

Kent Conservation Advisory Committee, Town of Kent
Meeting Minutes, February 18, 2015

Attendees

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 PM.

1. Chairperson's report

Correspondence

Seedling sale

Chair Beth Herr announced that the Putnam County Soil and Water Conservation District will be taking orders again this year for its annual [Tree and Shrub Seedling Sale](#). Orders must be received by Wednesday, March 25, and picked up on Friday, April 24 or Saturday, April 25. Please click on the link for more information. Beth asked Dave if he could please promote this opportunity on Kentcac.info.

"Got Nature?" lecture

Beth shared information about a free lecture that will be hosted by the Lewisboro Land Trust at the Katonah Village Library on Sunday, February 22, from 3 – 4:30 PM. Yale professor Stephen Kellert will be presenting "Got Nature? The Science Behind Why We All Need It."

Spring Landscape Conference

Beth reported that the Spring Landscape Conference, sponsored by the Native Plant Center that operates under the auspices of Westchester Community College, will be focusing on the topic "Natives That Nourish: Planting an Edible Landscape." This all-day event will be presented at the Gateway Center, Westchester Community College, from 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM on Monday, March 16, 2015 (with a snow date of Friday, March 20). For more information and to register, click [here](#).

Eagle Scout Project

The Chair stated that Patrick LaFontaine continues to work on his plans for the Mead Farm and Hawk Rock sites. She shared his designs for the trail markers he hopes to put up in the spring or summer. There are three designs. Each features the same image of the head of a hawk on a disc with a red/maroon background, but the text on each one is different. CAC members seemed to like the one with the least text best: CAC . DEP. Patrick placed the lettering around the bottom edge of the circle. Beth will work with him and the DEP to get approval for the signage. He intends to build and install an informational trail kiosk at the trail head. He is considering placing QR codes at points of interest along the way that hikers with smart phones could use for accessing additional information.

Promoting CAC activities at Kent Recycling Center

The Chair pointed out that the Kent Recycling Center is a very good place to promote the CAC and its activities. She said the easel she has been using to post CAC information has been moved to a higher-profile location—right by the cash register. One thing she wants to do is post photos of all CAC members so that KRC members can see that the people serving on our organization are residents just like them, and may well be their neighbors and friends. She asked that CAC members send her their photos as soon as possible.

2. Websites

Town of Kent website

Dave Ehnebuske reported that he has not heard about any progress on the town's new website recently.

Kentcac.info

The CAC website continually adds one or two new people. Many are attracted to the site because of their interest in the Kent Nature Almanac. Currently, 149 readers subscribe to that online publication.

3. Kent Nature Almanac

Beth stated that to date, she has received two photo submissions for the CAC's Kent Nature Almanac [photo competition](#).

4. Hikes and programs

Showing of the film "Bag It"

CAC members discussed collaborating with the Kent Public Library to show the film in their new program room sometime in April. Jean mentioned that since there are six copies of the film in the collection of the Mid-Hudson Library System, there would be no reason for the CAC to rent or buy it. Anne Balant-Campbell said she would look into what it would take to arrange this event.

Hawk Rock Hike

This annual event is scheduled for Sunday, May 3, at 11 AM. Dave suggested that Beth might want to invite Patrick to join CAC members and others on the hike, and Beth agreed that was a good idea.

Photo Competition Winners Exhibit

Beth said she would install the winning entries for display in the Kent Public Library during the whole month of June.

Firefly Social

The Chair set the date and time for the event for Saturday, June 20, at 8 PM. It needs to be held near a wet meadow. CAC members discussed possibilities for where it might be held. Mentioned were Putnam County Park, Huestis Park, and Ryan Memorial Park.

Butterfly Count

This event to count butterflies in our area will be held on Saturday, July 11, at 10 AM. It could involve visits to several different parks or perhaps to some residents' butterfly gardens (if any) in Kent. Anne suggested creating a brochure with images of various butterflies that participants would be likely to see.

