



Friends of Accotink Creek Town Meeting

June 16, 2014

Next Meeting: July 21, 2014

Audrey Moore Rec Center, Clubroom 3
(Third Monday of each month)

Present:

Kris Unger
Philip Latasa
Suzy Foster
Ted Welch
Flint Webb
Giulio Porta

Upcoming events:

- Next FLAP meeting, June 26, 2014
- Friends of Long Branch Kickoff meeting, July 7, 2014
- Joint FLAP/FACC meeting, July 17, 2014
- Next FACC meeting, July 21, 2014
- Lake Accotink Park Stream Monitoring, Sept. 13, 2014
- Watershed Projects Presentation, Providence District Council, Oct. 21, 2014

Action Items:

- *Everyone is to bring grant ideas to the next meeting*
- *Flint – Follow up on Fairfax City Parks plan*
- *Philip – Propose cleanup schedule to the Federation of Civic Associations*
- *Philip – Confirm status of Adopt-a-Stream sign authorizations*
- *Kris - Work with Heather on fall cleanup recruitment*
- *Kris - Work with FCPA on Lake Accotink natural resource assessment*
- *Kris – Arrange Anacostia trash trap visit*

FACC Subjects Discussed –

• Whole Foods:

Kris reported the Whole Foods 5% day was a success, with proceeds of \$3460, to be split between FLAP and FACC. Kris mentioned it would be possible to double the amount with a Park Authority Mastenbrook grant. Possible grant ideas included a trash trap or a professional survey of mussel populations.

• International Coastal Cleanup:

Federation trash site

Philip advised the Federation of Civic Associations will cooperate with FACC at our Old Lee Hwy cleanup site. Philip needs to schedule a date and advise Flint.

Messiah United Methodist Church

Philip reported that during the Whole Foods day, a member of nearby Messiah United Methodist Church suggested that we schedule cleanups during their Sept 7th service day. We have yet to receive confirmation from the church.

Adopt-A-Stream Signs

Our Adopt-A-Stream signs have been put up in some Fairfax City parks. Will Balling of Northern Virginia Soil & Water Conservation District is working on permission for county parks and VDOT sites. Philip will confirm his progress.

Kris advised he is discussing fall cleanup recruitment with Heather. Ted is interested in organizing interpretive inventories of trash bag contents.

- Grant Proposal:

1. *Lecture series:*

Suzy advised the new Mantua civic association board hopes to get lectures scheduled. Flint noted the Providence District Council is planning a presentation on watershed projects in August and wondered if that would be a good fit. [Note: Now scheduled for Oct. 21]

2. *Community Initiative:*

Philip asked if there is a deadline on the grant. Kris responded that there is not, but we do need to report results. There was general discussion of possible approaches, including involving the Annandale H.S. Green Atoms, organizing walks for civic associations, building on participation in cleanups, and connecting with the Federation of Civic Associations initiative with county schools.

- Lake Accotink Park Master Plan:

Kickoff Meeting

Philip noted the kickoff meeting is not scheduled, but will likely happen in summer or fall. He added that Park Board member Mary Cortina advised us to speak up in favor of natural resources, because other interests certainly would be speaking up.

Natural Resource Assessment

Kris explained that Mary Cortina had suggested the possibility that FACC provide input to the natural resources assessment for the master plan, possibly in cooperation with Virginia Native Plant Society, Virginia Master Naturalist, Audubon, etc. Justin Roberson of the Park Authority Natural Resources Division will communicate ideas to Kris by early July. Justin did say areas currently undisturbed would be left undisturbed.

Dog park

Philip mentioned that the recent Friends of Lake Accotink Park meeting had provided a platform for advocates of a dog park, who appear to be quite organized and prepared with corporate backing. He offered that this might be an opportunity to turn the power of the dog park advocacy into a force in favor of natural resources if that is the way they can achieve their goal.

