



Verona Environmental Commission

600 Bloomfield Avenue
Verona, New Jersey 07044

www.veronaec.org

December 16, 2024

Dear Mayor Tamburro, Verona Township Council Members, Town Manager D'Arco, and Deputy Manager O'Sullivan,

2024 Verona Environmental Commission Annual Report

2024 Roster: The VEC has seven members plus two alternates:

1. Jessica Pearson (Chairperson, Planning Board Liaison, Plan Review Committee, SV Liaison)
2. Sean DiBartolo (Vice-Chair and Plan Review Committee)
3. Sarah Yauch O'Farrell (Social Media)
4. Kelly Peña
5. Fuad Dahan
6. Walter Steinmann (Plan Review Committee)
7. Adam Bulger
8. Philip Beaulac (Alternate 1)
9. Vacant (Alternate 2)

All members are Verona residents and serve without compensation. Mayor Tamburro is currently serving as our liaison through July 2025. Members that served but stepped down from the Commission this year are Michael Auteri and Erdal Turnacioglu.

The following outlines our initiatives, ongoing programs as well as a compilation of policy recommendations we have made.

1) Cleanups and Events 2024: The VEC and its members remain committed to keeping Verona's open space, parks, and waterways free from debris and garbage. Barring weather related cancellations, the VEC ordinarily holds or participates in three annual cleanup or other sorts of events.

- A) March 3, 2024: Hilltop Conservancy Invasive Brush Clearing: Members of the VEC attended this Hilltop Conservancy to cut back invasive growth and relocate the debris forming natural decay piles. Decay piles help to feed hundreds of forest organisms and create nutrients for the soils to support the growth of other young trees.
- B) March 23, 2023: VEC members helped with the Sports Equipment Swap event at the Verona Community Center (VCC). The swap asked residents to donate gently used sports equipment and uniforms and raised over \$500 for the newly formed Friends of Verona Parks 501(c)(3). The VEC and the families that participated in the event are driven by our need to reuse valuable equipment, uniforms, shoes, etc. rather than

disposing of these items. Leftover items were donated to a number of different organizations for distribution and reuse, such as 'Hoodies for homeless,' the Montclair Show Swap, and Angels on the Ground.

- C) April 20, 2024: The VEC's Annual Earth Day Celebration, Tree Giveaway and Cleanup Event took place Verona's Grove Park and Historic Nature Preserve. The VEC secured 300 tree seedlings for distribution to any Essex County residents from the New Jersey Tree Recovery Campaign/ NJ Forest Service Nursery. The species included Mockernuts, Yellowwoods, Red Oaks, Redbuds, Kousa Dogwoods, and White Pines. Residents from multiple surrounding towns came to receive trees. Three Boy Scouts from Verona Troop 2 and multiple residents contributed by helping Commissioners to clean up the woods, define trail with fallen tree trunks and plant some extra trees that remained after the event. A report was sent to a State forester, which included pictures of the event and our public outreach leading up to it.
- D) June 1, 2024: VEC's Annual Peckman River / Trail Cleanup: At this event, the VEC achieved restoration of the wooden sign kiosk at the trailhead. Members applied a fresh coat of stain, and are working towards installing new mapping, infographics and historic references. Finally, we will replace the plexiglass and add a new or perhaps a recycled lock to the kiosk.

At the cleanup, volunteers helped retrieve commingled recycling materials, plastic bags, wrappers, bulk garbage, and the like. We note again, the continued erosion of the Peckman banks and the loss of portions of the trails to waterlogged conditions. The southwest portion of the trail continues to be saturated, with some areas under water, and there was a noticeable new growth of skunk cabbage, a known native plant that thrives in marsh areas. Also notable was the spread of invasive Japanese knotweed.

Finally, the bad news; Ayden Hanlon's Eagle Scout Project bridge was vandalized. Both railings had been broken off and were not found in the woods. The VEC has reported this occurrence to both Ayden Hanlon and the Verona Police Department.

- E) October 5, 2024: Sustainable Verona's EV Fair: The EV Fair took place at the Verona Community Pool parking lot and was a massive success. Kerry Bass, the Chairperson for Sustainable Verona, and Jessica Pearson, the VEC liaison to SV, spent a great deal of time contacting different car dealerships and personal car owners to participate in the event. Cars represented included the Ford Mustang Mach-E and Lightning, Tesla models and Cyber Truck, Lucid, the Nissan Ariya, Hyundai Hybrid, the Subaru Solterra, the Audi e-Tron BMW's i5, VW's ID4, Kia's EV6 and EV9, Acura's ZDX models, Rivian, Hummer, and more.

