

## **Kent Conservation Advisory Committee, Town of Kent, Meeting Minutes, May 16, 2012**

### **Attendees**

Committee members: Anne Balant-Campbell, George Baum, Bill Buck, Marty Collins, Dave Ehnebuske, Beth Herr. Town Board Liaisons: Lou Tartaro. Visitors: Jim Baker, Wilma Baker, Janis Bolbrock, Jean Ehnebuske, Ilene Thompson.

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

### **1. Chairperson's Report**

#### Amphibian inventory program

Chair Beth Herr gave an account of the very successful amphibian inventory program at Clearpool Model Forest on March 25. Over 100 people attended, and after an introduction about the purpose of the program, participants visited six vernal pools.

#### Earth Day

The Chair asked George Baum to give a report about Earth Day events at Clearpool Model Forest on April 22. After reporting, he also passed along news from a recent committee meeting he attended regarding Clearpool's plans to host a series of educational sessions.

#### Workshop on mapping invasive species

The Chair announced a workshop being held on May 23 at the Desmond-Fish Library in Garrison on mapping invasive species. Each session is coordinated through the Partnerships for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM). See <http://www.nyimainvasives.org/get-involved/training-live/nyimapschedule/spring2012>.

#### Correspondence

The Chair read aloud a letter she received from Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell in response to her inquiry about re-activating the former Putnam County Environmental Management Council (EMC). In her letter, Ms. Odell thanked the Chair for her interest and wrote that she had forwarded her letter to Southeast Supervisor Tony Hay and Putnam County Legislator Richard Othmer. The Chair read aloud the response she received from Supervisor Hay. She has yet to hear from Mr. Othmer. She intends to pursue the idea of re-activating the former EMC. All correspondence is attached.

#### CAC displays

The Chair showed the portable tri-fold display George displayed at the PCLT Annual Dinner in April and at Clearpool's Earth Day event. She also passed around a photo of the new CAC display she has put together for ongoing use in the Kent Recycling Center. It is cleverly designed with moveable velcro labels so that various events or programs can be featured "front and center" at any given time. She asked CAC members for photos.

Next, the Chair showed a larger display she created to educate people about the Great Swamp. She solicited ideas for what CAC members might want in a similar large-scale display. Suggestions were: focus on big achievements; don't use too much text; emphasize historic as well as current achievements as the county celebrates its bicentennial this summer; showcase just one activity; highlight the collaborative species inventory with Clearpool. On this last subject, the Chair reconfirmed Clearpool's intention to work with the CAC on our natural resources inventory. She said that SUNY students will be inventorying trees at Clearpool.

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

Dave Ehnebuske reported that 142 people have looked at the website since he compiled the data before the last CAC meeting. He noted that there is always more "traffic" on the website just prior to hikes.

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

The Chair said that because she was away for the month of April, she will be compiling observations contributed in both April and May into one posting to be published/distributed near the end of May.

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

#### Hawk Rock hike

Dave reported that the hike was very successful. It was perfect weather, the wildflowers were in bloom, and 22 people showed up—some with their dogs. Both Jim Baker and Lou Tartaro gave talks at the Mead Farm site and the stone chambers. Everyone had a wonderful time.

#### Hike to Mt. Nimham Fire Tower

The Mt. Nimham hike planned for Sunday, May 20, with a group from the Ward Pound Ridge Reservation has had to be postponed. The new date is Sunday, June 3, at 3 PM.

#### Reconnaissance hike to White Pond MUA

The Chair asked if anyone would like to accompany her on an exploratory hike to White Pond MUA on Wednesday, May 23. She would like to check out the trail. A few people offered to go with her.

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

#### Tower steps

George reported that a step to the tower disappeared and then reappeared, and that one is currently loose. Bill Volckmann is working on the steps.

