 private properties as well as HOA properties are involved, so the process has taken time. The erosion that has alarmed property owners will be stabilized with various techniques. A new trail bridge will also be installed, causing some questions of walking access to school for Mantua Elementary students. The area was the site of a 2017 sewer line break. [More details](#)

#### • [Cinder Bed Road Bikeway:](#)

Philip addressed the Board of Supervisors on November 9<sup>th</sup>, making the connection between climate change and forest loss and specifically calling out the Cinder Bed Road Bikeway. [Meta \(aka Facebook\) video](#)  
On December 15<sup>th</sup>, the group of the concerned will be meeting Supervisor Lusk for the third time. The fact that we are still meeting offers some hope.  
Philip has prepared a “Save Cinder Bed Woods” placard and handouts and will be standing at Franconia Metro to seek support. Everyone is welcome to join.

A site on Little River Turnpike where the construction of the 495 HOT Lanes a decade ago left an eroding trail has never been addressed. Philip made a [video](#) showing the contrast between urgent maintenance needs and plans for new trails. Avril queried how many miles of trail in Fairfax County are in need of maintenance. Philip suggested the ActiveFairfax [destinations and barriers map](#) might provide some information.

Safe Streets for All is a program of Fairfax County's ActiveFairfax program. Its focus is on making streets safer for non-motorized travel, so it is something we can support. There is a [public meeting](#) November 18<sup>th</sup> and comments are due December 10<sup>th</sup>. Avril will attend and draft comments.

Avril noted the Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions meeting November 17<sup>th</sup> could provide a forum to promote tree preservation. Avril also brought up the idea of distributing "Save Cinder Bed Woods" stickers to Springfield merchants. Discussion followed of the efficacy of stickers and the value of postings on NextDoor.



- [Annandale Greenway:](#)

On October 24<sup>th</sup>, Philip joined the inaugural walk on the proposed Annandale Greenway. The route is mostly streets, but one section is footpaths through Mason District Park and another is footpaths through Manassas Gap Railroad Park in our watershed. Sandy indicated previous meetings specified these paths will be left as natural surfaces.

- [Accotink Gorge:](#)

Philip reminded us our workday is scheduled for November 24<sup>th</sup>, 10 – 1.

- [Americana Drive Cleanup:](#)

On Veterans Day, November 11<sup>th</sup>, 29 volunteers worked together to remove 119 bags of trash and an estimated 600 pounds of loose items. We were supported by [The Vistas Apartments](#), which allowed use of their property and sent staff volunteers, and by [Facets](#), which provided use of a van and drivers. The [Fairfax County Restoration Project](#) did most of the organizing, while we played a supporting role. Supervisor Walkinshaw dropped by to express his support.

The cleanup was part of our Adopt A Highway adoption of Americana Drive. This street is plagued by chronic dumping and littering by commercial vehicles that park here. We also reported to VDOT a serious level of dumping on the other side of 495 just north of Little River Turnpike, but we have yet to hear back what their response will be.



*"Su vecindario Sin basura" - "Your neighborhood Without trash"  
These little pleas for community pride have appeared along Americana Drive.*

- [Lake Accotink Aquatic Invasives:](#)

There was a third expedition against the Water Caltrops on October 25<sup>th</sup>. A fourth one was scheduled, but was cancelled due to some rather unreasonable liability and safety issues with the use of boats. So the weeds and the lawyers teamed up against us and won.

- [Fairfax Water Grant:](#)

Kim advised that she, Bryan, Avril, and Philip had met to discuss fulfilling the grant. Fairfax Water will not modify the original terms, so we will need to include a classroom presentation element on the topic of winter salt. This is a reimbursement grant, so we will need to complete our work and submit invoices for payment. Bryan is in touch with teachers at the schools along Long Branch and with our past collaborator George Kralovec, who has Winter Salt Watch data. Kim reported she has successfully tested her Enviro DIY data logger in Snake Den Branch. Philip mentioned we expect to have a lesson plan ready by January and the deadline is the end of March.

