

**Kent Conservation Advisory Committee, Town of Kent,
Meeting Minutes, March 20, 2013**

Attendees

Committee members: Anne Balant-Campbell, Dave Ehnebuske, Beth Herr, Phil Tolmach. Visitors: Jean Ehnebuske, Bill Volckmann.

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 PM.

1. Chairperson's Report

Review of topics from last month's meeting

Environmental Education Exchange at Clearpool

Chair Beth Herr reported that she had arranged for the CAC to have an exhibit at Clearpool's Environmental Education Exchange on Friday, March 8. CAC members Marty Collins and Dave Ehnebuske, as well as volunteer Jean Ehnebuske, had offered to sit with the display, talk about the CAC, and answer questions. Due to a heavy snowfall, however, the conference was canceled.

Display of Carol Gracie's photographs

The Chair stated that she is hoping she can make arrangements for wildflower photographer and author Carol Gracie to display her photographs and give a presentation at Arts on the Lake in May.

Recruiting volunteers

The Chair expressed that she hopes the CAC can recruit some volunteers to help Bill Volckmann and George Baum with the trash pick-up at Mt. Nimham. Dave said he would put out a notice to the subscribers on the "Hikes" list through kentcac.info.

Status of CAC vacancy

Bill Volckmann reported that he intends to submit his application to be a CAC member to the Town of Kent.

Correspondence and announcements

2013 Tree Program

The Chair passed around an informative flyer from the Putnam County Soil and Water Conservation District regarding its 2013 Tree Program.

NYDEC projects

Also noted by the Chair was a list of DEC projects that she received recently. She reported that the proposed Northern Putnam Greenway was one of the projects, and that the completion of the Highlands Trail would be part of this effort.

Request for video

The Chair stated that she had been contacted by a man in Swansea, MA who is the grandson of Ray Singer. He is hoping someone can send him a copy of the video that includes a discussion between Martin Brech and Jim Baker that took place at the Mead Farm many years ago. It was suggested that George Baum may have a copy.

Display of photos in Kent Town Hall

The Chair said that she would like to begin displaying photos on the theme of "expressions of nature in our town" on the walls of hallways and meeting rooms in the Kent Town Hall. She invited any CAC member who would like to submit photos to contact her. She has already purchased frames.

New book about outdoor activities in Putnam County

The Chair shared a newspaper article about a new book, *Adventures Around Putnam, Vol. 1*, written by local author Steve Mattson. She noted that Steve includes text about the Mt. Nimham Fire Tower. His website is www.adventuresaroundputnam.com.

2. Kentcac.info website

Dave reported that the website is still ticking along, with 92 visits in the last month. Usually the count is 100 or more, but since the CAC has had no hikes or programs recently, that would probably explain the slightly lower number of visits. He said that a highly-visited page is “Suggestions, Precautions and Disclaimer” (for hikes) at <http://www.kentcac.info/hikeprecautions.html>.

3. Kent Nature Almanac

The Chair reported that a March edition of the Kent Nature Almanac will be forthcoming.

4. Hikes and Trails

Amphibian Hunt

On Sunday, March 25, at 2 PM, the Amphibian Hunt at Clearpool Model Forest will begin, led by Beth Herr. Prior to the program, between 1 - 2 PM, the DEP will present its findings on the survey it conducted of 16 different wetlands across 9 acres at Clearpool.

Woodcock Walk

The Chair will be leading a Woodcock Walk on Friday, April 19. Interested participants should meet at 7 PM at the Great Swamp Wildlife Management Area on Cornwall Hill Road in Patterson.

Hike to Hawk Rock

CAC members decided that the annual hike to Hawk Rock will be on Sunday, April 28. Interested hikers should meet in the DEP parking lot at the end of Whangtown Road at 11 AM.

Mountain Laurel hike

It was also determined that the hike to view the Mountain Laurel at Clearpool will be on Sunday, June 9, at 1 PM.

Publicizing hikes

The Chair noted that the CAC will need to publish information about upcoming hikes and activities. She will work with Dave on this.

5. Mt. Nimham Fire Tower

Mural installation

The CAC decided that Sunday, May 19, would be the date for celebrating the installation of the four-panel mural that students at George Fischer Middle School have been creating. The Chair will check with art teacher Amanda O'Shaughnessy to find out if that date will work for her and her students. The CAC determined that Sunday, June 2, could be an alternate date.

Staircase braces

Bill Volckmann reported that he will check with Greg at Brewster Iron Works to see if the braces will be made from galvanized or non-galvanized steel. The answer will determine the kind of paint that has to be used.

T-shirts

The Chair asked if anyone has any Mt. Nimham Fire Tower t-shirts leftover from fundraising activities for the Fire Tower restoration several years ago. Anne Balant-Campbell said she or her sons may have one, and will let the Chair know. This information may be useful as the CAC considers plans for future fundraising in order to maintain and preserve the Fire Tower. Dave Ehnebuske and Bill Volckmann will be meeting to sketch out some “straw-man” plans for the CAC.

Scheduling a meeting

The Chair will work on scheduling a meeting to bring together various constituencies that have an interest in and/or responsibility for the Mt. Nimham property—the DEC, Putnam County Emergency Services, mountain bikers, amateur radio operators, and representatives from the CAC. This recommendation came from Barbara Lucas-Wilson during a mid-December meeting with the Chair, Dave, and Bill V.

6. ELLA (Hudson Hills and Highlands Environmental Leaders Learning Alliance)

The Chair shared an ELLA newsletter. She remarked that on June 15, ELLA is hosting Doug Tallamy, author of *Bringing Nature Home*, and Carolyn Summers, author of *Designing Gardens with Flora of the American East*. She announced that in 2014, ELLA is going to be offering online training for CACs and similar organizations.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

The next meeting of the Kent CAC will be at 7 PM on Wednesday, April 17, at the Kent Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Ehnebuske,
ex-officio recording secretary