

Town of Kent Conservation Advisory Committee
Public Meeting
Minutes

March 18, 2020 at 7 PM

NOTE: This public meeting was held by conference call due to the standing Emergency Order in NYS and Putnam County mandating all in-person meetings and gatherings greater than 10 persons be cancelled, postponed or otherwise held by video or conference call

Attendees: Bill Volckmann, chair, Bill Buck, Anne Balant Campbell, Phil Tolmach

1. The minutes of the meeting of February 17, 2020 were approved as amended

Chair's Report

- Wetland Conservation webinar was attended March 18, 2020
- Attended meeting at Hudsonia re grant opportunities etc. Hudson Highlands Trust obtained a grant from the Hudson Estuary fund and had someone on staff who did the project for Putnam Valley. That person has since left Hudsonia. Bill B. will email the director of Hudsonia to learn more about how they did their natural resources inventory (NRI). Highlands Trust is setting up a meeting of the chairs of local CAC's and CCE's in May (Kent CAC, Beacon CAC, Put Valley CCE, etc.)
- Kent Lakes Association did not meet in March. Next meeting date April 25, 2020.
- NYS Plastic Bag Ban – Went into effect March 01, 2020
- Bill V. to check on due dates for KCAC annual report and renewal of DEP stewardship agreement.

KCAC Projects

- Highlands Trail/North Putnam Greenway trail project with NYNJ Trail Conference
- Kent Natural Resources Inventory
 - Meeting with Putnam CACs scheduled for May (noted above)
 - Discussed possible sources of funding and support
 - Hudson Highlands Land Trust
 - Hudsonia
 - Other sources?
- Kent Biodiversity Inventory
 - Bill Buck visited the Oasis Sportsman's Club and gave a short presentation re wanting to inventory fish species in Kent, in part through "microfishing". No members had heard of microfishing. Several people expressed interest. Bill B. has been in touch with Tom Lake, fish biologist who has worked at Canopus, and has given him a list of lakes and ponds in Kent. They plan to select a fairly small pond and find out what people are catching. A herpetologist will participate as well. This is on hold for now.

- Beth Herr had agreed to help and to get training on the iNaturalist ap, which will be used for animals and to log locations of duplicates of plant species that are in the database in order to document their distribution in the town. Anne will email Beth to find out when she is returning to NY. Anne is also interested in helping Bill B. and Beth with the inventory.
 - Anne agreed to ask for information about macro lenses for Bill B.
 - Recruitment of additional community members could be done via a press release when the time comes. Bill will ask John Casper if he wants to help. Chris Ruthven has name of someone who is doing a fish inventory for the county. Bill B will follow up. Also, there's an undergraduate from the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry who had done a project on rabbit species. Bill will try to find her contact information.
 - KCAC needs to do research on how to present the biodiversity data that's obtained. Bill B. will develop an outline of plans and the anticipated amount of work, including estimates of the numbers of species we will need to find for each group.
- Climate Smart Initiative
 - Anne will register us with DEC.
 - "How Green is My Town" survey needs to be completed.
 - Maybe plan at next CAC meeting to look into grant opportunities.

Town Development Projects

- Upcoming public hearing re: Local Law Amendment to Chapter 32 – "Chickens" – March 31, 2020 @ 7:00PM – chicken ordinance.
- Mining land-use zoning and temporary soil removal moratorium. This six-month moratorium as passed at by the Town Board at the March 3 meeting. A new mining ordinance to be developed. Bill V will ask Chris and Maureen about ensuring that KCAC has a chance to comment on the new policy at Town Board meetings.

Hikes and Programs

- Woodcock walk: Saturday, April 4, 2020 @ 7:00PM – on hold
- Hawk Rock: Saturday, May 30, 2020 @ 11:00 AM on hold - Bill V to lead, Phil T maybe to join. Publicity will be on hold until distancing policies for this time period are announced.
- Mushroom walk at Clearpool: Sunday, September 19, 2020 @ (time)
 - Will be led by COMA members – Bill V to follow up on contacts
- Astronomy night: date and location TBD. Bill V. reached out to Westchester Astronomers Club and is waiting for response re possible locations. Town Center preferred site due to parking and accessibility.

- Kent Clean-up day – Coordinated by Kent Beautification Committee: April 18, 2020 (rain date April 25, 2020) @ 9:00AM – 1:00PM – on hold, will probably be canceled. Bill will talk to Maureen Perotti about this.

Social Media Outreach Report

- FB and other social media outlets. The facebook page continues to have moderate traffic.

KCF Report

- Fire Tower maintenance. Planned a clean up for March 24 at 9:30 AM, meeting at the parking lot.
- There has been an ongoing project since 2017 to removed trees around fire tower to protect it. The 2018 tornado caused some damage and DEC gave permission. Putnam County workers have finished the job. Most of the trees that were removed were 8-10 inches in diameter. Going forward, the brush needs to be cut down.
- Money has been allocated by DEC for tower painting. We are waiting for project manager to be assigned. Bill V. to follow up at some point.

Next meeting date – Wednesday April 15, 2020 @ 7:00PM

- Meeting to be held in-person at the Town of Kent Town Hall
- Alternate meeting method will be via web conference if the Emergency Order mandating avoiding meetings/groups greater than 10 persons remains in effect in NYS and Putnam County.