

## **Kent Conservation Advisory Committee, Town of Kent, Meeting Minutes, June 20, 2012**

### **Attendees**

Committee members: Anne Balant-Campbell, George Baum, Marty Collins, Dave Ehnebuske, Beth Herr, Phil Tolmach. Town Board Liaisons: Penny Ann Osborn. Visitors: Jean Ehnebuske, Ilene Thompson, Bill Volckmann.

The meeting began at 7:05 PM.

### **1. Chairperson's report**

#### Deer ticks

Chair Beth Herr passed around an article regarding the prevalence of deer ticks this year. See [www.ecostudies.org/images/newsletter/ecofocus\\_spring\\_2012.pdf](http://www.ecostudies.org/images/newsletter/ecofocus_spring_2012.pdf), page 3.

#### Correspondence

The Chair reported that Putnam County Legislator Richard Othmer responded to her letter inquiring about the possible re-activation of the county's Environmental Management Council (EMC). He wrote that he'd help any way he could, and also sent a packet of background information via Councilwoman Osborn. She delivered that to the Chair. The Chair will follow up with Legislator Othmer.

#### Renewal of stewardship agreement

The Chair reported that she has applied for the renewal of the CAC's stewardship agreement with the DEC for Mt. Nimham. Discussion ensued regarding the need for the DEC to post a sign and inspect the property once a year. The DEC stewardship agreement obliges them to install a sign acknowledging CAC stewardship.

#### Remnant road

Related to the topic of Mt. Nimham, Councilwoman Osborn commented on some ongoing problems with a neighbor regarding Maynard Road, a remnant road that goes to the Mt. Nimham Fire Tower. The Town of Kent recognizes the road as one of its remnant roads, and Councilwoman Osborn is working to have the road declared a historic landmark.

#### Tree-cutting

Councilwoman Osborn mentioned that this same neighbor cut down many trees on a steep slope in that area. She is quite concerned about the ensuing erosion. George Baum pointed out that the Town of Kent does not have a tree-cutting ordinance that would regulate tree cutting on steep slopes and suggested that perhaps the Town's Planning Board could consider this issue.

### **2. Kentcac.info website**

Dave Ehnebuske reported that there have been 159 visits to the website since the last CAC meeting, with 125 different people looking at various pages. People are still signing up to be added to the subscription lists. There are now 94 people who subscribe to the Kent Nature Almanac; 131 who subscribe to the hikes list; and 48 who receive agenda notices and minutes.

### **3. Kent Nature Almanac**

The Chair announced that although the CAC will adjourn for the months of July and August, the Kent Nature Almanac will continue to be published online.

George suggested that perhaps a question could be posed to the contributors and readers of the Kent Nature Almanac regarding how they have made their own yards into welcoming habitats for various creatures and plants. The Chair commented that in Rye, the Rye Habitat Project raises environmental awareness by encouraging people to create "Certified Backyard Habitats." Each property so designated is recognized by the color green on the town map.

#### **4. Hikes and trails**

##### Mountain laurel hike

The Chair reported that the hike to view the mountain laurel at Clearpool Education Center on Sunday, June 3, was very successful. It was a lovely day, the mountain laurel was abundant, and she was delighted to be able to collect some plants she was not expecting to find for the Natural Resource Inventory.

##### White Pond MUA walk/survey

The Chair stated that she and Janis Bolbrock walked the White Pond trail. At the current time, to return to their starting place, walkers must walk along White Pond Road for about a mile. She reported that after a little exploration, she and Janis concluded that anyone wanting to create a trail would have to make that trail through both DEP and NYS-owned land. The Chair said she would look into obtaining a revocable permit from Lori DiLorenzo. Marty Collins suggested that perhaps Tom Maxson and Ed Illiano might be able to provide some information about the existing paths on this property.

##### Future hikes

- The CAC scheduled a hike to the White Pond MUA for 10 AM on Saturday, June 21.
- A hike to view and learn about invasive plants in Kent was tentatively scheduled for 11 AM on Sunday, August 19. (The Chair will confirm the date and place with Dave.)
- The annual hike to the Mt. Nimham Fire Tower was slated for 11 AM on Sunday, October 14.

#### **5. Mt. Nimham Fire Tower**

##### Mural contest

Because no one contacted the webmaster or anyone else with an interest in entering the contest, CAC members agreed to step up the publicity and extend the deadline for entering to August 20. The Chair wants to post a notice about the contest at the base of the fire tower. Other suggestions were: posting a notice at Arts on the Lake; making an announcement at the Arts on the Lake rock concerts (beginning this coming Friday); publicizing the contest at Green Chimneys; posting notices at places teens tend to go (e.g., Scoops, Johnny Gelato's, pizza places, etc.).

##### Ongoing repairs by Fire Tower Committee

George reported that he and the committee members have been continuing to secure the existing fencing by placing baling wire at one foot intervals. There are no longer any big gaps. Bill Volckmann is continuing his work on replacing the steel step. The Chair acknowledged the committee's hard work.

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

##### Workshop

The Chair reported that she attended the "Water Words that Work" session on May 19. She said that the focus was on how to get a message across, and that a very interesting discussion ensued with participants regarding why people vote as they do on environmental issues.

What she took from the workshop was that environmental leaders should find a way to tell people they can actually do something that makes a difference. Emphasis should be placed on all the positives that derive from such participation. At some point, the Chair would like to convene a local forum to discuss such issues.

##### Site-planning series

Phil Tolmach stated that he has been attending the site-planning series that ELLA organized. In their sessions, participants are working on maps of a site in nearby Holmes.

#### **7. Natural Resource Inventory**

On a related topic, Anne Balant-Campbell reported on a workshop she recently attended on mapping invasive species. The session was coordinated through the Partnerships for Regional Invasive Species

Management (PRISM). She proposed that the CAC could get the Kent community involved with identifying invasive species through a training session. This led to a discussion about the CAC offering people a chance to see various invasives in their natural habitat here in Kent and also learn how to identify two or three. A hike and training session was tentatively scheduled for August 19.

#### **8. Other**

The Chair announced that the CAC will suspend meetings for the months of July and August as usual.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 PM.

**The next meeting of the CAC will be at 7 PM on Wednesday, September 19, at the Kent Town Hall.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Ehnebuske,  
ex-officio recording secretary