

Town of Kent Conservation Advisory Committee
Public Meeting
Minutes
May 27, 2020 7:00 PM

Attendees:

Members: Bill Volckmann, Bill Buck, Anne Balant Campbell

Guests: James Shearwood, Pamela Wadler

Minutes of the April, 2020 meeting we approved.

Chair's Report

- Bill attended the DEC Online Interactive Mappers webinar on Thursday, May 21, 2020, 10-11AM which introduced GIS based mapping tools and their use.
- He recommended an upcoming workshop on Best Practices for Local Environmental Reviews – June 17, 2020, part of the DEC Conservation and Land Use Webinar series (<https://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/120539.html>)
- Kent Lakes Association
 - The last meeting was held May 16, 2020 by video conference call. Progress has been made in developing a water testing program. Members have gone through training and have identified a reliable test kit. They are working on property access issues. They will meet again on June 20, 2020 at 9AM.
- Bill gave an overview of the meeting of Putnam County CAC/CCE/CSC groups hosted by Hudson Valley Land Trust on May 6, 2020

Climate Smart Communities (CSC)

- Discussed scheduling an organizing meeting for the Climate Smart Committee. Tentative date: June 30 7:00 PM via Webex.
- Pamela Wadler offered to write and distribute a press release advertising the meeting as well as the vacancies on the Climate Smart Committee and the KCAC. James Shearwood offered to give Pamela the contact information for the papers.
- Anne will clear the date with Chris Ruthven, put a notice on the KCAC Facebook page, and notify contacts in Sustainable Putnam.
- Anne will work with Bill B. to complete the “How Green is my Town” survey.
- Bill V will seek to obtain representatives from the Kent Lakes Association and the Kent Beautification Committee.

Discussed the possibility of kitchen waste composting facility at the Kent Recycling Center. Several members had ~~ask~~ asked about this. There is a company in CT that provide bins and collects them for a fee. This would require additional KRC volunteer staff time and will be reconsidered when concerns about covid19 abate.

Kent Natural Resources Inventory (NRI)

Bill B. will talk to Erik Kiviat at Hudsonia to get cost estimates for a “typical” NRI comparable to those done by other communities that will meet Kent’s needs.

Kent Biodiversity Inventory

Bill B. and former KCAC Chair Beth Herr have done two fieldwork sessions, with about 30 collections each day. Beth is documenting species of birds. Bill V. is waiting for a report from Nate Nardi-Cyrus, Conservation and Land Use Specialist at the Hudson River Estuary Program, of mapper tools which will include data from the herbarium dataset where Bill B. has previously uploaded findings.

Other CAC projects

- Highlands Trail / North Putnam Greenway trail project with NYNJ Trail Conference is on hold for now. The original plan for the trail may need to be modified to avoid the EPA Superfund site on Mt. Nimham.
- The status of the mining land-use zoning and temporary soil removal moratorium is unknown. Anne will check with Chris Ruthven.
- A new preserve of 42 acres acquired that abuts Wonder Lake State Park has been purchased by a partnership between the Westchester Land Trust and the Hudson Highlands Land Trust. It will serve as a wetland buffer for the park.

Hikes and Programs

The Town of Kent CAC encourages all residents to get out and explore our wonderful outdoors while being responsible and maintaining a safe, social distance from other hikers during this 2019-COVID issue. There are many hiking trails available in this area where people can hike independently and enjoy time outdoors.

Possible future programs:

- Mushroom walk at Clearpool: Sunday, September 19, 2020 @ (time)
 - Must confirm date/time at this point
 - Will be led by COMA members
- Astronomy night: date and location TBD – reached out to Westchester Astronomers Club – awaiting contact from the astronomers club to review possible locations – Town Center preferred site due to parking and accessibility
- Hike at Huestis Park. The Town Parks Department has restored trails there that had fallen into disuse and created some new trails. Bill V. will contact Ed Illiano (Kent Historical Society) about possible historic structures there.

Social Media Outreach Report

- The Facebook page continues to have moderate activity.

Kent Conservation Foundation (thekcf.org) Report

- Maintenance work is on hold due to COVID-19 social distancing requirements and liability concerns. A planned work party event scheduled for May had to be postponed temporarily.
- Jeff Wiegert at DEC said we should apply for the Parks and Trails grant this year. Funds that had been earmarked for painting the tower seem to be on hold. The deadline is December. This project might be undertaken by the town grant-writer.
- There may be panels in the DEC's warehouse for the roof for the fire tower cabin. Bill V. has received blueprints for fire towers from US Dept of AG. We may want to alter the windows to prevent them from swinging open. Bill V. is seeking a welder who can make this change.

Meeting Adjourned 8:30 PM

Next meeting Weds. June 17, 2020 @ 7:00PM. Format tbd: Kent Town Hall or via WebEx conference