

Members Present (Quorum Established at Four or More Members)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jessica Pearson (Chair/Planning Board Liaison)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michael Auteri	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sean DiBartolo (Vice Chair/Plan Review)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fuad Dahan	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Martin Golan	<input type="checkbox"/> Anthony Castillo (Alternate I)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sarah Yauch O'Farrell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brooke Berardo (Alternate II)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kari Baureis (Sustainable Verona Liaison)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cynthia Holland (Gov. Body Liaison)	
	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
1.	Call to Order by Jess: a) Open Public Meetings Act Statement. b) Roll Call performed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None.
2.	Public Comment Period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No members of the public commented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None.
3.	Approval of September 8, 2021, Regular Meeting Minutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MOTION to Approve: Kari; Second: Fuad. APPROVAL: All Members Present AYE. Abstentions: None. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sean will email approved minutes to Township Clerk Kiernan and Steve Neale.
4.	Updates:	
	a) Peckman River Damage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Township is in the process of scheduling a meeting with the NJDEP officials to discuss both clearing operations on the river as well as financial options for funding needed modifications; this preliminary meeting is set for 10/19/21. Discussion followed on partnering with other Towns to discuss working together to discuss flooding, runoff, and stormwater issues with Cedar Grove as well as with other surrounding towns like Caldwell, North Caldwell and West Orange. Sean shared the Army Corps of Engineers mapping of our watersheds to show how Verona is bound by waterways at our east and west peaks. When they flood, the water ends up downstream at the Verona Lake and Peckman River. Montclair State University had attempted some drone flights along the river to capture shoreline images. However, the footage was not so great. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updates at next meeting.
	b) Scouting Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sean sent a map of the Peckman Trail to Mike DeCarlo and Matt Cavallo for review of the property where our Eagle Scout Candidate will be planning an extension of the boardwalk. They both approved of the preliminary plans for the potential construction. Mike attended the Fairy House construction meeting at the library where 25 children participated. The high attendance rate signaled great interest by the community and extra houses were subsequently added to the trail. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updates as they become available. Sean is in contact with the Eagle Scout candidate and will continue to keep up posted on progress.

	<p>c) Sustainable Verona (Kari)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sustainable Verona met on 9/22/21 but cancelled their October meeting. ○ They are discussing a composting proposal and working with an Eagle Scout candidate who is designing a three-bin composting system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates at each meeting.
	<p>d) Neonicotinoid Pesticides Webinar (Sarah)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This ANJEC sponsored webinar took place on 9/27/21. ○ These pesticides are harmful to our have cancer causing agents, can cause neurological problems and learning disabilities. ○ Their use has collapsed 51% of bee populations and insects, which have reduced bird populations. ○ We have experienced reduced crop sizes due to loss of pollinators and persistence of compounds in our soil and water. ○ We can send a letter in favor to a ban to our legislators. The five Neonics currently approved in the U.S. are Acetamiprid, Dinotefuran, Clothianidin, Thiamethoxam, and Imidacloprid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinar available on YouTube.
	<p>e) Verona Water Usage (Fuad)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fuad has been charting Verona’s water usage data collected over the past couple of years, focusing mainly on residential usage. ○ This update included up through 2nd quarter usage for 2021. ○ Last year saw a notable increase, throughout the year, likely due to COVID lockdown policies, but each year, 3rd quarter (Summer) sees an increase of use. ○ Fuad notes that the trend (except for anomaly of 2020) shows a slow, gradual decrease in usage and he will continue to investigate the numbers to show usage per household and person and will compare to the national average. ○ Fuad will find pricing per gallon of water to show the cost of our usage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fuad will update us in November. • Mike will help Fuad with adding info to the website and Brooke will draft a text narrative on how to conserve/save on water usage.
	<p>f) MS4 Permit Webinar (Jess)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jess attended the MS4 Permit Webinar on 9/21/21. ○ The MS4 Permit (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Permit) is required for all municipalities who do not have a combined storm and sanitary sewer system and who let stormwater into NJ waterways. The reason for it is to regulate pollutants that are discharged into the waterways. ○ The webinar showcased DEP expert Stephen Boyer who discussed some new rules will be issued in the near future including adding additional educational requirements for engineers and land use board members. ○ Mr. Boyer discussed the requirements for all municipalities to review and update their SPPP (Stormwater Pollution Protection Plan) on a yearly basis (based upon the introduction of new problems that may present themselves. ○ They require GIS mapping of waterway outfalls and offer a free 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinar available on YouTube.

