



Verona Environmental Commission

600 Bloomfield Avenue
Verona, New Jersey 07044

Minutes: May 17, 2011 - Verona Community Center

Members in attendance: Gerard Shimonaski, Gloria Machnowski, James Loudon, Tom Freeman, , Virginia Citrano , Anthony Saltalamacchia, Tara Bratek, and Marjorie Williams

AGENDA ITEMS

- I. The March minutes were approved without any corrections.
- II. Councilman Kevin Ryan attended our meeting at the request of our Chairman, Jerry Shimonaski. Mr. Ryan stated he volunteered to be our Liaison. The VEC did not have a Liaison for the last two years.
- III. There was discussion about where the funding for the recycling containers came from. Jerry stated it came from the tonnage of recycled materials reported to the State.
- IV. Jerry had attended a Shade Tree Commission meeting at the request of the Township Manager to see if our Commissions could work on a joint project. Gloria already added the Shade Tree Commission information to the VEC's Web site under "Township Trees". Talks started with their Liaison, Councilman Sniatkowski, regarding developing a program to make trees available for residents.
- V. There was discussion about how there is lack of funding for pruning the township trees. There is funding but the pruning program is much disorganized. Trees are planted in narrow spaces, and there is no variety. Jerry suggested that Shade Tree Commission needs to look at Township trees in a whole different way and where the trees are planted. Marjorie suggested the town should start using more appropriate trees, for example instead of using October Glory, other types of trees should be planted for variety. There is a negative effect of having a monoculture-disease would eradicate the population. Gloria mentioned a part time or consultant arborist was promised for the town years ago and suggested the need for one and to push for diversity. Tony suggested a long-term game plan to accomplish small goals. Kevin Ryan said there is money in the budget to replace trees. Marjorie recommended trees that grow down and not out should be planted. Kevin inquired/suggested a Memorial Planting Tree Program. Gloria suggested there should be one person from the Shade Tree Commission supervising roadwork so trees are not damaged. Verona Code requires someone from the Shade Tree to supervise. It was mentioned that trees at the Civic Center were being distressed.
- VI. Jerry mentioned the post office will no longer accept the Recycling Booklet for mailing. Jerry suggested that we have an opportunity to improve the Recycling Booklet by incorporating it into the town's website. It was mentioned that the town's webmaster was already overextended but Jerry felt the suggested changes were easy to do.

- VII. Peckman River Cleanup: Jerry mentioned that the high school's Environmental Club was not available this year for the cleanup. Fortunately, the Boy Scouts will be involved in this year's cleanup. Jerry made arrangements with the Assistant Scout Master, Bruce Williams. He will attend a meeting to explain safety procedures and precautions that need to be taken by the Boy Scouts. The Peckman River Cleanup is scheduled for June 25th. Gloria will be onsite to take pictures. All participants will meet behind FN Browne. Jerry will suggest the Boy Scouts wear sneakers and gloves when working in the Peckman. Trash will be placed in garbage bags and Public Works will be notified about their location after the cleanup is completed. Last year, approx. 1500 pounds of trash was removed.
- VIII. The Essex County Environmental Commission extended an invitation to all Municipal Commissions to attend a Roundtable at the Essex County Environmental Center. Each member Commission was given an opportunity to present their accomplishments for the year. Marjorie represented the VEC. Marjorie shared some highlights of the meeting. She noted that Montclair was awarded a grant to set up two public charging stations. Marjorie pointed out that many of the commissions had common interests/concerns/goals on how to achieve increased website usage, push for more recycling, and encourage everyone in their respective towns to at least recycle something. Marjorie expressed that there was motivation amongst other commissions/communities to network and exchange ideas.
- IX. There was some discussion about cardboard recycling and how the VEC has pushed for single stream recycling. Kevin Ryan suggested that instead of having two bulk items pickup per month, reduce it to once/month and add once/month cardboard pickup.
- X. Idling: our current goal is to teach parents to teach the children about the negative effects of idling in order to reduce it.
- XI. The new Recycling Presentations will be given every two years and it is posted on the VEC's Web site..