The EV Fair also included a local, licensed electrician who discussed installing home charging stations, food trucks, a deejay and provided tables for Sustainable Verona, the VEC, the Shade Tree Commission and more. The VEC focused upon Verona's Tree Ordinance and showcased battery powered lawn care equipment.

- F) October 9, 2024: Walk and Roll to School Day: The VEC sent the Council, the Schools, and the VPD information regarding scheduling and safety precautions prior to the event. The event was a success, with a reported minimum of 500 Verona students walking to school on a sunny, warm October morning. Members reportedly attended both Forest Avenue's and FN Brown's event.

- G) November 16, 2024: Park Place-Peckman Cleanup: The VEC and the Junior Commissioners partnered to clean up the woods that run behind the HBW school field and that line the Peckman River. The event was extremely successful and well attended by VHS students (about 30 students), as well as Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts. The area was littered with a great deal of plastic bags, and bottles, as well as remnants from metal fencing and signage. In addition to collecting trash from the wooded areas, two individuals equipped with waterproof waders entered the river to drag trash from our waterway.
- H) The VEC continued to issue Service Certificates for all young volunteers as proof of their service. The certificates are emailed upon request to volunteers at cleanup events.

2) Policy Recommendations 2024: The VEC recommended that the Town Council pass ordinances or resolutions or take actions on the following:

- A) The VEC began working with the Township Administration on an updated Stormwater Management Ordinance in October of 2023. After a number of virtual meetings with Deputy Manager O’Sullivan and our engineers from Boswell, the final draft was introduced to the Verona Town Council at their February 5, 2024 meeting. The preexisting ordinance, passed in 2021 was enhanced to reduce the property size and area of disturbance in the Township’s determination of a “major development” as well as included provisions for minor developments. The new version added the new state requirements for current and future rainfall totals, revised calculation requirements and added reporting and registration requirements for major development stormwater best management practices.

The Ordinance, as introduced, was proposed as a new Article XXV of the Verona Zoning Code Chapter 150 and was sent to the Verona Planning Board for a Consistency Determination with the Verona Master Plan. Based upon the Board’s findings of no inconsistency with the Verona Master Plan, the Ordinance was sent back to the Verona Town Council for second reading and successful adoption at their March 11, 2024 meeting. The Ordinance was slightly revised in October 2024, adding a section that had been inadvertently omitted: “Solids and Floatables”.

A number of other related documents and forms are required to accompany this updated ordinance including major and minor stormwater application forms, yearly registration forms for major developments and maintenance forms for both major and minor developments. The fee ordinance also underwent updates related to Stormwater management for new and existing buildouts.

- B) December 2023 for the 2024 year: The VEC sent the Verona Town Council a memo on the Recommended Planting List, in conjunction with Chapter 150, Article XI, Section 11.7: Plant Selection and placement. The VEC determined that no changes to the recommended planting list were warranted for 2024.
- C) Chapter 493 Article II Tree Protection, Removal and Replacement: In February 2024, Chair Pearson, and Vice Chair DiBartolo met with the Deputy Manager O’Sullivan to discuss potential updates for the Tree Ordinance. The existing issues included accurate recording and tracking, compliance, follow up with replacement trees, and certain revisions according to a mandatory State model ordinance. The discussion touched on potential revisions to the total amount of trees that could be removed within a 5-year

period (five trees was proposed) rather than two trees within a 1-year period. No further discussion has been had on that as of yet.

- D) RSIS Stormwater Issue: The DCA's SIAB (Site Improvement Advisory Board) continues to consider the passage of RSIS rules that would overrule Verona's more strict Stormwater rules, as they would apply to residential uses. In 2024, the Verona Town Council passed new stormwater rules that exceed the state's requirements. The VEC continues to attend SIAB meetings to monitor the actions that may be taken by the DCA that could impact Verona rule applicability.
- E) Artificial turf: 2023-2024.
 - i) The VEC sent a review of the submitted plans for Everett Field to the Verona Town Council in the Fall of 2023. Among the many environmental issues that were identified were the proposed use of artificial turf and the removal of many trees (including many from steep slopes), cutting into a steep slope, and no testing for the seasonal high water table when permeable pavement was proposed for the parking area. The VEC has been following the updates on the plans throughout 2024 closely and will continue their assessments as plan updates are presented.
 - ii) The VEC worked closely with Sustainable Verona's Green Team to support the Montclair State University (MSU) Green Team's study on artificial turf versus natural grass turf at Centennial Field. Members of the VEC agreed with the findings of the MSU team, that natural grass was all around a healthier and more long-term economical choice for the future of the field.
- F) Supported continued efforts to educate the public on the water conservation, native species, removal of invasive and destructive plant and insect species, composting, recycling, tree conservation and stormwater management.
- G) Supported the production of educational materials and videos related to a proper residential recycling practices, harm-free mosquito control, trees, local wildlife and so much more, mainly through our social media accounts and our website.
- H) Supported a townwide effort for education and implementation of composting practices for all interested residents.

