



Verona Environmental Commission

600 Bloomfield Avenue
Verona, New Jersey 07044

VEC Public Meeting: January 17, 7:30 to 9:30 pm, 2012 at the Verona Community Center. Members in attendance: Gerard Shimonaski, Gloria Machnowski, Anthony Saltalamacchia and Kerry Bass.

MINUTES

I. Not enough VEC members were present to approve our December 20, 2011 minutes. Two members were at the re-scheduled Council meeting.

II. 25 bins were distributed by Kerry and Jerry at the January 14th event in the Recycling Center. All residents that signed up for a bin were contacted by phone or e-mail by Kerry, Jerry and Gloria with details of the event, also posted on the VEC's site and VTV. About 10 residents didn't show up to pick up their free bins. Several others e-mailed the commission to sign up for bins. The upcoming distribution event will be on Earth Day in April.

III. Tony and Jerry are working with HBW teachers and Principal to plan a VEC sponsored 5th and/or 8th grade field trip to the Sewage plant /Well Houses/Recycling Center in September 2012. The VEC will hold the February 21st Public Meeting at the Sewage plant located on Commerce Court to meet the plant Manager Tim Newton and get a better understanding of the facility. Tony and Kerry will look at the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards for Science 2009 to prepare this presentation. There are some bus related issues that needs to be worked out as well.

IV. Jerry informed that Mr. Steve Neale sent an e-mail to the VEC inviting us to broadcast information from the commission. Gloria contacted him and supplied two announcements: an invitation to the general public to assist to our January meeting and a remainder for the recycling bin distribution day. Gloria is editing a shorter version of the video "Idle Free Verona" for VTV and putting together a "Tip of the Month" similar to our current Web site section. We'll start with "Have an Eco-friendly Valentine's Day" (written by Gloria and edited by Virginia). Gloria suggested to also send an article to the paper. Kerry supplied a magazine article and suggested to submit several tips to broadcast alternatively.

V. Discussion on how to inform residents about how well Verona is recycling. In 2008 some 2,500 tons of recyclables were removed from the waste stream saving taxpayers \$193,000 on disposal costs. We need the 2011 figures to evaluate our recycling status. Jerry got very detailed tonnage numbers and he'll "digest" those for the commission. Gloria asked for clarification about the electronics at the Recycling Center since in the past residents were allowed to pick those up saving money to the town on

disposal cost. Jerry explained that a fight between two residents over an item prompted Mike and Chuck to stop all residents from picking electronics. Jerry will talk to Mr. Martin to discuss the possibility of allowing pick ups again and request a "No Idling" sign to be installed at the Recycling Center. Kerry suggested that a sign detailing the accepted electronics is needed as well. We talked again about the possibility of reducing the amount of bulk curb pick ups to reduce trucks' traffic, save money and/or replace it with a cardboard pick up. Jerry also mentioned that he is looking into other paper/cardboard recycling companies that could collaborate more with the schools' recycling program and replace Ragonese, the current vendor.

VI. The Environmental Club from Laning School SCA has 60 Verona cloth bags left and Linette Ellis offered Gloria those at cost price, \$2 each. Jerry said that we can purchase them to give them away at Earth Day. Jerry will send the bags' information to Kerry to propose other schools' SCAs to sell canvas bags and promote the use of reusable instead of disposable bags while doing a fundraiser.

VII. Interviews to Treasured Tree owners: Jerry mentioned few trees with interesting stories behind to enrich the Treasure Tree program. Gloria offered to video tape those interviews, edit and upload the videos to the VEC Web site through YouTube and broadcast it in VTV. She asked if any other VEC member is interested to help Jerry conducting the interview.

VIII. Gloria suggested to work with Mr. Ryan to discuss the possibility of applying for an ANJEC grant. ANJEC e-mailed the commission the following: "ANJEC recently mailed an application brochure for the 2012 Sustainable Land Use Planning Grant Program to your commission at the town hall address. The full application and supporting materials are also available on our website at www.anjec.org/SustainableLandUseGrants.htm Completed applications are due at ANJEC Friday, March 30, 2012.

IX. Members also discussed the fate of HBW's rain garden project. Jerry will contact Mr. Kurt Landsberger to ask him to sponsor it. Members suggested to name the garden after Mr. Landsberger. About \$5,000 are needed for installation and maintenance. Tony explained how complicated is to obtain funding when lesson plans are needed from all school teachers for the proposal. Kerry suggested to link it to an engineering high school program and she'll reach out to her contacts.

X. Jerry informed the members that he was invited and he will assist to the Jan. 24th Landmark Preservation informal meeting to brainstorm about the possibility of relocating the Freight Shed located at Depot Street.