

KENT CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Kent Town Hall
41 Kent Green Boulevard
Kent, Connecticut 06757

REGULAR MEETING

January 11, 2017

MINUTES

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
KENT TOWN CLERK
2017 FEB - 3 A 9 24
BY TOWN CLERK

Present: Commissioners Liddy Baker, Melissa Cherniske, Carol Franken, Wendy Murphy, Donna Spillers, advisor Jos Spelbos. Guest: Lynn Worthington (reporter). Absent: Rick Levy, Connie Manes.

Prior to the meeting the following items were distributed via email:

- A. Draft Agenda
- B. Additions to agenda by W. Murphy
- C. Draft Minutes of Regular Meeting November 9, 2016
- D. Draft 2017 KCC Activities Calendar
- E. Letter to Bruce Adams regarding visitor center Dec. 14, 2016
- F. Sustainable CT meeting notice
- G. CEQ Draft report Energy sprawl in Connecticut
- H. UConn NRCA correspondence

1. Call to order.
With a quorum present and in the absence of the chair, vicechair Carol called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
2. Accept/Amend Agenda.
The draft Agenda was amended to add under 11.I Election of officers, and under 12.E Report on CACIWC Conference. Upon a motion by Melissa seconded by Liddy the amended agenda was unanimously accepted.
3. Review, amend, approve minutes of Regular Meeting of November 9, 2016.
The Minutes were amended to reflect that the October Minutes had been amended. Upon a motion by Wendy seconded by Liddy, the amended Minutes were approved.
The meeting scheduled for December had been canceled.
4. Treasurer's Report and Budget.
Liddy noted that there were no new expenses. The majority of our expenses will come in the Spring, but we hope to get some mapping done this Winter.
The KCC budget for 2017-2018 was discussed. We won't have expenses for recycle signs, recycling container tops and for trail maps, that we had this budget year, but we will have significant mapping expenses for the update to our Natural and Cultural Resource Inventory, as discussed under item 7. The commission decided to keep the budget the same, but adjust some budget lines. Liddy will prepare a new budget as discussed to present to the commission and the Board of Selectmen in February.

These are Draft Minutes and are not considered final until approved. Corrections may be made by the Commission at a subsequent meeting. Please refer to subsequent meeting minutes for possible changes or corrections.

5. Public Comment
None.
6. Annual activities calendar
Commissioners discussed the calendar, which had been updated by Connie, and accepted it after adding the Annual Report to December.
7. NCRI update
Jos reported that he and Connie had a meeting at the Housatonic Valley Association on December 6 with Tim Abbott and their new GIS specialist Zach, to discuss updates to the maps in our 2009 resource inventory Natural & Cultural Riches of Kent, CT. It turned out that HVA doesn't have the metadata for the 2009 maps anymore because of staff changes and because their software has changed significantly since, and we will have to redo most maps completely. Some more recent data may still be accessible. Since we can start with a blank slate Connie proposed to make some more significant changes to the maps, and make them relate better to the text of the report. A number of changes were discussed, and Connie and Jos will try to list the new maps and the data layers needed. After that Zach will give a cost estimate. Tim stated that the HVA will discount our costs.
The commissioners asked that we get a cost estimate from HVA a.s.a.p., so we can budget for it, and it was proposed to try to spread the cost over this and next budget years. Publication of the revised report is now scheduled for the Fall.
8. Trees
 - A. Fall tree planting
Melissa and Liddy reported that Kent Greenhouse graciously donated and planted several sizeable pine and cherry trees around Town Hall in November, aided by a \$1,000 contribution from the Kuga Fund.
 - B. Specimen tree advocacy
Wendy proposed providing better protection for specimen trees during site plan review and site development. She will work with Jos to draft some protective language for incorporation into the new Zoning Regulations.
9. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Campaign.
 - A. Streetside Containers.
The town received a \$2700 Recycling Rewards grant from the state DEEP for the promotion of recycling. KCC chair Connie Manes wrote a letter to first selectman Bruce Adams asking to apply this grant towards the purchase of recycling containers for the village streets.
 - B. WRAP – School Grant Program. No new developments
 - C. Other – Sustainable CT. Several public forums are planned around the state during January.
10. Water concerns – The movie Tapped
Wendy and Donna discussed the movie Tapped about the commercialization of drinking water, and the planned Bloomfield, CT water bottling plant which will profit from the use of public water.
11. Old Business.
 - A. Hatch Pond Watershed Implementation Committee.
Carol will contact Mary-Ann Haverstock to check what is happening, if anything.
 - B. Roxbury Conservation Commission Well Testing Program. Tabled
 - C. Open Space Plan. Tabled
 - D. HVA Culverts Project. Tabled

These are Draft Minutes and are not considered final until approved. Corrections may be made by the Commission at a subsequent meeting. Please refer to subsequent meeting minutes for possible changes or corrections.

- E. Turtle Crossing Signs. The signs will go up in the spring.
 - F. Kent Hikes Challenge. Tabled
 - G. P&Z Zoning Regulations.
The expectation is that the revised regulations will go to a public hearing within a couple of months.
 - H. NHCOG POCD Update.
Jos reported on the meeting that he and Connie attended on November 30. That meeting was focused on land conservation and outdoor recreation in Northwest Connecticut, and what strategies to incorporate into the regional Plan of Conservation and Development. Jos also noted that the State is updating its Conservation and Development Policies Plan, and has presented a draft which is very similar to the existing plan. The State is asking for input from the towns on the draft plan and on the Locational Guide Map, which was created several years ago with input from our commission.
 - I. Election of officers
Connie has expressed that she would like to step down as chair of the Conservation Commission. However sofar none of the other commissioners is interested in assuming the chairmanship. There was some discussion about sharing or rotating the position, but no agreement was reached.
12. New Business.
- A. Pervious paving request for Visitor Center parking
In the letter to the first selectman mentioned under 9.A. the commission also requested that the Town consider pervious paving for use in the new Visitor Center parking lot. Liddy will follow up on this.
 - B. Solar farms
There was a short discussion about the pros and cons of large solar installations on farmland and in natural areas, and whether we should regulate them. This in light of a proposed 80 acre "solar farm" in New Milford, and the Energy Sprawl report by the Council on Environmental Quality.
 - C. UConn Natural Resources Conservation Academy
The NRCA program is looking to partner with local groups to recruit students and mentors for environmental stewardship programs and internships. Connie is in contact with them.
 - D. Save the date.
The CT Land Conservation Council Annual Conference will take place March 18 in Middletown.
 - E. CACIWC Conference.
Jos attended the November 12 conference of the Connecticut Association of Conservation and Inland Wetland Commissions and reported on some of the issues discussed there:
 - 1. We will soon have to address the spread of the invasive pest the emerald ash borer in Kent, and consider treating valuable ash trees with pesticides or risk losing them.
 - 2. Our floodplain maps need updating; towns have to request to FEMA to have this done; we should coordinate this for the whole Housatonic valley with the HVA and Housatonic River Commission.
 - 3. A workshop about Conservation and cluster subdivisions was very relevant given that the P&ZC in Kent is reviewing its Conservation subdivision regulations.
13. Correspondence
See list of items distributed by email above.
14. Adjourn.
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jos Spelbos, January 18, 2017

These are Draft Minutes and are not considered final until approved. Corrections may be made by the Commission at a subsequent meeting. Please refer to subsequent meeting minutes for possible changes or corrections.