3) Presentations, Meetings, and Actions 2024:

- A) The VEC holds regular meetings generally on the 2nd Wednesday of each month, except for August. The VEC may hold Special meetings; these can be held when the VEC needs to convene during the intervening time between regular meetings to discuss specific topics that may be time-sensitive that cannot wait until the next regular meeting. They also may be held when members are not available to meet on a regularly scheduled date.

Members of the community are welcome to attend and are offered public comment periods at the beginning of each meeting. All meetings in 2024 were held via internet video conference and all approved meeting minutes were posted on both the VEC's and the Township's websites.

- B) Ongoing commitment to Sustainable Verona. VEC member Jessica served as the liaison to Sustainable Verona (SV) and resolved to work more closely with Sustainable Verona Green Team Chairperson Kerry Bass. Since then, they have partnered in more educationally rich events to achieve greater results for the Township.

- C) January 2024: The VEC hosts the inaugural Junior Environmental Commissioner Program (JEC) for the 2024 calendar year. The VEC had contacted the appropriate teachers and administrators at Verona High School in December of 2023 to seek applications and received 12. Two students were chosen to participate: Nia Pilauri and Cece Manis.

The program fits neatly into the Board of Education's Strategic Plan and seeks to engage High School Students to engage with the community to forge a more sustainable future. The students are expected to attend VEC meetings and to create a project that will be showcased later in the year. The students will not only learn more about the environment, Verona's issues, and best sustainable practices, but will also hone skills in public speaking and presentation, project management, and critical thinking.

- D) January 2024: The VEC sent the Verona elementary school 4th grade teachers the requirements for participation in the 2024 Poster and Sustainability Contest. The contest is a digital poster contest for the 4th graders and focuses upon reducing plastic from our waste stream and anti-idling practices. Participants were asked to submit all entries by March 15, 2024 so VEC members could choose the winning submissions and plan for the Town Council awards ceremony in honor of Earth Day, in April.
- E) January 18, 2024: The VEC partnered with Sustainable Verona's Green Team to present: Backyard Composting in Verona, a Live Webinar Event. This webinar served as the first of a series planned for 2024. It featured sustainability and composting expert Virginia Lamb, of Groundwork Education and Consulting, based in Maplewood, New Jersey. Virginia discussed different composter equipment, ratio of brown to green materials that succeed in process, and importantly, which products not to compost. At the end of the presentation, she addressed questions from attendees. The VEC posted this webinar to its website and YouTube channel for those that could not attend the live event.
- F) January 23, 2024: Members attended Stormwater Retrofit BMP Guide and Resources Webinar, presented by NJ Future and Princeton Hydro. The webinar discussed many of the BMPs (Best management practices, or installations of green infrastructure) that were created prior to the new MS4 Permit rules and how to carry them forward according to those new rules.

NJ Future created a 64 page BMP guide on these retrofits along with case studies within New Jersey that successfully adapted existing systems with new BMPs. The takeaway from the study showed many success stories in areas with less dense development, lending to better opportunities for the locality. However, many of the retrofits were fashioned with existing basins and proved that even densely developed communities can accommodate these alterations.

- G) January 30, 2024: Members attended an ANJEC Roundtable Webinar titled, "Setting and Achieving Goals." This webinar discussed planning of many events common to most Environmental Commissions including cleanups, public outreach, budget planning, and annual report writing. It also featured the Chairperson of Sommerville, New Jersey's EC, Jeff Lamborn, who discussed his planning process throughout the calendar year.
- H) February 7, 2024: Members attended a webinar titled, "NJ's Climate Future: The Science, Politics and Planning", presented by NJ Spotlight, and focused mainly on New Jersey's flooding problem, its effect on water quality, housing, and the economy.

