



Verona Environmental Commission

600 Bloomfield Avenue
Verona, New Jersey 07044

VEC Public Meeting at the Verona Community Center – December 18th, 2013
Started at 7:30 pm - Adjourned at 9:00 pm

Members present: Gerard Shimonaski, Gloria Machnowski, Virginia Citrano, Anthony Saltalamacchia, Jessica Pearson and Council Liaison Kevin Ryan.

Guest: Lucas Freschi, President of the Verona High School Environmental Club and Greenhouse Manager (and his brother). **Public:** Dennis Handel

Minutes

I. Members approved November 21st, 2013 minutes.

II. Update on the proposed Steep Slope ordinance: in previous meetings the VEC suggested to look into this ordinance since it is mentioned on the Verona 2009 Master Plan and several neighboring towns have one. Councilman Ryan presented the draft to the Council. During the last Council Meeting Jerry asked about its status. The Town Manager explained that he needs to meet with several town officials to discuss it since it is problematic. Gloria mentioned that the draft is consistent with NJ State legislation and the NJDEP steep slope model ordinance. The NJDEP notes that municipalities may include more restrictions or restrictions for lesser slopes at their discretion, as long as the minimum requirements in their model are met. Jerry will present this draft to the Planning Board during the Dec. 19th Planning Board Meeting.

III. The commission participated in Verona Fair in the Square on December 7th. The VEC table was busy all day long with residents of all ages. Tony, Gloria, Jess, Lucas, Virginia and Larry informed residents about Sustainable Jersey, a free certification program for municipalities that want to go green and save money in the process. Verona recently joined the program. About 30 residents signed up to volunteer in the Green Team, a group that will coordinate Verona's sustainability efforts. Children took the Kid's Green Challenge and 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.

IV. The VEC presented **Sustainable Jersey** to the Council on Nov. 18. The Council approved a resolution to join the program on December 2, 2013. And appointed Mr. Martin to register the township, who mentioned that Noreen Jones is part of this initiative as well. Gloria gave Jess the Green Team volunteer sign up

sheets to type the contact information and the commission will send it to the Town Manager. Kevin suggested inviting township heads of different departments to participate in the green team. Virginia suggested and all members agreed that the next step is helping the township to create the Green Team and register in the program.

V. The commission requested the township a copy of the **new 2014 Solid Waste and Recycling brochure** over a month ago to review it and make recommendations. The commission didn't receive a copy yet. Kevin mentioned that the Town Manager will give him a copy as soon as he has one available.

VI. The commission also requested information **about guidelines of all the recycling vendors that Verona uses**, but got very limited current information after one of the members filled an OPRA request.

VII. At the Verona Recycling Center:

Waste Industries: hauls electronics, metal and commingled. **Atlantic Coast Fibers:** hauls corrugated cardboard and mixed paper. Do we have any information about monthly tonnage, cost and revenue?
Jerry reminded commissioners that Waste Industries is not certified as **electronic recycler** and we should use a certified vendor.

Gloria called Atlantic Coast Fibers to get the Guidelines from them and found out that they accept Paperboard /Chipboard such as Cereal Boxes, Cracker Boxes, Paper Towel cores, etc. in the Mixed Paper Dumpster at the Recycling Center.

This information should be provided at the Recycling Center and to the media. Lucas will work on laminated signage with examples of chipboard to inform the public. Gloria proposed to also make a video explaining Verona's solid waste and recycling procedures. Jerry will write an article.

Commingled: Waste Industries accepts plastic containers type #1 and #2. Do they accept type #5 as well? If they don't we should use a company that accepts them, such as Atlantic Coast Fibers.

VIII. Curbside collection: Waste Industries picks-up garbage twice a week; White Goods-Metal-Bulk Items every other week and vegetative waste every Wednesday (when in season).

First Occupational Center of NJ picks-up junk-mail/magazines, newspaper and commingled every other week. Do they accept plastic type #5? Could they include chipboard in their paper collection? Do we have any information about monthly tonnage, cost and revenue?

Gloria and Kevin will meet the town manager and engineer and found out.

The commission recommends:

- Stop picking up corrugated cardboard with regular garbage (corrugated cardboard is one of Essex County mandatory recycling items).
- Reduce the White Goods-Metal-Bulk Items collection to one per month.
- Add a corrugated cardboard recycling pick up once a month.

VIII. Lucas brought up the issue of several trees removed at VHS during a BOE meeting. He was told to get involved on the remediation plan (planting new trees) by contacting Paul McDevitt. He did but did not receive feedback from Paul yet. Jerry and Gloria mentioned that Paul is doing a great job and they hope he will soon get in touch with Lucas. Jerry volunteered to attend the VHS Environmental Club Meeting on January. It has over 20 members.

VII. 2014 ANJEC membership renewal: Gloria filled up the paperwork with the new roster information and members approved to renew the membership. Jerry will submit the paperwork to pay for it.

VIII. Updates to www.veronaec.org had been made to reflect information about Fair in the Square and the Sustainable Jersey VEC presentation to the Council.

IX. VEC plans and priorities for 2014: commissioners agreed to focus on Sustainable Jersey, the Steep Slope Ordinance, Municipal Organic Care of Fields and education programs about recycling and sustainability in general.