



Verona Environmental Commission

600 Bloomfield Avenue
Verona, New Jersey 07044

VEC Public Meeting: May 21 - 2014, 7:30 pm at the ANNEX, 2nd floor, Verona Community Center. Adjourned at 9:30 pm

Members present: Gerard Shimonaski, Gloria Machnowski, Anthony Saltalamacchia, Jessica Pearson, and Julia Capuano.. **Guests:** Verona residents Chris Stark and Martin Golan.

Minutes

I. Members approved April 9, 2014 minutes.

II. Jerry is retiring from the VEC on June. Members agreed to the following: Tony Saltalamacchia will be the new Vice Chair and Jessica Pearson will be the new Treasurer.

III. The VEC produced the 6 min. video “Verona Recycling 101” with the VHS Environmental Club. Gloria and Virginia filmed it on May 17, the video features Mike Inglesino, Julia Capuano, Sam Bass and Lucas Freschi. The video is 6 minutes long and it was presented at the meeting. Members suggested to send it to Steve Neale to be included on veronanj.org and VTV, and include it on veronaec.org and the schools' website, facebook and twitter.

IV. ANJEC Open Space Grant: the VEC tree planting event is on May 31, 10 to 12 noon behind F. N. Brown School.

- ⤴ The commission is inviting volunteers through posters placed around town, press announcements, and social media.
- ⤴ All F.N. Brown parents were reached by email, the flyer is included on the School District Friday Folder as well.
- ⤴ Gloria met Chuck Molinaro and Paul Mc. Devitt at the site, Chuck will water the trees on weekdays with the township's truck.
- ⤴ Paul will supply mulch, water pump and generator to water on the 31 from the river. Virginia contacted ANJEC to confirm that it is legal.
- ⤴ Jim will mark the spots to plant the 8 trees and 6 ferns that he selected at Barton Nurseries, Jess will help. Gloria submitted the bill to the township.
- ⤴ Chuck will pick up the trees on the 28 and deliver to the site before the 31.
- ⤴ Resident Martin Golan will help organizing the groups during the event.
- ⤴ The VEC also needs to work on trail maintenance, control of invasive plants and access to the river to install the pump.

V. Report on Bloomfield Ave. round table meeting: Jerry attended this meeting, You can take the survey here: <http://togethernorthjersey.com/?grid-portfolio=bloomfield-avenue-complete-corridor-plan>

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Bloomfield Ave. Complete Corridor Plan is a collaborative effort to pursue the creation of design standards and recommendations for this nearly 4 mile long, multi-modal transportation corridor in Essex County through Bloomfield, Glen Ridge, Montclair and Verona.

OBJECTIVES

This project proposes to:

- ▲ Assess the area to identify transportation, pedestrian and bike access improvements that can improve the capacity of existing roads and the overall mobility of residents, stakeholders and patrons
- ▲ Recommend roadway improvements that will create a healthy, enjoyable and safe environment using Complete Street guidelines
- ▲ To develop a transit-friendly corridor that attracts economic investment on a regional scale

PROJECT TEAM

NJ TRANSIT

NJ Health Impact Collaborative

Looney Ricks Kiss

VHB

Nishuane Group

Essex County

North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority

Montclair Center Business Improvement District

Bloomfield Center Alliance

HOME Corp

New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition

Partners for Health Foundation

Bike Walk Montclair

Montclair State University

Bloomfield College

Julia pointed out that VHS students drive to school because it is uphill, while HBW and the elementary schools are closer to homes. Members agreed on the need to alleviate traffic congestion on Bloomfield Ave. Also, **Jerry Fried, former Montclair Mayor**, EC member and staff member at the Voorhees Transportation Center (Rutgers University) contacted the VEC and confirmed that he **will do a presentation during the upcoming VEC meeting about Complete Streets** and the benefits of adopting a policy. More information at www.njbikeped.org

VI. Verona Green Team will meet again on May 22 at 7 pm at the VCC. Gloria reported that the team is working towards certification and these are the current members:

- ▲ Steven Neale (Township of Verona)
- ▲ Gloria Machnowski (Environmental Commission)
- ▲ Frank Sapienza (Council Member)
- ▲ Kevin Ryan (Council Member)
- ▲ Noreen Jones (Township of Verona, Engineer's Office)
- ▲ Christine Liaukus (Verona Resident, Architect)
- ▲ Bob Dickison (Shade Tree Commission)

- ^ Dave Fink (Verona Resident, Renewable Power, Inc.)
- ^ Bob Prout (Shade Tree Commission)
- ^ Chuck Molinaro (Township of Verona, Public Works)

VII. Green Building Policy-Construction Checklist: Jerry said that the list can't be submitted to the Planning Board with comments. Gloria mentioned that this is a suggested list and she gave it to Steve Neale from the Green Team to include it as a resource for residents in the township's website. Jess will do research about Green Code and Larry told the commission during the last meeting that he'll see how it can be utilized.

VIII. VEC table at the FN Brown ECO Fair on May 22: Gloria during school hours, and Tony during the Open House will man the table. The main theme of the VEC table is Sustainability. The commission created new games to learn why reusable is better than disposable, how to recycle corrugated vs. chipboard, etc. The VEC will also invite students to take the Sustainable Verona Pledge.

VIII. Social Media: Gloria maintains the VEC website and mentioned that Jess is doing a superb job feeding the VEC's facebook page, and Virginia the twitter account. Members were reminded to visit the following:

www.veronaec.org

www.facebook.com/veronaenvironmental

<https://twitter.com/GreenVeronaNJ>

IX. VHS Green House: Julia and Lucas would like to meet with Mr. McDevitt to discuss plans. Gloria will ask Paul to attend one of the Environmental Club meetings to do so. Julia also gathered information about tree suggestions for VHS and she will invite Env. Club members to attend the tree planting event.

IX. Public Participation: Martin Golan was part of the successful Montclair initiative to limit the use of leaf blowers "to minimize the adverse impact of such equipment, restore a peaceful quiet to suburbia as well as combat pollution by restricting its use within the Township." Golan leaves in Verona now and commissioners welcomed his input on this matter.