Panelists included members of NJ Spotlight, The New Jersey Resource Project, Rutgers University, and New Jersey American Water. This is the first of a series of webinars.

- I) February 29, 2024: Members attended an ANJEC webinar titled, "Building Cleaner Communities through Stormwater Education." Special speakers included the Executive Director of Clean Communities, Joanne Gernerden, and The Watershed Institute's Kendra McKoy. This webinar generally discussed the how to better promote stormwater education and litter reduction relying upon broad partnerships with the Township administration, staff and community volunteers. It focused upon funding opportunities with Clean Communities and public education to meet the requirements of our MS4 permit.
- J) March 5, 2024: Members of the VEC attended a webinar titled, "Tier A MS4 Tree Removals-Replacement Model Ordinance: What is it?" The webinar was hosted by the NJ Association of Planning and Zoning Administrators in conjunction with Rutgers University and focused upon the necessity to adopt an ordinance to restrict tree removals in flood-laden areas in New Jersey and mandate tree replacements. Planner James Clavelli, NJDEP representatives Kristina Koreivo and Christina Schwartz, and Forester Neil Hendrickson, PhD presented.
- K) March 19, 2024 through April 10, 2024: Members of the VEC attended parts II and III of the Tree Webinar series titled, "Tier A MS4 Tree Removals-Replacement Model Ordinance" for further insights on how to tailor the ordinance to a municipality's specific needs. This webinar added Forester Rich Wolowicz to the expert panel, a forester who serves Verona as a consultant. Items discussed included important definition inclusions for a complete Tree Ordinance: Critical Root Radius, Hazard Tree, Tree Removal (which should include much more than a chainsaw type of removal; i.e.: damage from construction, or willful harm to a tree using herbicide, pesticide or other chemical application, etc.) and Invasive Plant.

Also included was a recommendation to include terms that may describe different types of valuable trees for preservation. Currently Verona includes "Extraordinary Tree," but the experts recommended adding other specifications such as "specimen tree," "heritage tree," "historically valuable tree" etc. The webinar went on to share how towns configured their replacement tables and fee structures. Some towns require replacement for street trees with DBH's (diameter at breast height) as low as 2.5 inches. Lambertville presents their replacement tree ratio and financials (\$500 per tree) at a 1-4.99-inch DBH and called for four tree replacements (or \$2,000) if a 17-inch or greater DBH tree was removed. Some towns have a tree fee structure that allows for current market pricing changes.

Finally, the experts recommended creating zones or areas in town where offsite replacement trees should be planted and further recommended that any areas where new sidewalks were to be created leave ample room for street trees. The last of the series discussed different approaches to enforcement and fines.

- L) March 2024: VEC prepared its first quarterly Newsletter (Spring 2024) and its distribution to residents through the Township of Verona's email system. The Spring Edition focused upon garden planning, whether herbs, annuals or perennials and emphasized the importance of native species as well as researching to avoid planting invasives. Verona's PIO, Elisa Northrop distributes the newsletter through the Verona Township's email system.

- M) March 20, 2024: The VEC and Sustainable Verona's Green Team co-presented a Webinar entitled: "Recycling 101". The webinar featured sustainability expert and Essex County's Solid Waste and Recycling Coordinator Wayne DeFeo, and Verona's Recycling Coordinator, Len Waterman. Wayne discussed the brief history of recycling, which items we currently recycle, which items we cannot recycle and provided a long list of hazardous waste items that Essex County accepts at their drop off events. Len discussed Verona's curb compliance tagging program, and how it has reduced Verona's rate of contamination and increased our overall compliance with curbside recycling practices.

There was a Q & A held after where attendees comments and questions were addressed. The webinar was recorded and posted on Verona's and the VEC's YouTube accounts and the VEC's website.

- N) April 9, and 10, 2024: VEC Recycling/No Idling Assemblies at Brookdale Avenue School and Forest Avenue School. Sarah presented three assemblies at each school, to differing age groups on recycling best practices and no idling.

Wearing her famed lobster cap, interacting with the students, Sarah expertly ran the assemblies with a lively, upbeat tempo. A visual slide show accompanied Sarah and helped the students see specific items that Verona recycles and how to properly dispose of them. At the end of each presentation, a question and answer session was held. The VEC will continue to approach Verona's elementary schools to present this information to all of the young students in the Verona School Systems.

