

**Kent Conservation Advisory Committee, Town of Kent
Meeting Minutes, July 16, 2014**

Attendees

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

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

1. Chairperson's report

Correspondence

Chair Beth Herr announced that Governor Cuomo declared the week of July 6 – 12 as New York's first-ever Invasive Species Awareness Week.

Beth stated that Teatown Lake Reservation is hosting a program this week on identifying and managing invasives.

The Chair passed around a copy of "Native Plant Garden," a publication showcasing the new demonstration garden opened by the Katonah Village Library in May.

2. Kentcac.info and Kent Nature Almanac

Dave Ehnebuske reported that there are currently 66 people who are signed up to get meeting notices, 150 signed up for hikes notices, and 127 who get the Kent Nature Almanac. He added that the Kent Nature Almanac is very popular.

3. Natural Resource Inventory

No report.

4. Hikes and trails

Next hike

Beth announced that the annual Fall Foliage Hike to the Mount Nimham Fire Tower will be on Sunday, October 5, at 1 PM. She would like the emphasis for the hike to be on plant life.

Photo request

She asked CAC members if anyone has any fall photos of the fire tower, or any photos from fall hikes to the fire tower from past years. She would like to use them to help publicize the hike. George Baum mentioned the fun hikers had crossing the creek at the beginning of the hike, and said he has a photo of two of that activity. He will send what he finds to Dave. Bill Volckmann said he would do the same.

5. Fire Tower Committee

Floor

Beth stated that considering all options, it seems to make sense to go with Bob McCarthy as the contractor to install the new floor. Bob was one of the contractors who originally bid on the project. She wondered if he could also install the murals. Anne Balant-Campbell said that she had just seen Bob, and that he is very busy at this time. She indicated that it might be a few months until Bob could install the floor, but suggested that maybe he would be willing to work on the project over a weekend. Bill V. said that he met a young carpenter, Matt Blunt, who would like to help with the project. Although Matt is not a professional carpenter, he expressed a great deal of interest and enthusiasm for the project.

Bill V. said that during the installation the tower would need to be closed to visitors. George asked how people visiting the tower could be prevented from going up. He replied that rangers and the DEC police

as well as the Kent police would be kept up to date on the installation so they could monitor the site. He said temporary fencing could be used to indicate the tower was closed. He will ask the DEC's Barbara Lucas-Wilson how to proceed. He also reminded CAC members that it will be necessary to obtain a Temporary Revocable Permit (TRP), and that this process can take up to six weeks. Since Barbara is on vacation until the first week in August, beginning the process to obtain the TRP will have to wait until after she returns.

Bill V. suggested that if the contractor was okay with it, perhaps volunteers could help with the project. There was interest among some of the CAC members in helping out.

After more discussion, the Chair called for a vote to determine if CAC members were in favor of having Bob McCarthy install the floor in the cabin of the Mount Nimham Fire Tower. The motion was made by Bill Buck and seconded by Marty Collins. The Chair called for discussion, but hearing none, she called for the vote. The motion passed unanimously.

Bill V. will contact Bob McCarthy to try to schedule the work and discuss details.

Braces

The Chair reiterated that the braces for the fire tower had been installed on June 12 by some members of the CAC and other volunteers. She asked those who helped install the braces to send Marty Collins a short e-mail about their experience with this volunteer work. Marty will include some of those reflections in a story she'll submit for publication. Beth remarked that such a story would help bring the public's attention to the critical work that needs to be done to maintain the fire tower. Beth said that Bill V.'s daughter, Emi, had taken lots of on-the-scene photos, and hoped that Emi would share them for possible use in the article.

Beth inquired whether the braces need to be painted, and if so, when that work could be scheduled. Bill V. confirmed that painting would be necessary. It was decided that the painting would be done on Friday, July 18, and that Bill V. would contact those interested in helping. He said that Emi would probably be able to join the work party.

Fire Tower Sign

Dave has been working with Drew at Sundog Signs on a sign to replace the one that vandals destroyed. He reported that he will be able to pick up the sign a week from this coming Friday.

501(c)(3)

Dave stated that he learned from Paul Denbaum that a colleague in the law firm where he works would take on the work necessary to establish a 501(c)(3) organization. The cost would be \$505.00. After some discussion, CAC members agreed that Dave should follow up by contacting Paul to set up a meeting. Bill V. and Phil Tolmach volunteered to attend the meeting with Dave. Note: Paul Denbaum is a Kent Town Board Member, and he is also an attorney.

As a reminder to those who will be attending the meeting, it was pointed out that Sal Tripi requested that the name of the new organization should *not* be Friends of Mount Nimham. That was the name of the DBA of the former non-profit organization.

Beth asked CAC members to think of individuals in the community who might want to serve on the board of the new organization after it is established.

Other

The Chair reminded CAC members that there will be no meeting in August.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.

The next meeting of the Kent CAC will be at 7 PM on Wednesday, September 17, at the Kent Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Ehnebuske,
ex-officio recording secretary