

Verona Environmental Commission

600 Bloomfield Avenue
Verona, New Jersey 07044
www.veronaec.org

March 7, 2014

Dear Verona Mayor Bob Manley and Council Members,

Please see below the 2013 Verona Environmental Commission Annual Accomplishment Report:

20 Year Anniversary

The Verona Environmental Commission (VEC) celebrated its 20-year anniversary by planting a White Oak (*Quercus alba L.*), a native shade tree, and placing a plaque by the Verona Community Center's playground on October 2013. The VEC was established by Ordinance No. 9-92 on August 3, 1992.

Go Idle Free Verona

The VEC conducted its fifth annual poster contest on October 9, 2013. The anti-idling contest is aimed at supporting Walk to School Day and raising awareness for cleaner air.

The contest was open to students from all public elementary schools in Verona and H. B. Whitehorne Middle School. The VEC exhibited the posters at all participating schools and at the Verona Public Library. The commission received over 150 submissions and created a new video with these artwork. The video was posted in the commission's Web site, aired on Verona TV and presented at the contest award ceremony in Town Hall on November 4, 2013. Each winner received \$50 and a certificate signed by Verona Mayor Bob Manley.

Sustainable Jersey Presentation

The commission put together a presentation and on November 18, 2013 introducing the program Sustainable Jersey to the Town Council. The commission formally requested to register Verona with the program and establish a Green Team. The council's feedback was very positive.

Verona Fair in the Square

The commission participated in the fair on December 7, 2013. The VEC table was busy all day long with residents of all ages. Visitors learned about the certification program Sustainable Jersey. Over 20 residents signed up to volunteer in the Green Team. Children took the Kid's Green Challenge, everybody got a Sustainable Jersey pin and signed the 2014 Verona Pledge promising to recycle more, save water, eat more veggies, use reusable bags, walk more and drive less.

Proclamation

On December 16, 2013 the former VEC Chair Gerard Shimonaski was honored with a proclamation by the Verona Town Council recognizing his 10 years of service and 6 years as the chairman on the VEC.

Landscape Care

The VEC worked with the township and schools to switch from synthetic pesticides to organic landscaping care, especially on the fields where children play.

During the summer Verona schools started testing horticultural vinegar to control poison ivy at the playgrounds.

The Township announced that they will use vinegar at Verona Pool as well, instead of glyphosate-based chemical pesticides.

Earth Day Cleanup

To celebrate Earth Day, the VEC organized a cleanup at two locations in town on April 14, 2013.

The morning group met at F. N. Brown School and the afternoon group met at Brookdale Ave. School.

Volunteers helped keep our Peckman River clean by removing trash and debris from the surrounding areas.

The commission and the township provided gloves, garbage bags and recycling containers, and removed the collected materials.

The Junior Woman's Club of Verona and Verona High School juniors also participated in the clean up.

Other 2013 VEC projects included:

Gathering support to adopt a Steep Slope Ordinance.

Following up on school Green Cleaning Policy and styrofoam-free cafeterias.

Reviewing recycling contracts and making suggestions for the 2014 township recycling brochure.

Evaluating proposed development in the Township and submitting comments to the Planning Board and Board of Adjustment related to the preservation of existing natural resources.

For more information please visit the commission's Web site at www.veronaec.org

Regards,

Gloria Machnowski
Chairperson
Verona Environmental Commission