



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 – March 21, 2023

Next Meeting: April 18, 2023 (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: Gary Bangs, Sandy Collins, Avril Garland, Philip Latasa, Dave Lincoln, and Peter Clark all via on-line meeting.

Opportunities Representing FACC:

Federation of Friends Meeting, March 14, 2023: Avril watched meeting which met over Zoom. Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) staff went over its goals, current projects, and budget requirements. Philip sent in slides of the proposed Cinder Bed Road Bikeway and the invasive wisteria in the Accotink Gorge. Four other groups did short presentations: Friends of Green Springs, Friends of Holmes Run, Friends of Historic Huntley, and an archaeology group. Meeting link is included if you wish to watch.

FCPA staff presented the Parks and Recreation Master Plan goals which included improving access to parks especially for pedestrians, planning to expand habitat connectivity between environmental corridors for potential parkland acquisitions, and identifying existing park sites where habitat health should be improved.

The budget hearings are on April 11th to 13th. We were encouraged to speak before the BOS and urge that FCPA be fully funded. Meeting discussion was on bamboo removal estimated at \$500,000 for approx. 200 acres, or IMA program which in 2023, its budget was \$350K. For 2024, it will have \$400K.

Mount Vernon District Environment Expo, April 22, 2023: Dave, Sandy, and Avril said they planned to attend. If possible they will discuss with someone access problems to Accotink Stream Valley behind Costco for litter cleanups.

Choralis Concert, April 30, 2023: Avril and Gary will attend. [Choralis](#) is a semiprofessional choral group that partners with different charities at concerts. On April 30th, we are invited to have a display at the concert at Fairfax Presbyterian Church in Fairfax City. The church is right on the banks of Accotink Creek. We should certainly find ways to connect the concert location to Accotink Creek and our mission, such as a sign on the driveway, a mention in the publicity materials, and a graphic in our lobby display. We are looking at having signup sheet for stream cleanup at that location for May 13.

The church has a proposed [affordable housing and day care project](#) on its grounds. There are some environmental questions about the project that didn't seem bad enough for FACC to get into a tussle.

Herbicide legislation: Avril gave a brief overview of the legislation from Illinois that allows volunteers to be approved to use herbicides for invasive removal projects overseen by a governmental agency. The concept is to pursue through Virginia General Assembly a similar bill. She has contacted Patricia (IMA manager) if IMA would support this bill. Generally she said she would have to remain neutral on the subject. Avril, Gary, Dave, and one other person from Great Falls area has expressed interest in working on this.

Cinder Bed Road Bikeway: Phillip reported that the Cinder Bed Bikeway group is preparing an online slide presentation aimed at the Amberleigh residents, since their homeowners association would need to vote to approve any land rights transfer to the County. The scheduled date is tentatively April 19th. The group will distribute postcards and door hangers to invite residents, and FACC may provide some shared funding for the outreach.

Potomac Watershed Cleanup: Philip said that on March 11th was our first cleanup of the season with the international exchange students of Cultural Crossways at our Pickett Road site. Our next date will again be a private cleanup for the West End Rugby team on April 1st at Americana Drive.

Lake Accotink Dredging:

<https://www.accotink.org/2023/DredgeMeetingComments-20230216.pdf>

Philip said that two civic associations are having presentations on the dredge this week:

- North Springfield right now with Dr Joe Wood of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation
- Springfield Civic Association with Supervisor Lusk 7:00 pm March 23rd at Crestwood Elementary

North Springfield will be recorded.

https://www.facebook.com/NSCivicAssociation/videos/1247138909223381/?extid=CL-UNK-UNK-UNK-IOUS_GK0T-GK1C&mibextid=l2pjGR&ref=sharing

Gary will represent FACC at the second and let us know what transpired.

Two interesting suggestions have emerged of unknown practicality:

- One is to route trucks from the industrial park along the margin of the railroad to the next large street, with a variation going right through the industrial parks.
- Another is to use the [natural gas storage facility](#) off Rolling Road as the dewatering site. There is already a cleared area and it is close to a major road, but numerous other obstacles can be imagined.

Dam Repair

Dam repairs are underway. What is being done is replacement of the wooden flashboards at the top of the spillway. The purpose of the flashboards is to increase the water depth, so the water level will be about two feet lower during repairs. It will be something of a sneak preview of a future diminished lake. According to park staff, there will be so little depth that all spring kayak classes are being cancelled. The work should be completed by Memorial Day.



Huntley Meadows or Humpy Meadows? The upper end of Lake Accotink filled in years ago and is dominated by mounds of invasives. The rest of the lake would likely be the same.

Site Specific Plan Amendments: Reported on by Phillip.

[AT&T Site](#)

This proposal is before the Planning Commission March 23rd. He plans to speak in support of the proposed tree preservation and stormwater awareness and urge that the small headwaters stream on the property also be preserved.

[Sheridonna Lane](#)

This Dogue Creek floodplain development proposal was rejected at the March 9th Planning Commission Workshop.

[PanAm Shopping Center:](#) Phillip provided that the PanAm Shopping Center mixed use redevelopment on Nutley Street near Vienna Metro has been in progress for a couple years. A [community meeting](#) is scheduled on March 30th at 7PM at the shopping center. He doesn't expect any adverse effects in this already paved space and the addition of a couple small parks can only help.



PanAm Shopping Center redevelopment concept

Shutterfly Share Sites: Phillip continues to work on the issue. In addition to shutting down the share sites feature we have always used, Shutterfly sent a note telling us to buy something or lose the other part of our account. So he paid \$13.24 to purchase business cards to keep the account active.

He has migrated all our photos off Share Sites onto regular Shutterfly, but it is not a viable long term alternative. There is no way to include captions, except by putting them into the pictures themselves. We have a couple albums on Facebook, but it is cumbersome to search and creepy in its data harvesting. Ditto for Google's data harvesting. We also have several albums on Kris' Smugmug account.

So he is still pondering what to do for a permanent solution. Whatever we do, it will be tedious and time consuming to repost everything.

Volunteer Fairfax Migration: Phillip said that website migrations seem to be a fad. Volunteer Fairfax has commanded us to move all our events, past and present, to a new platform by April 3rd. Another tedious job but he will be able to complete it.

Gallows Road Corridor Study: Phillip said that the Gallows Road Corridor Study has begun with meetings of a stakeholder group. The Friends of Holmes Run will share representation on the group with us and keep us up to date. The only significant wooded area along the route is the Inova campus.

Candidate Questionnaire: Phillip said that the primary elections in June will likely determine the winners of most elections in November. In the Accotink Creek watershed, the Mason District supervisor's race is probably the most interesting, with an open seat and several candidates campaigning. In addition, redistricting has significantly revised all the General Assembly districts, creating opportunities for challengers.

The Sierra Club Great Falls group will develop a candidate questionnaire and is looking for help, if anyone wants to take that on.

Donations: Phillip said that we received \$26.05 from AmazonSmile. Since the program was discontinued, this is either our last or next-to-last payment. With it being discontinued FACC website will need updating.