Philip also related recent reports of irresponsible off leash dogs and owners in the park, some of whom have even gone so far as to threaten harm when reminded dogs must be on leash. Ted mentioned personal encounters with similar attitudes. Giulio added the dangers off leash dogs chasing cyclists. Flint pointed out off leash dogs also harass wildlife. Philip suggested these facts should be used as leverage in dog park discussions.

Trash boom visit

Kris let us know the plans to visit the Anacostia river watershed trash boom are underway, but no date is set.

- Represent FACC:

Hidden Oaks/Master Naturalists

Ted related his recent stint as student educator at Hidden Oaks Nature Center. Philip expressed the hope we could maintain and build on the contact with Hidden Oaks, one of only three staffed parks in our watershed. Ted suggested a meeting with the Hidden Oaks Program Director and the Green Atoms faculty advisor. Ted also took a moment to demonstrate his new [Extractigator](#) tool for invasive plant control.

Fairfax City Parks Action Plan

Flint will check back with Betsy Bicknell on the status.

Senior Info Fair

Philip reported he had represented FACC as an exhibitor. Attendance was light, but the location was notable, as the American Legion property borders the headwaters of Accotink Creek, across from Paul VI H.S.

Joint FLAP Meeting July

Kris will set a date with Tony for the joint meeting. [Note: Now set for July 17, 7 pm, Braddock Hall]

Wash to Save the Bay

Philip noted that Mr. Car Wash in Merrifield, located in our watershed, had participated in the [Wash to Save the Bay](#), benefiting the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

Virginia High School League film festival

Philip noted the Virginia High School League has initiated a [film festival](#) for next May. Kris observed there might be opportunities to work with FCRP and FCPS to encourage student films.

- *FY 2015 County Budget:*

 - Carryover*

Philip reminded us the recent budget cuts affecting environmental programs, including the Invasive Management Area, may be corrected during the September “carryover” budget process. We can remind supervisors of our opinions using our [online form](#). Flint mentioned efforts by the former president of the Federation of Civic Associations to bring local environmental groups together around this issue.

- *Route 1 Widening:*

 - Ginger rescue*

Kris described efforts to work with Doug White, organizer of a wild ginger rescue in the Route 1 widening construction area. Flint suggested the Mt. Vernon District Council Environmental Committee may be interested. Kris will follow up with Doug.

- *FACC Display Materials:*

Philip set up some of the FACC display materials for comment and suggestions. The main improvement offered was a colored background for our folding repurposed cardboard box display. Giulio suggested bicycle shops might be a source of boxes suitable for displays.

- *Scout Projects:*

Ted noted a recent scout project rerouted the eroding trail connecting the Lake Accotink Park office to the CCT, but could use some additional attention to more completely cover the old trail. The board used for the new trail sign was repurposed after being fished out of the “mung” in the marina.

- *Nazi Vandalism:*

Ted let us know he has the materials and will shortly be working with North Face volunteers to repair the damaged Americana Park information kiosk. The North Face provided funds to purchase the replacement acrylic panels.

- *Northern Virginia Soil & Water Grant:*

Kris reported the grant application for Flag Run and Danbury Forest stream restorations was not awarded. The proposal may yet be revived for future applications.

- *Logjam near Hunter Village:*

Philip relayed a report from Dave Lincoln that the county has removed the logjam near Hunter Village Drive that had caused damage to the CCT. Giulio mentioned another logjam had been removed near Merrifield.

- *Hard Hats for a Healthy Potomac:*

Philip informed us the Potomac Conservancy and the Heavy Construction Contractors Association (HCCA) are sponsoring one Northern Virginia watershed project per year. He suggested we should lobby

for Accotink, perhaps Flag Run, by consulting with the county. Kris suggested the Danbury forest stream restoration project is another possibility.

- *Friends of Long Branch:*

Kris discussed Tony Vellucci's initiative to create a Friends of Long Branch Stream Valley Park, with a kickoff meeting July 7th. There was a discussion of the merits of a separate group for this Accotink tributary versus bringing these new friends into FACC.

Philip Latasa

Friends of Accotink Creek