- O) April 2024: In an effort to help with Verona's Silver certification, the VEC began completing actions and uploads for Sustainable Jersey certification portal.
- P) May 6, 2024: The VEC Award Ceremony for the Annual Sustainable Poster Contest took place at the Verona Town Council meeting. The theme of the contest was reducing plastic use, recycling and no idling. Mayor Tamburro presented certificates to the four winning submission (one from each elementary school) and two honorable mention awards. The winning submissions also received a \$50 gift card.

As a sidenote, F.N. Brown had 100% participation in the contest, submitting 66 posters. A short video showcasing all of the entries was shown and was accompanied by music by the Rallies, a band from Seattle, Washington who were excited to have their music play with such an important message from today's concerned youth.

- Q) June 12, 2024: Jessica attended a meeting with Kerry Bass, and the PSE&G sponsored Green Team from Montclair State University. The subject of the meeting was Verona's Stormwater Management Control Ordinance. Jessica created a PowerPoint presentation to explain the rules that Verona has adopted and how those rules may apply to an artificial turf field, which is defined by the State as an impervious surface.
- R) July 1, 2024: Jessica attended a second meeting with the PSE&G sponsored Green Team from Montclair State University. The subject of this meeting was a presentation by Turf Talent/Drain Talent product representative Aaron Golemiewski and company founder Arno Harmsen. This product is used mostly on natural grass surfaces and can store and reuse rain and other irrigation water to both water the fields and quickly drain them for immediate use after heavy storms. The system can also treat rainwater and depending on the location of a field, may even be able to send treated water back into the aquifer. Deputy Manager O'Sullivan also attended this meeting.

- S) January -July 2024: Jessica worked with Sustainable Verona's Chair Kerry Bass to successfully achieve Silver Certification from Sustainable New Jersey for the Township of Verona. Jessica scheduled multiple phone calls, zoom and in-person meetings with Sustainable NJ officials to ensure completion of multiple actions. The VEC also worked with Verona's Public Information Officer, Elisa Northrup who continuously updated Verona's website and social media accounts to aid with many actions, Verona's head of buildings and grounds, Len Waterman, and Deputy Manager O'Sullivan.

The VEC successfully submitted 185 points worth of actions of the 350 needed to achieve this status. Actions included Make Your Town EV Friendly, Household Hazardous Waste, Support Local Businesses, Buy Local, Recycling Depot, Backyard Composting, Public EV Charger Infrastructure, Enhanced Stormwater Control Ordinance and many others. Overall, 415 points were submitted, and all were accepted.

- T) June 2024: The Township distributed the VEC's 2024 Summer Newsletter, which focused upon water conservation and featured VEC member Sean DiBartolo's volunteerism.
- U) Summer Season 2024: Sean, Walter, and Jessica worked on plans to upgrade the information kiosk at the entry to the Peckman Trail, behind FN Brown Elementary School. Plans include replacement of the acrylic protective sheet, redesigning the map of the trail and adding new data flood and historical data into to informational kiosk. At our annual Peckman cleanup event, the kiosk was given a fresh coat of stain in preparation for the new signage. This is a work in progress and will continue into Winter 2024-25.
- V) Summer Season 2024: Walter raised the rate of recycling at the Verona Pool by ensuring that there were well-marked receptacles for recycled materials in convenient locations. He also self-transported those collections to the Verona Recycling Center. Walter requested that the VEC set up tables at the pool early in the 2025 season to raise awareness for continued success.
- W) September 2024: Members attended The Watershed Institute's (TWI) webinar titled, "NJ PACT REAL Rules." The presentation was led by Michael Pisauro, Policy Director of The Watershed Institute, Jennifer Coffey, the Executive Director of ANJEC, Tim Dillingham, the Executive Director and Lucia Osborne, the Program Director, from of a national coastal conservation organization named the American Littoral Society, based in NJ's Highlands. The webinar touched on some of the over 1,000 pages of the new act, which further tightens stormwater management rules, as well as development rules in tidal areas and in wetlands.

At the time of the webinar, the state's public comment period was ongoing. If the NJPACT Act and REAL pass next August, all municipalities will need to make revisions to many of their municipal rules as well.

