

**Kent Conservation Advisory Committee, Town of Kent
Meeting Minutes, October 15, 2014**

Attendees

Committee members: Anne Balant-Campbell, Bill Buck, Marty Collins, Dave Ehnebuske, Beth Herr, Phil Tolmach, Bill Volckmann. Visitors: George Baum, Jean Ehnebuske.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

1. Chairperson's report

New York State Association of Conservation Commissions (NYSACC) Conference

Chair Beth Herr asked Bill Volckmann to report on the highlights of NYSACC's annual Conference on the Environment that he attended in Binghamton in early October.

Bill V. said that there was not a lot of focus on CACs or EMCs, but that he met several people from CACs who asked him what happened to Putnam County's EMC.

He reported that attendees included representatives from private industry as well as students.

He attended a presentation by the president of NYSERDA who, among other topics, reminded the audience that NYSERDA offers energy audits and certifies photo voltaic installers.

Bill said that there was information at the conference about volunteer projects that focus on increasing access to solar energy and reducing installation costs for interested individuals and businesses (see <http://www.solarizenewyork.org/>) He learned there are currently several solarize programs up and running and more to come.

Dave Ehnebuske asked if there were any presentations about using geothermal as an energy source. Bill replied that there was really not much on that topic.

Bill reported seeing a permeable-tile product at the conference that is used to pave roads. He suggested that the tiles might be a good option for replacing the erosion-prone, ineffective item 4 gravel road to/from the Mount Nimham Fire Tower. Beth commented that the CAC might also want to look at Clearpool's new bridge and road that was designed using best practices.

Suggestion for an energy forum

During discussion following Bill's report, Anne Balant-Campbell suggested that the CAC could host a forum for the Kent community on alternative energy resources and invite recognized speakers to make presentations. CAC members agreed that providing such information would be very valuable to Kent residents and that the CAC should pursue organizing such a forum.

2. Kentcac.info

Dave reported that within the last month, 146 people used the website and there were 214 different sessions. As usual, new people requested subscriptions to the Hikes and Kent Nature Almanac lists.

3. Kent Nature Almanac

September issue

Beth apologized that the September issue of the Kent Nature Almanac has not yet been published, but promised it would be forthcoming.

Nature photo contest

She shared George Baum's idea for sponsoring a nature photo contest and arranging to hang the winning photos in the Kent Town Hall or Kent Public Library. Discussion ensued about when to hold the contest. Launch it this winter? Wait until spring? Beth added this idea to others CAC members would be discussing before the end of this year.

4. Hikes and trails

Mountaintop Ecology Walk

Bill V reported that he and Phil Tolmach were the only hikers joining local ecologist Diana Lee on the Mountaintop Ecology Walk to Mount Nimham on Sunday, October 5. Bill added that a family joined them on the way back down.

Suggestions for other hikes

Marty Collins suggested that the CAC might consider co-hosting a hike with Tom Maxson who leads the "Magical History Tours" in our area.

There was also discussion about organizing an after-dark hike at some point.

Beth stated that the CAC will be discussing such ideas for hikes as it creates a hikes calendar before the end of the year.

5. Fire Tower Committee

Floor

Bill V reported that David Tomkins, the contractor who has volunteered to replace the cabin floor in the fire tower, was unable to meet with him today as scheduled. Bill said they are planning to meet at the fire tower tomorrow instead. Beth offered to be there as well.

New sign

Dave said that he and Jean made a trip to the fire tower this week so that he could secure the bolts on the sign with loctite and nuts.

Not-for-profit corporation

Dave reported that Paul Denbaum assured him that his law firm will help establish a new not-for-profit corporation at cost.

The paperwork requires that the person filing it submit two names for the not-for-profit corporation.

Those names are: Kent Conservation Foundation and Kent Conservation Fund.

The initial board members will be: George Baum, Dave Ehnebuske, Jean Ehnebuske, Beth Herr, Phil Tolmach and Bill Volckmann. To go forward with submitting the paperwork, Dave needs the snail mail addresses of each individual listed above. He will collect those after the CAC meeting has been adjourned.

Dave explained that in addition to serving on the board, others who wish to become involved can serve on various committees of the new not-for-profit, e.g., on an advisory committee, a donors committee, a publicity committee, etc.

6. Other

Mead Farm project

Beth stated that she received an e-mail from Patrick Lafontaine, a boy scout who is interested in doing a project relating to the Mead Farm to earn his eagle scout status. Since the farm is on DEP property, he would need the DEP's permission to proceed. CAC members agreed that Beth should continue the conversation with the young man.

Public meeting on Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail

Dave passed around information about a public meeting to be held at the Chalet on the Hudson in Cold Spring on Thursday, October 23, 7 - 8:30 PM, to learn about and discuss the master plan for the Fjord Trail. Click [here](#) for more information.

Presentation on Firetowers

Beth announced that Martin Podskoch, author of *Firetowers of the Catskills*, will be speaking and showing slides about firetowers and CCC camps at the Pound Ridge Historical Society on Sunday, November 9, at 1 PM (time is tentative). See <http://www.poundridgehistorical.org/events.html>. Jean added that Mr. Podskoch will be making a similar presentation at the [Rosendale Library](#) on Wednesday, October 22, at 7 PM. (Note: The Rosendale Library is about an hour's drive west and north of Kent.)

News from Kent Planning Board

Phil reported that Patterson Crossing is getting its renewal. Beth asked Phil if he knows the size of the wetland buffers in our town. Phil responded that he is unsure. It might be 50 or 100 feet.

Teatown Lake Reservation

Beth said that the website has been revised and upgraded.

Curtailing the distribution of plastic bags

George suggested that the CAC begin an initiative to curtail (not ban) the distribution of plastic bags in the Town of Kent. Bill Buck commented that such an initiative might be more effective as a county-wide endeavor. Anne suggested inviting other CACs in the county to meet with us to discuss this issue.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

The next meeting of the Kent CAC will be at 7 PM on Wednesday, November 19, at the Kent Town Hall. All meetings of the Kent CAC are open to the public.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Ehnebuske,
ex-officio recording secretary