Fire Tower Celebration and Fall Foliage Hike

At the January 21 CAC meeting, it was decided that holding the celebration and the hike on the same day made sense. The date CAC members chose was Sunday, October 11. However, Bill Volckmann reported that when he talked with Jeff Wiegert, Jeff suggested moving the date earlier so that hunting around and on Mount Nimham would not be an issue. If the CAC decided to stick with the October 11 date, it would mean the DEC would have to shut down the mountain for hunting for that day, something Jeff Wiegert seemed reluctant to do. After discussion, most CAC members seemed to agree that the event could be rescheduled for Sunday, September 27, instead.

Bill commented that Jeff would like to meet the CAC members sometime. He said Jeff remembered the celebration ten years ago. He also remembered that he had asked for a TRP (Temporary Revocable Permit) and a Certificate of Liability. George Baum asked Bill if Jeff wants a Certificate of Liability for the Fire Tower Celebration, and Bill replied that Jeff said he plans to look into it. Beth said she would check with the Town Supervisor about the details of getting a Certificate of Liability.

George reported that Councilwoman Penny Osborn indicated the Nimham Mountain Singers would be interested in performing at the Fire Tower Celebration. On the recommendation of former Arts on the Lake Director James Shearwood, George has also been talking with Ed Durkee, currently the Interim Director of Arts on the Lake. Ed may serve as a producer for the event.

It was mentioned that the Fire Tower Celebration would be a good opportunity to promote the Kent Conservation Foundation through the distribution of informational brochures, etc.

"Make a Difference Day"

This annual national event, occurring on October 24 this year, may be an opportunity for the CAC to "give back" to the community through volunteer efforts on a project. Beth is going to research it further and report back at the next meeting. Click [here](#) for details.

5. Fire Tower Committee

Mural installed in Kent Town Hall

The Chair reported that one of the four murals is currently on display in the foyer of the Kent Town Hall. Dave took a photo of Town Supervisor Maureen Fleming standing beside the mural.

Fall Fire Tower Celebration plans

Please see information under “Hikes and programs” above.

Floor replacement plans

Bill V. reported that hopefully he will be meeting this coming weekend with David Tomkins, the volunteer who will be installing the cabin floor in the fire tower. Bill is targeting the end of April for the installation. Phil Tolmach suggested that Bill ask David for a certificate of insurance since he carries his own insurance.

6. Kent Conservation Foundation report

KCF President Dave Ehnebuske reported that at its meeting this evening, the KCF hopes to adopt the revised bylaws and also decide on categories of membership and the dues for each membership level. Once the bylaws are approved and in place, he can begin the process of applying for 501(c)(3) status.

7. Other

Initiate plastic bag ban campaign

After discussion, CAC members agreed that the first step in the campaign would be urging a ban on plastic bags, or charging a nominal fee for using them, right here in our own town. Beth said she would approach Town Supervisor Maureen Fleming about the issue and follow up with a letter to her. To raise awareness and garner community support, the next step might be publishing a letter to the editor from the CAC in the local papers. After that, the next step might be meeting with the two Putnam County legislators who represent Kent on the Putnam County Legislature: Legislator Toni Addonizio and Legislator Carl Albano. Legislator Albano also currently serves as Chair of the Legislature. George suggested meeting with Legislator Barbara Scuccimarra since she has been promoting the idea of a ban on plastic bags. The point in meeting with these representatives would be to encourage the legislators to make such an initiative a county-wide practice.

Beth mentioned creating some kind of eye-catching display for the Kent Recycling Center at some point that would help promote the idea. Since the KRC is a high-traffic area for Kent residents, it would be a good place to collect signatures if the CAC wished to begin a petition in support of the initiative.

Report from Kent Planning Board

Phil commented that there was nothing new to report.

ELLA (Environmental Leaders Learning Alliance)

Phil reported that someone at ELLA had asked him whether we have problems with beavers here in our town. Beth replied, “Not yet, but they're coming.” She added that she thought there would be interest in our community in attending a local symposium on dealing with beavers if ELLA planned one.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:08 PM.

The next meeting of the Kent CAC will be at 7 PM on Wednesday, March 18, at the Kent Town Hall. All meetings of the Kent CAC are open to the public.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Ehnebuske,
ex-officio recording secretary