

## **Kent Conservation Advisory Committee, Town of Kent, Meeting Notes, June 18, 2014**

### **Attendees**

Committee members: Bill Buck, Beth Herr, Anne Balant-Campbell. Visitor: George Baum.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM. There was not a quorum, but those present informally discussed topics on the agenda. Ex-officio recording secretary Jean Ehnebuske had to miss the meeting, so notes of the meeting were recorded by CAC member Bill Buck who had generously volunteered to fill in for her. Many thanks, Bill.

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

#### July CAC meeting

Chair Beth Herr requested that even though the CAC normally takes a recess for the months of July and August, it needs to meet in July in order not to lose momentum on the various Mount Nimham Fire Tower projects (see below). **Therefore, the next CAC meeting will be on Wednesday, July 16, 2014, at 7 PM at the Kent Town Hall.**

#### Correspondence

Beth reported that she wrote to Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell thanking her for her support of state legislation on food-service waste. The letter also encouraged her to move ahead with a county-level bill. The letter is attached.

#### Annual dues notice

The CAC received its annual dues notice for \$75 from NYSACC (New York State Association of Conservation Committees). Beth will submit the notice to the Town of Kent for payment. NYSACC's 2014 Conference on the Environment will be October 2–3–4, 2014, (Thursday to Saturday) in Binghamton, NY.

### **2. Kentcac.info and Kent Nature Almanac**

The website had 91 visitors in the last month, up from the previous month. There are 67 subscribers to the agenda and minutes. The Kent Nature Almanac now goes to 128 households.

### **3. Natural Resource Inventory**

Beth reported that just today, Dr. Eric Karlin from Ramapo College identified the *Sphagna* that Bill Buck picked up at Clearpool Education Center when he and Beth went there last month. There were four species and one of them, *Sphagnum torreyanum*, is quite rare off of the coastal plain. Bill will try to take Eric there to collect for himself, hopefully when the water levels are lower.

This mention of Clearpool led to a discussion of the Model Forest Committee and the work at Clearpool. Apparently the advisory committee is disintegrating because Clearpool staff predetermine the agenda and others just listen. Non-staff seem to have no role in the project as it has been redesigned.

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

There were only five participants on the Mountain Laurel Hike at White Pond Multiple Use Area on Sunday, June 8. All these participants found out about the hike from the Kent Nature Almanac, not from the mailing list for hikes. They were younger than many of our hikers, and it was nice to have new faces. George Baum suggested that Beth send photos of the hike to Marty Collins in order for her to write up an article for the *Putnam County Press/Times*.

## **5. Fire Tower Committee**

### Braces

On Thursday, June 12, 2014, the braces were installed on the fire tower by Bill Volekmann, George Baum, Tom Hard, Dave Ehnebuske, Beth Herr, Ralph Szur and Lou Tartaro. Although the project took longer than hoped, the result is an important step forward. A big "thank you" to Brewster Iron Works for fabricating the braces for free.

### 501(c)(3)

Dave wrote to Kent Town Board member Paul Denbaum (as a lawyer, not as a board member) about the possibility of finding a pro bono lawyer for establishing a 501(c)(3). Although Paul said this is not his specialty, there are lawyers in his office who might be able to help. However, it is not free, mainly because of various filing fees, etc. Dave is waiting to hear back about the costs.

### New sign

Dave also worked with Sundog Signs for a sign for the Fire Tower. It will cost \$250 (of which \$200 is material shipping). Dave has volunteered to cover this cost out of his own pocket. Thanks, Dave.

### Floor

At the recommendation of Anne Balant-Campbell, Beth will contact Bob McCarthy, a contractor who originally submitted an estimate for installing the floor in the cabin of the Fire Tower. Beth will find out if his estimate still stands. His original bid was more expensive, but he has all the right paperwork and probably could begin soon. Beth will phone him and check on the estimate, and then move ahead with a contract. It was suggested that this contractor might be willing to have CAC volunteers help out in order to reduce costs. Beth will also contact Bill V. to set a date for this project.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:34 PM.

**The next meeting of the Kent CAC will be at 7 PM on Wednesday, July 16, at the Kent Town Hall.**

Respectfully submitted from notes recorded by CAC member Bill Buck,

Jean Ehnebuske,  
ex-officio recording secretary

Attachment: Letter from CAC Chairperson Beth Herr to Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell

Maryellen Odell, County Executive  
Putnam County Office Building  
40 Gleneida Ave., 3rd Floor  
Carmel, New York 10512  
June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Dear Ms. Odell,

I write as Chair of the Kent Conservation Advisory Committee to applaud your leadership and support of the New York State Bill #A04973A in relation to food service waste reduction and the prohibition of polystyrene foam by private and government contractors.

It is unfortunate that while the bill passed in the Assembly it failed in the Senate. It is remarkable that the County of Albany WAS able to rebound and pass their resolution. We urge you to enact similar legislation for Putnam County that would reduce food service waste and require compostable or recyclable food service ware. Such a bill would address the many negative environmental impacts of foam.

Thank you for attention to this matter toward a more sustainable community.

Sincerely,

Beth Herr, Chair  
Kent Conservation Advisory Committee