



Verona Environmental Commission

600 Bloomfield Avenue
Verona, New Jersey 07044

Minutes: February 15, 2011 - Verona Community Center

Members attending: Gerard Shimonaski, Gloria Machnowski, Tom Freeman, Virginia Citrano, Anthony Saltalamacchia, Tara Bratek, and Marjorie Williams

AGENDA ITEMS

- I. The January minutes were approved without any corrections.

- II. Jerry opened up with discussion about Earth Day celebration plans. Saturday April 30 was selected for celebrating Earth Day. Jerry mentioned that green recycling bins would be given out to residents as well as the remaining blue recycling containers. Gloria suggested a Disney Educational DVD could be purchased and played for K-12 students. The DVD features songs about conservation, ecology, recycling and global climate change. The DVD costs \$29.99 and can be purchased from:
<http://www.deptore.com/ProductDetails.asp?ProductCode=77D65VL00...>
Permission will be needed from either the schools and/or township to use the DVD. The Verona Community Center was suggested for the location. Jerry asked Tony if the middle school art students could make posters to remind/educate/encourage residents that plastic bags can be recycled instead of throwing them in the garbage. Verona doesn't recycle plastic bags, however grocery stores such as Shoprite will accept them to be recycled. The artwork on the posters could depict the harm plastic bags have when they enter the environment. Tony was asked for his involvement with this idea. Jerry mentioned that Jim Helb mentioned that our recycling center will recycle #1-#7 plastics but will only pick-up curbside #1 & #2 plastics.

- III. Discussion about the cost of garbage disposal for the town opened up and ideas on how to curb the future expenses and encourage garbage reduction per household were discussed. Tom Freeman brought up the idea of the town allotting/issuing households 104 specific plastic garbage bags per year and if households exceed their allotment they would need to purchase bags from the town. The goal is to encourage residents to be smarter about garbage production and to reduce taxpayer costs. Jerry wants to draft a proposal on this theme.

- IV. Ideas and suggestions for long-term projects were discussed. Such ideas included:
 - The creation of a Guide for Water Usage (suggested by Jerry)
 - The creation of an Energy Efficiency Guide (suggested by Jerry)
 - Community Environmental Education with regard to the fertilizer bill proposed by Governor Christie (suggested by Marjorie)

- Writing articles for our newspapers under a column titled “Lawn & Garden Tips”. Marjorie offered to start preparing such articles.
 - Getting recycling containers placed on the playing fields.
 - Or possibly instituting a take-in/take-out garbage requirement at the playing fields.
- V. The Recycling presentations given at the Laning and Forest elementary schools in January to 3rd & 4th graders were reviewed. The overall feeling is that the presentations given so far were well received and that the students were engaged and asked strong questions about recycling issues. It was noted that the students were excited to each be given a recycling item as they walked into the auditorium and by doing this engaged the students from the start. Recycling presentations for 3rd and 4th graders at FN Browne and Brookdale elementary schools will be held in March.