

Town of Kent Conservation Advisory Committee

Minutes
June 17, 2020

Attendees: Bill Volckmann, Chair, Bill Buck, Anne B. Campbell
Guests: Caleb Duncan, Travis Hunt, David Jenkins, Pamela Wadler

Meeting called to order 7:05 PM
Minutes of the May 2020 meeting were approved

Chair's Report

- NYS Association of Conservation Commissions (NYSACC)
 - <https://nysacc.org>
- Kent CAC must renew annual membership in this organization. This expense is covered by the Town (\$ 75.00)
- 2020 Conference on the Environment originally scheduled for Autumn 2020 is canceled
- Review NYS DEC Land Use 101 webinar series
 - <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5094.html#Training>
- Update on Kent Lakes Association
 - Last meeting held May 16, 2020 by video conference call
 - Each private lake association will be setting up water quality testing of their lake waters using a procedures and methodology worked out and tested in 2019
 - Next Lakes Association meeting scheduled for June 20, 2020 at 9AM

KCAC Projects

Grant Opportunities

- Introduction from Millennium Strategies (m-strat.com) grant writing team members David Jenkins and Caleb Duncan.

They have been hired by the Town to identify funding opportunities in multiple categories including sustainability and environmentalism. Notify the town of the opportunities, and write grant applications at the direction of the town. Staffers will research our ideas. To be proactive as possible, they need to know our funding priorities for now and the next year.

They can work with the KCAC on Climate Smart Communities grants. The Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) is expecting a new funding cycle despite huge budget deficit. REDC Mid-Hudson receives a lot of their applications from for-profit companies and non-profits

and wants them to have local growth. The funding cycle may be later this year and may be announced late, e.g., August. They can also help pursue Federal and Foundation-based grants, and have experience writing grants for the DEC rebate program.

Our three priorities were discussed:

1. For Kent Conservation Foundation, funding to maintain the Nimham Fire Tower. The DEC still has money allocated for painting the tower, but it has not been released. Representatives have told us to apply again for Parks and Trails grant program. It usually opens in July or August with an October deadline. Could do a debrief re our previous unsuccessful application. Bill agreed to forward it to them.
2. For Climate Smart Communities Program, funding to conduct a greenhouse gas inventory (about 20 k). Planning grants require a 50% match in kind. They suggested pursuing a Consolidated Funding application.
3. For KCAC, funding to complete a natural resources inventory. Bill B. suggested including the representatives from Millennium in the upcoming conference call with Hudsonia.

Caleb and David asked for minutes of previous KCAC meetings. Anne will email minutes to them.

Other ideas and projects for possible funding:

The town has been adding temporary trails at the Town Center and at Huestis Park, with a goal of making them permanent. Per David and Caleb, a competitive trail grant application must have continuity; the proposed trail should interconnect places of significance and using existing trails. For example, the Highlands Trail/North Putnam Greenway project, or a bicycling plan for the town. The latter could perhaps be funded by the People for Bikes Community grant program (awards up to 10k for facilities improvement, engineering design work, and construction work to build bike lanes or bike parks. The grant deadline is in July. This might be a source of funding for the pump track for mountain bikers being built at Ryan's field. David and Caleb will discuss this with the Recreation Director.

Their goal is to submit 1-2 grant applications per month for the town.

Climate Smart Communities (CSC)

- First meeting of the committee scheduled for June 30 7 PM via Webex. Chris Ruthven will attend

Kent Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) and Biodiversity Project

Bill B. and former KCAC Chair Beth Herr have been doing fieldwork each week. Bill B. will set up the meeting with Hudsonia re options for an NRI and associated costs.

Other CAC projects

- Highlands Trail / North Putnam Greenway trail project with NYNJ Trail Conference is still on hold

Development Projects in Town of Kent

- No updates; Planning Board Chair Phil Tolmach not present

Hikes and events

- Mushroom walk at Clearpool: Sunday, September 19, 2020 @ (time)
 - Clearpool needs confirmation well in advance but plans for a hike leader from COMA are uncertain. May be best to cancel or consider a different location.
- Astronomy night at Town Center: on hold

Social Media Outreach Report

Nimham Fire Tower Facebook page is quite active. KCAC facebook page has had limited postings but is still being viewed. Bill V. now has access to the Kent CAC webpage, so content can be sent to him for posting.

Kent Conservation Foundation Report

- Maintenance date (graffiti painting) to be scheduled

Meeting adjourned 8:30 PM. Next meeting Wednesday July 15, 2020 @ 7:00PM