



Verona Environmental Commission

600 Bloomfield Avenue
Verona, New Jersey 07044

VEC Public Meeting at the Verona Community Center - February 20, 2013.

Members present: Gerard Shimonaski, Gloria Machnowski, James Loudon, Tom Freeman, Virginia Citrano, Anthony Saltalamacchia and Council Liaison Kevin Ryan. Started at 7:30 pm - Adjourned at 9:00 pm

MINUTES

I. **Minutes** for Oct. 16, Nov. 20 and Dec. 18, 2012 were approved by members.

II. **Township playing fields:** Jerry and Virginia explained that during the last council meeting the council confirmed that no pesticides will be used with the exception of Verona Pool and the Town Square. Mr. Martin indicated that one of two vendors will be selected to organically maintain Veteran's Field with the help of DPW. At least two DPW employees will attend a state sponsored course which includes organic maintenance and use an aeration machine that the township owns. Regarding the school fields Mr. Martin said that those are under BOE jurisdiction. However, the Township is doing the maintenance of these fields. Kevin said that the VHS upper field will not be treated due to the sink hole and there is uncertainty regarding HBW field due to track needing repair work.

III. **Single Stream Recycling:** Jerry was willing to be part of the team visiting vendors that have single stream facilities but the town manager declined. Tom Freeman suggested that a certain number of Verona garbage bags be given to residents and if they need more they will have to purchase them. Gloria suggested replacing a bulk day with corrugated cardboard collection and maybe share garbage pick up services with other town like Roseland. Gloria also asked what happened with the Recycling Enhancement Act money that Verona receives every year (about \$10,000). Kevin said that he will ask Mr. Martin again to inform us on how that money is spent.

Jerry talked about the benefits of single stream and suggests to have one weekly pick up for garbage and one weekly pick up for single stream recyclables. One company that provides this service is Atlantic Coast Fibers <http://www.atlanticcoastfibers.com> – Chatham currently does single stream with Waste management <https://www.wm.com/index.jsp>

Mr. Martin wants to use the Occupational Center and feels that even with single stream the Recycling Center should remain open as a community gathering location. Tony suggested looking at the cost of the different options. Kevin suggests to replace one garbage collection day with a recycling collection and

pointed out that in 2012 recycling was budgeted \$325,900 and \$312,000 was spent (about \$13,000 surplus). Revenue was budgeted at \$50,000 and it was \$45,000 and it is now estimated at \$30,000. There is a discrepancy regarding cardboard recycling revenue since the townships calculates \$20 per ton while it is \$80 per ton.

IV. Developments: Tom explained that ordinances are like a master plan but for specific issues, Kevin added that ordinances should conform as close as possible with the master plan but they can differ too. Regarding 176 Bloomfield Ave., Jerry showed the blueprints and explained that there were two properties, purchased by the developer for \$200,000 total. One is classified for mixed use while the other is residential. Jerry felt the build out of this property was too aggressive.

The developer is seeking a variance to allow him to build 70% residential and 30% retail (14 apartments over retail stores) instead of 50%-50% as well as going over the allowed retaining wall height. Tom has his office next to this location and expressed his concern regarding the blasting near current houses. The developer recently mentioned that he is willing to save 7 trees in the back of the property. Jim pointed out that the plans don't show the real size of the trees so you can't determine if close blasting will not damage the root system and become a hazard. There is another developer who is willing to build four single family houses. Approximately 2 million dollars will be spent to get the property to ground level before building can begin by developer DMH2.

The Landmark Preservation commission has requested permission from the Verona Council to place a historic shed on the property across from VHS. However, Mr. Martin was not sure who was the owner of this parcel of land. There was some discussion regarding the automatic re-appointment of Mr. Helb as a consulting town engineer with a \$130,000 salary while Noreen Jones, also an engineer would earn \$70,000. Verona also uses other engineering companies for other projects.

Regarding the planned new fields, Tom suggested converting the lower field at VHS to artificial turf instead of using Hill Top. Jerry pointed out that jurisdictional matters could impede it. When the Hilltop apartments are completed and fully occupied the township will receive from \$900,000 to one million dollars. Kevin would like to know if some of this money could be used for tax relief. Mr. Martin mentioned that Verona will receive about \$400,000 per year from the developer and a 4 million dollar bond will be used to complete the second phase. Fields will be paid with pilot moneys.