



Verona Environmental Commission

600 Bloomfield Avenue
Verona, New Jersey 07044

VEC Public Meeting: November 19 at 7:30 pm – VCC Annex building. Members present: Gloria Machnowski, Larry Lonergan, Virginia Citrano, Jessica Pearson, Chris Stark, Martin Golan and Council Liaison Kevin Ryan. **Guest:** Gerard Shimonaski.

MINUTES

I. Members approved October 8, 2014 minutes after rephrasing some paragraphs. Regarding VHS, there are 2 different matters, as suggested by Virginia, one issue is the delayed plans to replant trees in front of the school and the other is the construction plan.

II. VHS Environmental Club report: postponed to the next meeting.

III. HBW Environmental Club report (Tony emailed this, since he has parent/teacher conferences at HBW). Environmental Club Activity: Continued work on posters to increase awareness and participation. Discussion of a "how to recycle video" for lunch periods. Tony thinks the VEC should support effort to acquire 3 bin set up for school cafeterias: Waste, commingled, and paper. Composting down the line. Water-bottle fountains are also a worthy cause. Tony likes the idea to add recycling information for Institutions and Business as well as promoting recycling, mainly of corrugated and propose a pick up day. And he likes the idea to create a nature trail at 42 Grove as well as using the \$300 left for the Peckman project on the construction of a trail bridge to the right side.

IV. Kevin's report: Steep Slope Ordinance and Anti Idling Resolution update.

http://www.nj.gov/dep/wqmp/docs/steep_slope_model_ordinance20080624.pdf

<http://www.stopthesoot.org/Model%20Idling%20Resolution%206-08.pdf>

Kevin keeps advocating for both to be adopted by the Council members. On the Anti Idling Resolution, Kevin explained that Sapienza has a problem with the idea of enforcement. Kevin mentioned that the police will use their best judgment to determine when a ticket is appropriate, as they do with all other matters. All members agreed on the following: this is state law, the police is already empowered to write tickets, passing the resolution doesn't add to their current workload but it would give Verona more points in the Sustainable NJ System while improving our air quality and reducing vehicular pollution. Members asked Kevin to bring this up in the upcoming council meeting.

Regarding the Steep Slope Ordinance, members proposed to ask the Council to put in the agenda a short presentation by the VEC to explain why Verona needs this resolution. Tony supports a steep slope presentation to the council, if there are still some that don't get it. Kevin mentioned that it is in our Master Plan, passed in 2009 and most of the surrounding towns have that ordinance. Larry mentioned that it is strange that we don't have one and that

he proposed it during the last planning board meeting. He added that there are several different ideas about what a steep slope is, and that Verona should study the VEC proposal and recommendations. Members added that Verona should do what is right for the town as a whole. Jerry has been asking the town to pass this ordinance for years.

V. Larry's report: Green Construction.

http://www.sustainablejersey.com/?type=1336777436&tx_sjcert_action%5BsjAction%5D%5B__identity%5D=31

<http://www.iccsafe.org/CS/IGCC/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://www.energycodes.gov/sites/default/files/documents/GoingBeyondCode.pdf>

Larry supports the Green Building Policy/Resolution included in the Sustainable Jersey Program. He explained that it is a collection of better design, construction, and operating practices that have the potential to reduce or eliminate the negative impacts of development on the environment and on human health. Green building programs commonly address energy efficiency and carbon emissions reduction, water conservation, waste reduction, healthy and sustainably produced materials, indoor air quality, occupant productivity and health, and other components of sustainable development. Larry mentioned that this initiative will take a lot of work and he will need help. Members suggested to contact Steve Neale and Christine from the Green Team to work with them on this matter. Larry will contact them, he is very enthusiastic about this project. He also brought up this initiative during the last planning board meeting.

VI. Gloria's report: Every other year the Junior Woman's Club of Verona funds a community improvement project, their budget is \$2,000. This year they contacted the VEC and there is a possibility to work together creating a nature trail in the wooded municipal lot located at 42 Grove Ave. The VEC recommended Verona Mayor and Town Manager to preserve this open space. Kevin did a follow up at the Nov. 17 Council meeting. Gloria called Mr. Martin the following day and he agreed with the proposed plans to install one or two park benches, a trail sign and a trash receptacle by the front. Preserve the existing vegetation, remove invasive plants and plant a wild-native flower garden in the front and a few native trees. Steve Neale provided the vendor information, Verona uses Wabash Valley: <http://www.wabashvalley.com>. They have some benches made from recycled materials for \$815. A 32 gallon garbage can for \$419 and lid flat top for \$75. The town manager will contact a landscaper to draw the layout in January. We could host a Spring event with volunteers to plant the trees, mark and clean up the trail and pull out invasive plants.

VII. Jim's report, postponed to the next meeting: ANJEC Congress and Peckman Woods Restoration Project update.

<http://www.anjec.org/pdfs/OpenSpaceGoodInvestment2004.pdf>

<http://www.veronaec.org/peckman-trail>

VIII. Fair in the Square is Dec. 6, 12 to 5 pm (11 am set up). Gloria and Tony will man the table first, then Jessica and Martin and after Virginia and Chris. Plans include composting presentations and activities for kids (snowflake ornaments made with plastic bottles and pine cone bird feeders). Gloria will create the displays and collect pine cones. Jessica recommended to have information about common backyard birds. Joe Martin approved the purchase of a composter and bird seeds for this. Jerry recommended contacting Rutgers about composting. Tony confirmed by email that he'll do the composting demos at the fair from set up until 2 pm and he'll supply plastic bottles prepared by HBW environmental club

students for the crafts.

IX-Commercial & Institutional Recycling: According to Sustainable Jersey our ordinance should specifically mention the recycling guidelines for commercial and institutional establishments. Outreach materials should also target commercial institutions (annual letter to business managers informing tonnage reporting requirements). And provide a tonnage report. Noreen Dapuzzo is listed as Verona's Recycling Coordinator. Regarding residential recycling, SJ noted: "Even though Verona doesn't have an accepted materials flyer that is a visual indication of what can be recycled, your video is highly innovative and substitutes for this submission requirement." The VEC will contact Steve Neale to recommend producing a recycling visual list and to discuss the other points. Kevin will also bring this up during the Council meeting.

X- Martin Golan mentioned that he usually attends the Bike-Walk Montclair meetings and he is planning to attend the Pedestrian Safety Committee meetings and bring back their news acting as a liaison for the VEC.