- X) October 2024: The Township distributed the VEC's 2024 Fall Newsletter, which focused upon the benefit of leaving the leaves in your gardens, the Junior Commissioner Program members: Cece Manis and Nia Pilauri, and contained a recycling quiz.
- Y) November 6, 2024: Members attended an ANJEC webinar titled, "Flood Defense Action Session." This session, hosted by Jennifer Coffey, of ANJEC, discussed the NJPACT REAL rules and explained the importance of the adoption of these rules to protect both the environment and residents throughout the state. ANJEC is reviewing the proposed regulations and will be submitting comments to the NJDEP in support of the regulations,

and will also be pressing the DEP to enhance some of our current stormwater management rules on a statewide basis. Public comments were due on November 7, 2024. Adoption could potentially occur in August of 2025.

- Z) November 2024: The VEC rolled out the second year requirements for the Junior Environmental Commissioner Program (JEC) and contacted the appropriate teachers and administrators at Verona High School. The VEC discussed tweaking the program to include more actions, like drafting articles for the newsletters, and organizing clean-up events, and placing less of a focus upon one singular project for the Juniors. Applications were due in early December so that new Juniors could start the program in January of 2025.
- AA) December 9, 2024: The VEC's Junior Commissioners presented their projects at Town Hall in the Town Council Chambers. Family members attended this event, the VEC, Council members and Verona High School students. Cece Manis's project focused upon water quality at the Verona Lake and the Peckman River. Nia Pilauri's project focused upon microorganisms and their impact on soil quality conditions for both native and invasive plant species. The event was well-attended by friends and family, VEC members, Council and BOE members, and both Township and School Administrators.
- BB) Our social media influencer, Sarah , led VEC efforts to educate the public on upcoming meetings, forums, fairs, and lectures as well as important health and environmental issues. These issues included information on local issues like anti-Idling, local flooding, tree diseases and insects, tips for gardening, recycling, composting, as well as all upcoming cleanup dates for a wide array of Verona's many volunteer agencies including Sustainable Verona, the Hilltop Conservancy, and the Verona Park Conservancy. Of note, some of Sarah's posts/reels have received millions of views.
- CC) Throughout 2024, the VEC reviewed more than 20 Site Plans for proposals in Verona. Each plan review requires our Plan Review Committee (PRC) to research the plans and draft comments and recommendations for the land review boards that hear the applications. The PRC members are Jessica, Sean, and Walter. Sean is a licensed engineer, who has proven to be extremely beneficial in our review process. Walter, a lifelong Verona resident has a deep understanding of Verona's historic landcover, geology and waterways. The PRC also cross references the properties to check for flood and riparian zones that correspond to the property in question. The PRC may meet virtually or in-person to review more complex major site plans.

4) Installations 2024 and ongoing maintenance:

- A) The Grove Park Perennial Garden: The garden is weeded and maintained by Sarah, Jessica, and Hilltop Conservancy Treasurer and VP of Restoration, Theresa Trapp. Theresa has added a new supply of soil and many native plantings to fill the garden out this year. DPW has mulched and continues to water the garden daily during growing season. It should be noted that this garden would fare better and thrive if it had a water source onsite.
- B) Treasured Tree Program: The Treasured Tree Program is alive and well and continues to add new trees to its rich inventory. This year we added a beautiful Cornus Florida (dogwood) to the list, which is over 75 years old.
- C) The Verona Environmental Commission's Website: The VEC's website features a concentrated, one-stop view of environmental rules and regulations, best practices on any number of issues included recycling, donating used items, water conservation,

gardening, yard care, tree and plant selection and educational information related to our yearly programs. During 2024, the site averaged between 600 to 800 visitors per month. In 2024, The VEC website received 5,681 views and had 4,406 visitors to date. Social media and our newsletters have been integral in driving traffic to this rich, and informative resource. Also found on this site are the VEC's agendas, meeting minutes, and access to educational videos on subjects such as stormwater management, storm drain maintenance, etc., and a convenient catalog of Verona's parklands, environmental regulations, and recycling information.

- D) Sean DiBartolo maintains the VEC's Geocaching on-line account that was created in 2015 to track two VEC-owned geocaches. Since its hiding in 2016, the geocache title, "The Grove," has been logged by 194 visitors to the park. Maintenance was performed on VEC's geocache titled, "Scouting About with Verona Pack 31," located in the Hilltop Reservation, which was logged by 54 visitors since it was placed in late December 2021. Finally, there is consideration to hide a third VEC-sponsored geocache at the Verona Community Garden.

We would like to thank Verona residents and the Township for supporting our programs and helping make Verona a more sustainable community this year. For more information, please visit www.Veronaec.org or contact us by email at VEC@VeronaNJ.org.

Regards,

Jessica Pearson



Chair, Verona Environmental Commission
December 16, 2024