

Verona Environmental Commission

Serving the Township of Verona since 1992

The VEC Annual Report

The Verona Environmental Commission (VEC) is a body comprised of seven members and two alternates who must be Township residents and serve without compensation. Our Council Liaison is currently Mayor Christopher Tamburro.

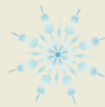
The VEC serves multiple functions including acquiring property for conservation for the Township, making recommendations for the use of open space, calling for joint meetings or activities of other similar bodies, and making recommendations to the governing body and land use boards concerning water resource management, air and water pollution control, solid waste management, noise control, soil and landscape protection, environmental appearance, protection of flora and fauna.

Each year, the Verona Environmental Commission submits an Annual Report which records its accomplishments, its activities and progress with ongoing projects. The following is an abbreviated list of our activities over 2024.

PUBLIC EVENTS:

- Coordinated three cleanups, including a tree give-away program, and attended multiple cleanups held by the Hilltop and the Verona Park Conservancies.
- Helped organize and participated in Sustainable Verona's Electric Vehicle Fair.
- Partnered with Verona Schools for our Walk to School Day event.

WINTER 2024-2025 NEWSLETTER



IN THIS ISSUE

THE VEC ANNUAL REPORT:
view the full report [here](#)



Park Place Clean-up

POLICY:

- Worked with Township officials on the newly adopted stormwater management ordinance.
- Created the recommended planting list for Verona's Zoning Code which we review annually for updates or changes.
- Recommended that Everett Field remain natural grass and for field renovation to avoid steep slope disturbance and tree removals.



PRESENTATIONS/MEETINGS/ACTIONS:

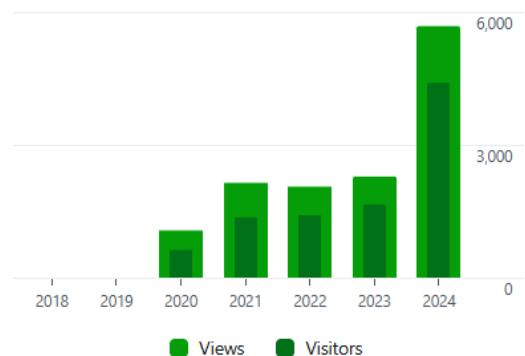
- Met monthly throughout the year except for August (11 meetings) and had a commissioner attend Sustainable Verona (SV) monthly meetings.
- Introduced the Junior Environmental Commissioner Program, which invited two Verona High School students to work with the VEC for the entire year. This program culminated in the Junior Commissioner Presentation of their exceptional research projects on December 9, 2024.
- Held two informative webinars, in partnership with SV, on backyard composting and recycling in Verona.
- Increased recycling awareness and compliance at the Verona Pool.
- Attended over 10 informative webinars sponsored by Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions, the Watershed Institute, Rutgers, and other organizations.
- Held our annual 4th grade poster contest, which culminated with winners receiving awards at an April Verona Town Council Meeting.
- Created and presented six elementary school assemblies (Brookdale and Forest Avenue Schools) to teach our students about recycling.
- Attended special meetings and worked with SV surrounding the production of a special study on Centennial Field drafted by Montclair State University visiting students. This was a program sponsored by PSE&G and led by SV.
- Helped SV achieve Silver Certification for the Township of Verona by submitting 185 points through research and written action submissions.
- Began a VEC quarterly newsletter starting in the Spring of 2024 to better inform our residents about what we do.
- Drafted over 20 site plan reviews for Verona's land use boards

INSTALLATIONS and ONGOING MAINTENANCE:

- Maintained our social media accounts with educational posts throughout the year. Some of our original reels have received over 1 million views.
- Maintained our website, which contains a concentration of important environmental information, our meeting documents, and event information. Our website has had 5,681 views and 4,406 visitors in 2024:
- Maintain and care for the perennial garden at Grove Park. Also welcomed new fairy house installations by Verona's scouting organizations.
- Ongoing renovation of Peckman River Trailhead kiosk at F.N. Brown Elementary School.
- Maintain Verona's Treasured Tree Program.
- Maintained VEC's Geocaching program.



2024 Poster Contest Winners



Website Visitation



Recycling Assemblies



Walk To School Day



Electric Vehicle Fair

The Verona Environmental Commission
SUSTAINABLE VERONA
 invite you to:

BACKYARD COMPOSTING IN VERONA
A Live Webinar Event
 THURSDAY JANUARY 18, 2024 @ 7 P.M.
 Featuring composting and sustainability expert
VIRGINIA LAMB

A practical how-to guide to get started and succeed!
 • Benefits of composting
 • Items to compost/ratios
 • Supplies for success
 • Q and A

Zoom Webinar ID: 945 6611 3680
 Please click the link below to join the webinar:
<https://zoom.us/j/94566113680>

For more information, please visit us:
<https://veronaeo.org/education/>

Composting Webinar



Social Media



Junior Commissioners



Grove Park Garden



Peckman Clean-up

VEC IN FOCUS: Member Sean DiBartolo

Sean and his family moved to Verona in 2011. A former, practicing engineer, PE, Certified Foundation Manager, and LEED AP, Sean has been specializing in architectural and engineering for over 20 years. In what he thought of as a VEC meeting back in 2014, he noticed the potential to volunteer as a new member. He discussed this interest in Veronans' lives and well-being and immediately became a steward for our environmental concerns.

Sean is really the consummate volunteer. In fact, he's an actual Eagle Scout and serves as a Chairman for Pack 21 and retained Executive for Veronans 2. You may see him rapping his Pack float out his position of the Pack in the forums, or dropping some float on a pack float, or just talking about it. A local association with his whole crew. Sean also volunteers on an election poll worker as you may have also seen him on one of the polling locations throughout Verona on Election Day.

And if you've ever been to one of the VEC's clean up events, you've undoubtedly see Sean, likely working through the landscape while collecting miscellaneous debris that found its way into our landscape and to back.

Sean, the Vice Chair of the VEC since 2016, oversees the Park Review Committee, a committee of three members who review plans to be heard before Verona's Zoning Board of Adjustment or the Planning Board. The role went from a simple task, but Sean's background enabled these reviews to provide better Boards with added insight to enhance their understanding of the applications and their impacts. Verona Park regulations and an inherent increase in Board events and in applications that added impetus, surface. Processes and an unmitigated best reviews must be met with a higher degree of thought, better streamlining, and integration tactics that were not given enough emphasis in the past. Sean was also instrumental in the drafting of Verona's enhanced Stormwater Ordinances.

Sean's wife and son, Iliad Christy, an award-winning former Architect and LEED AP, also volunteers for our Township. She currently serves on Verona's Zoning Board of Adjustment, and a Past President of the local American Institute of Architects, sections in conjunction with her self-owned architecture firm, and has coached her children for the VEC in baseball and softball.

When they aren't working or volunteering, Sean, Christy, and their three children spend their time together. If they can get away on a vacation, it's usually in a corner, and Sean is an avid golfer for the Verona Golf Club. Even when they can't get away, Sean and Christy love to travel. Sean has undertaken his travels in a van and travels for his job and creating memories in the long which becomes the yard's focus point when traveling. I hope.

Sean is an endlessly enthusiastic. Take for instance, the time he happens to inspect trees and makes his own maple syrup. He has no real intention to sell his own product, but he has a lot of curiosity, research, and an insatiable desire to make Sean an amazing colleague, volunteer, and an asset to our Commission.

The VEC thanks Sean and all of the volunteers that give their precious time to the VEC and to Verona.

Quarterly Newsletters

