

Town of Kent Conservation Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes for January 15, 2020

Committee Member Attendance: Bill Volckmann - chair, Anne Campbell, Ed Illiano, Chris Ruthven - Town Board Liaison

Guest Attendance: Robert Ulich

Chair's Report

- Update from Kent Lakes Association
 - Next meeting date January 18, 2020 @ 08:45 AM at Town Hall
- Mid-Hudson Renewable Energy forum - held on December 13, 2019 was attended by two KCAC members
- Clearpool Model Forest updates – Ed mentioned the ongoing programs and projects including wildlife monitoring with night cameras, a Swallowwort control program, and a “Bio-blitz” inventory. They are looking for volunteers for a model forests volunteer program. They are proceeding with building a forest products facility on the site of an existing building. They would like an additional volunteer from KCAC for their advisory board meetings because Ed also represents the Cooperative Extension Master Gardener program and the Kent Historical Society. Anne offered to start attending as well.
- CAC Membership Appeal
 - Phil Tolmach has decided to stay on the KCAC.
 - Advertisement for new members for the KCAC has been published in local papers. A sign will be placed at Kent Recycling to recruit new members.

KCAC Projects

- Climate Smart Initiative

The DEC has not yet been notified formally of the passage of the resolution by the town. Discussed possible composition of the Climate Smart task force. Committee liaison model: invite representatives from other town committees to participate to facilitate coordination with other town committees and groups. We might generate a list of groups for the next meeting.

- Highlands trail project

Bill V. has been working with Gary Haughland of the NY/NJ Trail Conference. The proposed route for the Putnam cross county trail may change to avoid Mt. Nimham in order to avoid the area of arsenic contamination. The new route might go through Heustis Park. Chris Kehoe, maintenance superintendent of Town of Kent Parks has suggested looking at using Heustis Park on Farmer's Mills Road as a possible route. Route possibilities are being reviewed.

- Kent Natural Resources Inventory project

Following the November, 2019 KCAC meeting and presentation by Nate Nardi-Cyrus, Conservation and Land Use Specialist at the Hudson River Estuary Program, the KCAC has a clearer idea of what is involved in developing a formal natural resource inventory, as well as the value that such an inventory can have in planning. This type of inventory requires resources including graphical information systems (GIS) for mapping. Bill V. will talk with Hudson Highlands Trust about possibly obtaining funding for this. The Biodiversity Inventory project being spearheaded by Bill B. will be incorporated into the NRI project as expert input by our local biologist researcher.

Town Development Projects

- At the next Town Board meeting (Jan. 21, 2020) the Town Board will introduce a new local law for a mining moratorium
- Chris McKelvey, Section Chief of Mining, NYS DEC, says that the principals of Kent Country Square had an initial meeting with the NYS DEC, but, have not have yet not applied for a mining permit. Mr. McKelvey discussed that NYS DEC recommends that all towns adopt a mining ordinance, however, NYS DEC cannot provide any guidance in this area of local land use ordinances because each municipality in NYS has different objectives for land use priorities.
- Discussed possibility of developing a ridgeline protection ordinance, as recommended by the 2008 Kent Comprehensive Plan
- Patterson Crossing: The representatives have requested extension of their permits

Hikes and Programs

- Kent CAC hikes/events
 - New Year's Day hike went well – about 20 in attendance
 - Woodcock walk: Late March; Anne will ask Beth Herr if she will lead it.
 - Hawk Rock: Sat. May 30 11:00 AM
 - Mushroom walk at Clearpool – Sunday Sept. 19th – Time TBA- will be led by COMA members
 - Astronomy night, date and location TBD – reached out to Westchester Astronomers Club (BV). Proposed using Huestis park. Awaiting contact back
- Other events
 - Kent Beautification Committee has scheduled Kent Clean-up day for April 18, 2020 (rain date April 25, 2020), 9AM – 1PM

Social Media Outreach Report

- Dave Ehenbuske has not provided statistics re traffic on the website in some time. The Facebook page continues to be active.

Next Meeting

- The next KCAC meeting will be Feb 19, 2020, 7:00 PM at the Kent Town Hall