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KENT CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Kent Town Hall
41 Kent Green Boulevard
Kent, Connecticut 06757

REGULAR MEETING
July 8, 2015 – 7:00 PM

MINUTES

Present: Commissioners Liddy Baker, Melissa Cherniske, Carol Franken, Rick Levy, Connie Manes, Donna Sommers; Advisors Laurie Doss, Jos Spelbos; guests Mike Jastremski, Lindsey Kerr; reporter Lynn Worthington.
Absent: Wendy Murphy.

1. Call to order.
There being a quorum present, Chairperson Connie Manes called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm. Manes welcomed guests Lindsey Kerr – a member of the community, and Mike Jastremski – Water Protection Director at the Housatonic Valley Association. The Commission invited Mr. Jastremski to the meeting to discuss its Macroinvertebrate Madness project and ways that this work might extend to other area water protection efforts. Members of the Commission briefly introduced themselves, as did the guests.
2. Accept/Amend Agenda.
Carol Franken made a motion to accept the agenda. Melissa Cherniske seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.
3. Review, amend, approve minutes of Regular Meeting June 10, 2015.
Rick Levy made a motion to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting held June 10, 2015. Franken seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.
4. Treasurer's Report.
Treasurer Liddy Baker provided an oral report and submitted a written report. Following June's Special Meeting, Wendy Murphy and John Baker established a budget and plan for printing the Trails Booklet; we have retained a printer to print 100 copies of the booklet when it is ready, at a cost of \$615.00. Baker reported that \$61.18 remains unspent from the Commission's 2014-2015 budget. The current Kuga Fund balance is \$7,355.85.
5. Fall Water Quality Monitoring – Guest Mike Jastremski, HVA.
Mr. Jastremski displayed a map showing the Town of Kent's watercourses and using data from the State of Connecticut's Macro Multimetric Model. This data incorporates actual macroinvertebrate monitoring data as well as projected results based on land and water characteristics. It would most help the state for our Commission to monitor those streams in areas coded dark green where we haven't already monitored – to corroborate the state's projections. Jastremski indicated that he would add points to the map showing state and KCC monitoring sites to make it easier to identify places needing monitoring. It may also be worthwhile, if conditions are better this year, to revisit streams where we obtained inconclusive or poor results, or where we found 4 "most wanted" and think there is a good chance we could find 5. Good candidates for revisiting include: North Kent Brook, Choggam Brook, and Thayer Brook. Potential new monitoring places include: Stewart Hollow Brook, Stony Brook, and Yuza Mini Brook.

The Commission's next steps prior to monitoring are to: a) determine target streams for this fall, b) identify parcel owners where there is no public access to the streams, c) assess parking and other logistic issues prior to approaching landowners for permission to monitor. We will aim to conduct 4-6 assessments, in addition to conducting volunteer training at Macedonia Brook. Laurie Doss reported that Marvelwood students are in the process of photographing macroinvertebrate species for use in the Department of Energy & Environmental Protection's macroinvertebrate guides. Jastremski would like to join the Commission this fall to participate in the Stroud Center Leaf Pack effort.

Jastremski reported that HVA is using the state's baseline data to help monitor ongoing water quality when a known event may cause an impact. The state's RBV model, while good at identifying excellent water quality, is not very useful in identifying places where water quality may be impaired or how problems might be mitigated. New York State's Water Assessments by Volunteer Evaluators (WAVE) program flags streams with significant numbers of "least wanted" macroinvertebrate species and assesses potential remediation strategies.

Jastremski discussed HVA's Culverts Project, which looks to evaluate nodes of intersection between roadways and streams. Fragmentation caused by continued development creates increased risk to fish and wildlife. Beginning in 2007, HVA began assessing road stream crossings to determine where there are barriers to fish and wildlife pathways. HVA's program uses an assessment protocol which generates a score for assessed culverts and make recommendations for remediation work. Use of this protocol has been expanded from New England throughout the Northeast Region.

HVA's project builds on the protocol's model to further tease out resiliency to flood events and prioritize culverts and crossings for repairs and replacement. HVA has concentrated on the Macedonia area initially, but eventually will prepare a town-wide assessment with recommendations. This is also in process for the Town of Sharon and a pilot report will be completed and presented to that town.

Volunteers for the culverts program must complete a four-hour online training with a quiz at the end, as well as a half-day field training, and then shadow a trained person for 20 assessments. The project is funded through the General Electric reparations fund. The Commissioners discussed whether funding might be available to pay additional staff. HVA has spoken briefly with the Town of Kent and neighboring towns; town-collected data on culverts varies greatly.

The Commission discussed whether we might sponsor a public demonstration of the data collection process to generate support and awareness prior to the release of HVA's town-wide results and recommendations. We would invite Marvelwood and South Kent Schools, Town officials, neighbors of problem crossings, and the general public. The Commission also offered assistance to HVA in making connections with private property owners, where permission is needed to conduct the assessment. Jastremski reported that the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) may have funding available for private property owners to make repairs to culverts.

Commissioners discussed generally with Jastremski repair work in progress on Route 7 north including the Carter Road "bridge/culvert", about water quality testing for salinity following winter road salting, and whether there will be revisions to the 100 year flood plain maps.

Following this presentation Jastremski left the meeting. Given the late hour, Commissioners determined to hold a Special Meeting on August 19th at 7 pm.

6. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Campaign.

A. Grant Update. Manes submitted an application to the DEEP for its Recycling Rewards Grant. If selected, the Town of Kent will receive \$2,600 to use in conjunction with recycling improvements.

Manes will continue to draft a proposal for DEEP Waste Reduction Initiatives funding, incorporating comments from Commissioners and feedback from Town personnel. Manes will circulate a draft for further comments prior to submission. Lynn Worthington mentioned that Kent resident Karen Bussolini has an interest in organics processing and may be helpful in our efforts.

The Commissioners unpacked the recently-delivered event recycling bins and discussed their use during the Sidewalk Festival. Manes will create a schedule for volunteering to monitor and exchange full bags throughout the festival.

7. Open Space Plan. Tabled.
8. Old Business.
 - A. Trail Brochure/Guide. Tabled.
 - B. Town of Kent Annual Report. Tabled.
 - C. Hatch Pond Watershed Implementation Committee. Tabled.
 - D. Roxbury Conservation Commission Well Testing Program. Tabled.
 - E. P&Z Regs Review. Tabled.
 - F. Washington Fracking Waste Ban Ordinance. Manes compared Washington's ordinance with Kent's Draft Zoning Regulations. The Regulations are similar and as extensive as the Ordinance and no further action is recommended by the Commission.
 - G. Elizabeth Street and Maple Street trees. Tabled.
9. New Business.
 - A. State Legislative Session Recap. Tabled.
10. Correspondence. None.
11. Adjourn. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Manes
August 7, 2015

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
KENT TOWN CLERK

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BY

Valerie Tracy
TOWN CLERK