	application program to achieve these.	
6.	Ordinance Updates	
	<p>a) Anti-Idle Resolution Recommendation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ On the recommendation of the Commission, Jessica drafted a letter from the VEC to the Council recommending that they pass the NJ State Model resolution against car idling. ○ The letter lists the detriments of no action vs the benefits of the prohibition. ○ The Commission was enthusiastic to see this through adding that the schools install highly visible signage and that Principals distribute communications to the parents to educate them on this matter. ○ MOTION to approve Letter of Recommendation for Anti-Idling Resolution: Mike; Second: Martin. ○ APPROVAL: All Members Present AYE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jessica will send the letter to the Council and Manager upon approval. ● Follow up when new information becomes available.
	<p>b) Mini Cell Towers: (Tabled)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Town Council discussed this in New Business at their 5/3/21 council meeting and are in the process of drafting an ordinance with an expert. ○ Questions regarding restrictions on installations in residential neighborhoods have been asked, but no answers are available yet. ○ No further progress has been discussed. ○ The last draft ordinance may be found here: Mini Cell Draft Ordinance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Updates as they become available.
	<p>c) Land Use Ordinance: (Tabled)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Manager Cavallo and Zoning Administrator Mike DeCarlo are in the process of drafting a new Land Use Ordinance. ○ No further updates are available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Ordinance is a work in progress. ● Updates as they become available.
	<p>d) Invasive Species Ordinance: (Tabled)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Matt Cavallo sent Jessica a request to find other invasive plant species ordinances in the state to seek a model for Verona. ○ Jessica will revisit this with the Mr. Cavallo in coming weeks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Updates as they become available.
7.	Plan Review	
	<p>a) 24 Valhalla Way</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Applicants propose to build a 2-story addition which require variances to exceed front and side yard setbacks as well as to exceed total allowable improved lot coverage. ○ The VEC PRC recommended that stormwater mitigation, using Green Infrastructure occur onsite to offset the additional 3.4% of impervious coverage above the allowable 40%. ○ MOTION to approve VEC PRC Memo 24 Valhalla Way: Sean Second: Jess; Abstain: Martin ○ APPROVAL: All other Members Present AYE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● VEC PRC memo was emailed to the appropriate Board Secretary prior to this meeting.

7.	New Business	
	<p>a) Cleanup Schedule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Verona Park Conservancy is holding a cleanup on Saturday 10/16/21 from 9 to 11 a.m. Meet near the Boathouse for supplies. ○ Sustainable Verona is conducting a cleanup on the West Essex Trail on Sunday, 10/17/21, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Meet at VHS parking lot. ○ Peckman Trail Cleanup at FN Brown: Sunday, 10/24/21, 9:30 to 11 a.m. All Commissioners and volunteers are welcomed to help with debris and trash cleanup. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Updates as they become available. ● Jess will send information to Mike to form a flyer for social media.
	<p>b) Impacts of Variance approval on Stormwater runoff/flooding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A study was conducted on the impacts of variance approvals by the Newton Creek Watershed Association. Note that Newton Creek is not an overly developed area like Verona and other Essex County communities; the impact on our area is likely more severe. ○ The data showed that variance approvals allowed for an average of 8 percent increase in impervious coverage beyond the zoning allowances on a 6,000 ft² property. In Verona, the average single-family property is more like 11,000 ft² or just under ¼ acre. ○ An 8% increase on a 6,000 ft² lot equals 480 ft² of new impervious surface, which equals 288 gallons of extra runoff. ○ Each plan that the VEC PRC reviews where additional impervious surface is added that exceeds the zoning regulation or the 400 ft² trigger to our Stormwater Ordinance for minor developments recommends that stormwater mitigation is added to those sites. To date, we have not seen this occur in practice. ○ Additionally, all proposals that seek to increase impervious coverage are cross-referenced with the FEMA and other flood mapping tools to assess factors such as riparian zone encroachment, flood zones, and risk assessment for the reviewing board's consideration. ○ Education is needed for our Board members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Updates as they become available. ● Sean will reach out to Mike DeCarlo to see if Verona tracks impervious coverage variances in a spreadsheet that can be shared with the VEC.
	<p>c) Spotted Lanternfly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jess has been corresponding with the Shade Tree Commission and the Hilltop Conservancy about a rapid increase in Lanternfly populations in Verona. ○ The Tree of Heaven, which is a non-native species, is one of the Lanternfly's favorite trees and Verona has some of these on publicly owned property; near the VCC fields and near the Cameco Property. Swarms of the insect were noted on these trees. ○ This discussion is ongoing, but it was suggested that the trees be removed, and if room was ample enough, replaced with a hearty native species. The insects will eventually kill the trees which could eventuate into a hazard. Brooke added that these tree roots will continue to grow and sprout new trees if not 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Updates as they become available.

	<p>properly treated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It was also discussed whether to ask private homeowners to consider removing this species from their properties. 	
	<p>d) Future Project Interests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Municipal composting is merely being pushed back for the time being due to extraordinary flooding expenses. Public education and support for backyard composting and community participation will continue. The town may add a community option to a service currently only available to individual households that will make the cost of composting service less expensive with Java's Compost. ○ Fuad's water usage charting. Ongoing data can be reverted into text to educate the public about their water use, and ways to conserve. ○ Fostering relationships with the area's scouting organizations in an ongoing effort. ○ Raingarden at the VCC is still delayed awaiting funding. ○ Fundraising options are still being explored. Mr. Cavallo mentioned that even though the VEC has a set aside account with funds, that it is not best practices to install funds in that account since we are a township arm. Best practice is to collect those funds as general municipal revenue. He is still investigating how, if at all, this may be managed. ○ Verona Pool Recycling will be revisited by Kari before pool opens again. ○ Treasured Tree: Sean added a new section on this to our website. Interactive mapping and credentials for tree nomination are being reviewed. ○ Engagement with the Highschool Environmental Club and or Media club or classes for creation of media to be used for educating the public on Verona's issues and policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Updates as they become available. ● Sarah will email Mr. Cavallo about composting. ● Jess and Mike will draft an email to Matt to ask further fundraising questions. ● Jess and Sarah will take pictures of the existing Treasured Trees for our website. ● Jess will draft an email to the VHS Environmental Club contact to see if they have reconvened their activities. Also will ask about other media classes or club teachers to reach out to. ● Brooke and Jess will work with High School outreach once we in touch with the appropriate people.
8.	<p>Adjournment: 9:18 p.m. Next Meeting Wednesday, November 10, 2021, at 7 p.m.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Via Internet Conference.