



Verona Environmental Commission

600 Bloomfield Avenue
Verona, New Jersey 07044
www.veronaec.org

Verona Environmental Commission Meeting, July 15, began at 7:30 P.M., 2nd floor of the Annex Building in the Verona Community Center, 880 Bloomfield Avenue, Verona N.J.

Attendees: Gloria Machnowski (Chairwoman), Virginia Citrano, Jessica Pearson (Treasurer), Chris Stark, Martin Golan and Council Liaison Kevin Ryan. Guests: Jerry Shimonaski and Jack McEvoy.

MINUTES:

1. Call to Order and Roll Call. Chairperson reads notice of Open Public Meetings law. The agenda and notice of this meeting has been posted 48 hours in advance on the bulletin board designated for this purpose, located in the lobby of the Municipal Building, 600 Bloomfield Avenue, Verona. The agenda and notice of this meeting has been electronically transmitted to two newspapers circulating within the Township .
2. Members approved June 10, 2015 minutes.
- 3- Visual list of accepted materials for recycling in Verona: Chris Stark is working with Verona resident Keith Konzelmann, a professional designer who volunteered to create an 8 ½ by 11 inches flyer, and also a pdf version that could be included in local websites.
- 4- HBW and VHS Environmental Clubs. To reduce waste the commission plans to reach out to schools and SCA's to promote reusable water bottles instead of disposable. Recycling in sports fields: the commission proposes cleanups by sport teams during practice and adding recycling bins, especially next to water vending machines.
5. VEC members: Mrs. Pearson was reappointed. Mr. Lonergan (Planing Board Liaison) informed VEC Chair that he doesn't have time to be a member anymore. He didn't attend VEC meetings for the last 7 consecutive months. Members requested the Chair to obtain his formal resignation. Martin Golan is not available to join the planning board. Machnowski and Ryan will approach possible candidates. Planning Board Chair, Mr. Brown, resigned and Mr. Roman will be the Council representative.
6. 42 Grove Ave. Nature Preserve and Historic Park. The June 20 Cleanup was a total success, thank you volunteers and DPW! The commission will do more field work instead of meeting on August. Jessica will coordinate with DPW to excavate the driveway to be able to install the walkway and plantings. Gloria is taking care of ordering the signage through the township. Verona resident Tom Bastanza suggested to post hours of operation and include Verona Police drive by inspections of the site into patrol routines. No Trespassing signs were

installed by the creek, at the end of the short trail, to protect wildlife. A broken pipe was observed nearby, Virginia will check with DPW about it.

7. Tree preservation: Verona already has a private property tree ordinance, but it only protects trees located in "undeveloped lots", which is about 2% of Verona. The current definition of protected tree in our Chapter 163-3 is: trees with a diameter in excess of four (4) inches, measured one (1) foot above the ground. VEC members want to explore the possibility of protecting trees in developed lots as well (excluding highly invasive species). Almost all towns in Essex County have tree ordinances that protect trees located on developed private property. There are some consistencies among them. Members want to reach out to ANJEC and environmental commission's in other towns to find out who enforces their ordinance, what is the cost, how much compliance there is, etc. In Caldwell, for example, a committee with a certified tree expert designated by the Mayor and Council administrates the enforcement. In Montclair, they have a Township Forester in charge and tree removal contractors must be registered in the town and obtain tree removal permits in advance. Members of the commission will research this matter and prepare a draft to be presented at the VEC's September meeting.

8. Steep Slope Ordinance update. The VEC submitted a draft to the Council and recommended to adopt it in 2013. It will empower local authorities to protect Verona residents and their properties from improper construction, building and development on steep slope areas. Disturbance of steep slopes should be restricted or prevented based on the impact of disturbing steep slopes on water quality and quantity, and the environmental integrity of landscapes. Many of our neighbors have similar Steep Slope legislation. Kevin Ryan informed members that the council recently passed a resolution formally requesting the Planning Board to review this ordinance. Members will also contact Jim Loudon to check on his availability to do a presentation during a Planning Board meeting.

9. Public participation: Verona resident Jack McEvoy attended the meeting to talk about the proposed walkway for 42 Grove Park. He offered to donate his services to help DPW with the installation.

10. Adjournment – The next meeting will take place on September 16.