- [Virginia Lakes and Watersheds Association:](#)

Beverley proposed the idea of support for administrative costs to the Virginia Lakes and Watersheds Association and was not rejected. VLWA will discuss it at their December meeting and would like one of us to attend the meeting. Beverley will be traveling for some of December, so we may need another representative. The date of this meeting is not clear. Beverley can provide speaking notes if someone else needs to fill in at the meeting.

- [Elly Doyle Award:](#)

The 2021 Elly Doyle Awards are this Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM. We will receive an award and also get to see the results of the video describing our activities recorded by Channel 16 in September.

- [Clean Quiet NOVA:](#)

Avril reported progress on the gas-powered blower front. On November 9<sup>th</sup>, the Board of Supervisors [approved a measure](#) to phase out gas-powered leaf blowers in County operations. The County currently owns 133 gas-powered blowers, but all future purchases will be electric and contractors using electric will be favored. The school board is also planning an all-electric landscaping equipment pilot program. Delegate Kay Kory is expected to introduce a local option blower ban bill.



Avril also mentioned studies showing the negative effect on birds by noise. Yard signs are available and the next online meeting is November 23<sup>rd</sup>.

- *Vienna Wood Swim Club Project:*

Avril has been working on an invasives project at the Vienna Wood Swim Club, clearing mostly bush honeysuckle. The area is private, so she is left to her own devices. She hopes the project will help improve the profile of FACC and an upcoming article in the Swim Club newsletter should help. Philip noted the work area includes an interesting section of wildflower-rich “Freedom Lawn”. This term describes an area under native trees that is mowed, but not much else, providing habitat for many low-growing native plants.


- *New Lee District Office:*

On November 9<sup>th</sup>, the Board of Supervisors received an update on the new Lee District headquarters. About half the site is in our watershed. The building will also house the Kingstowne Library, a senior center, and police station. The plans feature native landscaping and LEED Gold certification. Construction will be summer 2022 to fall 2024.

## Stormwater Management

Underground Contech StormFilter system

- Proposed design provides water quality enhancement by using four bioretention facilities and one underground Contech StormFilter system.
- Existing offsite dry pond located nearby only provides stormwater quantity control and provides no water quality enhancement under current regulations.

Building Design and Construction Division  20

*New Lee District Office plans*

- *Vernal Pool Sediment:*

After two years of delay since we first reported the issue, the collapsed drain pipe that was causing sediment to fill the vernal pool along the Lake Accotink Park entrance road was fixed. Within weeks after completion, the repair has also collapsed, returning the situation to square one. The current status – the slope is deforested, half the pool is buried in mud, the rather dubious rock channel that replaced

the pipe is failing. Land Development Services is talking with the owner about new solutions. Supervisor Lusk's office is aware.



*Discharging stormwater into an open channel on a steep slope seemed unwise from the beginning.*

- [Northern Virginia Conservation Trust Appeal:](#)

After the tax sale of these properties became widely known, Mason District Supervisor withdrew them from the auction. What happens next is not clear, because the County cannot simply appropriate the properties for nonpayment of taxes.

- [Lake Accotink Dredging:](#)

We received a minor update from Stormwater Planning to let us know the conceptual design is anticipated to be ready by May 2022, at which time there will be public meetings

- [Donations:](#)

PayPal Giving Fund has sent another \$1.00. We also received \$50.00 from Philip's niece. There was discussion of the source of these puzzling \$1.00 donations and comparisons to AmazonSmile.

- [Whither FACC:](#)

- *Annual Newsletter:*



Beverley and Julie will collaborate to do another annual newsletter to combine with our annual appeal, as we have the past few years.

- *FACC Elections:*

We will have elections for Purser and Conservator-at-Large at our December meeting. Both incumbents, Beverley and Julie, are eligible for reelection.

