

**Kent Conservation Advisory Committee, Town of Kent,  
Meeting Minutes, April 16, 2014**

**Attendees**

Committee members: Anne Balant-Campbell, Bill Buck, Dave Ehnebuske, Beth Herr, Phil Tolmach, Bill Volckmann. Visitors: George Baum, Karin Duermeyer, Jean Ehnebuske, David Rocco.

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

Because Chairperson Beth Herr was unexpectedly delayed, Co-chair Dave Ehnebuske began the meeting. He introduced a visitor, his friend Karin Duermeyer. He also welcomed Dave Rocco who was project manager for the restoration of the Mount Beacon Fire Tower. Dave thanked him for coming to our meeting to share his experiences.

**1. Chairperson's report**

Meeting with Town Supervisor

Report tabled.

Correspondence

Report tabled.

**2. Kentcac.info**

Dave reported that there were 126 unique visits to the website within the last month. There are currently 67 people subscribed to the "Meetings" list; 157 to the "Hikes" list; and 125 to the Kent Nature Almanac list.

**3. Kent Nature Almanac**

Dave remarked that with each passing month, the number of new contributors continues to grow.

**4. Natural Resource Inventory**

Report tabled.

**5. Hikes and trails**

Dave asked if anyone had suggestions for a hike in April. After a brief discussion, CAC members decided that since there are only two weekends remaining in April, and since the annual hike to Hawk Rock is scheduled so early in May (Sunday, May 11, at 11 AM), there would be no hike in April.

**6. Fire Tower Committee**

Anti-graffiti plexiglass

Bill Volckmann stated that graffiti has begun appearing on the fire tower again along with the warmer weather. He plans to install the two "test" plexiglass panels that Chair Beth Herr prepared with George Baum's graffiti repellant. Beth showed the treated panels to CAC members, saying that for now, they would protect two topo maps she'll place under them temporarily.

Visitor Dave Rocco pointed out that Lexan, although expensive, is the best anti-graffiti plexiglass. He remarked that Home Depot gives away \$500/month to support local projects, and that the CAC might consider applying for that funding to purchase Lexan.

Visit from Mount Beacon Fire Tower representative

At this point in the agenda, Beth asked Dave Rocco if he would share his experiences and take a few questions regarding his work as project manager for the Mount Beacon Historic Fire Tower Restoration Committee. Prior to taking on that project, Dave was involved in the restoration of the Walkway Over

the Hudson. He served in various instrumental roles on that undertaking, including being a board member for five years.

Beth asked Dave if he could share how the committee raised money for the fire tower restoration. He responded that their first fund-raiser was selling the 72 replacements steps through a successful public marketing campaign. He also made connections with the offices of State Senator Steve Saland and the late State Assemblyman Thomas Kirwan. Both followed through to support the restoration with a total of \$19,000 in state grants. He mentioned that both Home Depot and Rust-Oleum made donations, and that local banks contributed, too.

Dave said the committee planned some of their fund-raising activities to coordinate with local celebrations for events such as Earth Day and Make a Difference Day. Tip: Serve food to attract volunteers.

He remarked that the project could not have been completed without the help of the National Guard and the Hudson Valley Four Wheelers, and expressed how grateful the committee was for their help. Dave advised that one way to draw attention to our fire tower would be to submit an article for the "Lookout Network Quarterly" published by the [Forest Fire Lookout Association](#) (FFLA). It's accessible online to members of the FFLA.

#### Braces ready

George gave Bill V. a list Tom Hard put together of the hardware necessary to install the braces. Sometime in the next week or so, Bill and Dave will get together to confirm details of how the installation will work. If everything is copacetic, they will proceed to install the braces as soon as possible.

#### Floor ready

Bill V. reported that after the final paperwork has been received and approved by the DEC, contractor John Hamel is all set to install the new flooring. The work will be paid for by funding that has been held by PLAN Kent for work on the fire tower. Beth added that an inquiry by Marty Collins to former PLAN Kent Chair Bob Bradley confirmed that after paying for the floor, the organization will be defunct.

#### New KCAC sign

Report tabled.

#### Facebook: Friends of Mount Nimham; Mount Nimham

Minimal discussion, then tabled.

#### Finding or founding a non-profit organization

Discussion ensued about the CAC's options going forward. No decisions were made. Beth reported that James Shearwood, former executive director of Arts on the Lake (AotL), suggested she might want to talk to interim executive director Ed Durkee regarding possibilities for AotL to accept an additional organization along the lines of the Friends of Classical Music. Bill Buck suggested that Beth also talk to someone in that Friends group to learn how the relationship works from the Friends' perspective.

### **7. Environmental Leaders Learning Alliance (ELLA)**

Report tabled.

### **8. Clearpool Model Forest**

Report tabled.

### **9. Other**

Bill V. spoke briefly about an impressive half-day workshop on sustainability and land preservation that he recently attended at the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies in Millbrook.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM.

**The next meeting of the Kent CAC will be at 7 PM on Wednesday, May 21, 2014, at the Kent Town Hall.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Ehnebuske,  
ex-officio recording secretary