

Kent Conservation Advisory Committee, Town of Kent Meeting Minutes, May 20, 2015

Attendees

CAC members present: Anne Balant-Campbell, Marty Collins, Dave Ehnebuske, Beth Herr, Phil Tolmach, Bill Volckmann. CAC members absent: Bill Buck. Visitors: George Baum, Eli Campbell, Jean Ehnebuske, Rich Linkletter, Carly Salloway, Michael Tierney.

Chairperson Beth Herr called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

1. Chair's report

Correspondence

The Chair pointed out that the newsletter published by NYSACC (The New York State Association of Conservation Commissions) is now [online](#). She said that NYSACC has scheduled its conference for October 16-17 in Ithaca.

Trails survey

Beth reported that she had completed the Statewide Trail System Survey and submitted it to the Kent Town Board.

Presentations to Rotary Club of Carmel

On July 2, Beth will be speaking to the Rotary about the CAC and its activities. She asked CAC members to please send her any relevant photos, particularly of the Mount Nimham Fire Tower. Kent Conservation Foundation President Dave Ehnebuske will also be speaking to introduce Rotary members to the KCF and encourage their membership.

Eagle Scout project

The Chair reported that Patrick LaFontaine met his fund-raising goal through his social media "Go Fund Me" campaign. Even so, he plans to fund-raise outside of Shoprite on Sunday, June 7, from 9 AM to 3 PM. Beth said that with the guidance of the DEP, Patrick and his friends had removed lots of barberry from the Mead Farm site.

NYDEP request

Beth stated that the NYDEP will be increasing the liability insurance to \$2 million for the use of the land at Whangtown Road. The Town will provide the CAC with a certificate.

2. Websites

As webmaster for the [CAC website](#), Dave reported that things keep ticking along. In the past month, there have been 340 distinct visitors to the site. He said that at this time of year, people are particularly interested in the information about the trails.

Dave mentioned that action appears to have stalled on launching a new website for the Town of Kent. Nothing has changed.

3. Kent Nature Almanac

Comments from readers

Dave commented that last month as usual, several subscribers expressed how much they enjoy reading it.

Photo competition

Beth reported that she received 24 photos for the Kent Nature Almanac photo competition. They will be judged by Beth and two other artists from Cat Rocks Artists. Eli Campbell volunteered to edit the winning photos, format them so they are all 8x10, and print them out. The winning entries will be on display at the Kent Public Library beginning June 1. After the exhibit comes down, the photos will be hung in the foyer of the Kent Town Hall.

4. Hikes and programs

“Bag It”

The Chair reported that in spite of publicity, no one from the general public attended the “Bag It” viewing on April 25. Beth said in addition to herself, the only people present were Anne and her mother, Doris Balant, Marty Collins, and Dave and Jean Ehnebuske. Eli suggested that promoting such events on Facebook might help.

Hike to Hawk Rock

Beth commented that it was a spectacularly beautiful day for the hike, and the twelve people who participated had a great time.

Hike schedule

Beth reported that Eli and Michael Tierney would like to lead two hikes a month, most likely to the Mead Farm and Hawk Rock. They'd like to schedule the first one for either May 30 or 31.

CAC Hike with Arts on the Lake and the Mohican Chapter of ADK participants

Beth said she had been contacted by James Shearwood of Arts on the Lake to see what the possibilities might be for arranging a hike to Mount Nimham. As a result of their discussion, participants will engage in a very challenging walk of 6 miles or so. It was decided to schedule the hike for Saturday, June 13, from 10 AM to 3 PM. For details, click [here](#) or [here](#).

Butterfly Count

This event is scheduled for Saturday, July 11, at 10 AM. The Chair said she had not yet determined the meeting place.

5. Fire Tower Committee

Repairs finished

The Chair announced that the cabin floor replacement and mural installation has been completed. She and all CAC members acknowledged the efforts and work of Bill Volckmann for making this happen. With the help of many volunteers, the volunteer contractor, David Tomkins, was able to complete the job in under 4 days. David generously volunteered his time and expertise, and the cost for materials was very reasonable since Bill V. was able to get much of what was needed at a discount. Bill V. and other volunteers installed a new handrail in the cabin as well.

Press and publicity

The *Putnam County Press/Times* gave front page coverage to the cabin floor restoration that included a photo of Bill V. and David Tompkins at the top of the fire tower. On page 10, the paper featured photos of the four murals as well as photos of views from the cabin.

Acknowledging volunteers

George Baum suggested that the KCF present David Tomkins with a gift certificate for dinner for two. CAC members agreed this was a good idea. Bill V. said he plans to write a letter to the editor naming all the volunteers and thanking them for their help.

Nimham Mountain Fire Tower Facebook page

Bill V. commented that he has been developing a Facebook page to help promote the fire tower and to publicize news and events. Beth said that she would create a Facebook page for the CAC.

Graffiti

Bill V remarked that shortly after the completion of the floor and mural installation, the murals were damaged by graffiti. A brief discussion ensued about the challenges graffiti presents and possible ways to prevent it.

6. Kent Conservation Foundation report

Dave stated that the KCF Board did not meet in April because there was no quorum. He announced the good news that the KCF had been granted 501(c)(3) status. Dave reported that the KCF had finalized two separate brochures—one to promote general memberships and the other to promote associate

memberships. KCF members will be discussing plans for the use of the brochures at tonight's meeting. Dave passed around the brochures for CAC members to view.

7. Other

Beth said she would like to have permanent signs made for the CAC that could be posted at sites of CAC-sponsored events. She would like to see them modeled after the signs FrOGS uses.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

The next meeting of the Kent CAC will be at 7 PM on Wednesday, June 17, at the Kent Town Hall. All meetings of the Kent CAC are open to the public.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Ehnebuske,
ex-officio recording secretary