#### Mural contest

George presented a proposal he drafted regarding a mural contest. At April's CAC meeting, there was much discussion about how to engage young people in preserving and protecting the four panels at the top of the tower that are regularly defaced. CAC members had concluded that hosting a competition and awarding four young artists with the honor of painting the panels might be one way to attract their interest. Those interested in participating would be asked to submit their digital sketches to the Kentcac.info webmaster. The idea will be publicized as soon as possible in an article in the local papers and also via contact with art teachers at the local middle schools and high schools. The Chair volunteered to make those contacts. Marty Collins confirmed that she will write the article for the local papers. The Chair will also make inquiries at Arts on the Lake to seek judges. So that the project would have high visibility, especially to those who visit the tower, George proposed that the winning artists paint the panels on site. Anne Balant-Campbell suggested that the contest would be more inclusive and attract a wider range of participants if pre-cut panels were provided to the winning artists and installed later by the CAC. This latter arrangement was preferred by CAC members. George presented a working timeline that includes an unveiling ceremony.

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

The Chair stated that she is registered to attend an ELLA-sponsored workshop, "Water Words that Work," at Teatown Lake Reservation on Saturday, May 19.

### **7. Other**

#### Remnant roads

Jim Baker brought up the topic of remnant roads in the Town of Kent. Dave said that he and the Chair will be talking to Brian Alberghini, a former PCLT board member, who has information on remnant roads in Putnam County. The Chair said she would follow up.

#### Native plants garden; litter clean-up

Some time ago, Janis Bolbrock had presented the idea of working with the Town of Kent to create a native plants garden on the "town square." Also, Councilwoman Penny Osborn had suggested the CAC might organize a litter clean-up on secondary roads. The Chair said she had not forgotten these ideas.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

**The next meeting of the CAC will be at 7 PM on Wednesday, June 20, at the Kent Town Hall.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Ehnebuske,  
ex-officio recording secretary

**Attachments:**

Letter to Beth Herr from Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell

Letter to Beth Herr from Southeast Town Supervisor Tony Hay



**Supervisor**  
Tony Hay

## **Town of Southeast**

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### **Town Board**

Edwin Alvarez  
Robert Cullen  
Lynne A. Eckardt  
Elizabeth Hudak

### **Town Attorney**

Willis Stephens, Jr.

April 17, 2012

Ms. Beth Herr, Chair  
Kent Conservation Advisory Committee  
254 Horsepound Road  
Kent, New York 10512

Dear Ms. Herr:

I am in receipt of your letter to County Executive MaryEllen Odell regarding the disbanded Conservation Commission. While I understand your desire to re-instate this commission, the Town of Southeast Town Board opted in 2006 to replace such a board in the Town of Southeast with a Wetlands Inspector. The Town Board then and now believe that a Wetlands Inspector would be far more qualified to deal with wetland issues than the Conservation Commission. Since the Town of Southeast's wetlands code is actually quite restrictive, the Town Board feels that a competent professional would be more suited to guide the Town's Planning and Zoning Board's.

Unfortunately the Town has no immediate plans to re-instate this commission. If I might offer a suggestion though, the Putnam County Environmental Management Council you wish to resurrect could allow members from a Town's Conservation Commission and/or a Wetlands Inspector and/or his/her designee be a member of the Commission at the County.

Sincerely,



Tony Hay  
Supervisor  
Town of Southeast

Cc: Hon. MaryEllen Odell, County Executive  
Putnam County Legislature

# PUTNAM COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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*MaryEllen Odell*  
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*Bruce J. Walker*  
Deputy County Executive

*Patricia Simone*  
Chief of Staff

*Nicholas DePerno Jr.*  
Director of Constituent services



April 12, 2012

Beth Herr, Chair  
Kent Conservation Advisory Committee  
254 Horsepound Road  
Kent, New York 10512

Dear Ms. Herr:

Thank you for your recent letter regarding the past council known as the Putnam County Environmental Management Council, and of your interest in reviving this organization to help with the environmental and conservation issues of the County.

I have taken the liberty of forwarding your letter to Tony Hay, the Supervisor of the Town of Southeast and Legislator Richard Othmer for their review and recommendations.

I appreciate your continued interest and dedication to the people of Putnam County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'maryellen odell'.

MaryEllen Odell,  
County Executive

MEO

cc: Hon. Tony Hay, Supervisor of S.E.  
Hon. Richard Othmer, Legislator