



Verona Environmental Commission

600 Bloomfield Avenue
Verona, New Jersey 07044

VEC Public Meeting at the Verona Community Center – January 15th, 2014
Started at 7:30 pm - Adjourned at 9:00 pm

Members present: Gloria Machnowski, Virginia Citrano, Anthony Saltalamacchia, Jessica Pearson and Council Liaison Kevin Ryan. Guests: Lucas Freschi and 2 VHS students members of the Environmental Club, Julie and John. Public: Dennis Handel

Minutes

The commission is very saddened by the recent loss of Jerry's son. Members collected monies to be donated in his memory to the Verona Rescue Squad.

I. Members approved December 18, 2014 minutes.

II. New VEC Roster: Gloria gave Martin a copy of the new VEC Roster since Kerry Bass went back to full time work and she is not longer in the commission. He'll take care of a resolution to make Jessica a regular member. The VEC will try to find 2 new alternates.

III. Outcome of VEC's meeting at Town Hall on Jan. 8. Kevin and Gloria met Joe Martin, Jim Helb, Steve Neale (VTV-Township Website-Rec. Dpt.) and Town Attorney. The meeting was very productive. Nevertheless the manager prohibited the VEC to contact township vendors, ask questions during public Council Meetings, share the recycling brochure with Virginia, recommend legislation, and he'll appoint himself to SWAC instead of Jerry, who will be an alternate. The manager also mentioned that the VEC is overstepping its role.

The VEC commissioners and liaison disagree with Mr. Martin on those points. According to Verona's Code: The Environmental Commission shall have power to study and make recommendations concerning open space preservation, water resources management, air pollution control, solid waste management, noise control, soil and landscape protection, environmental appearance, marine resources and protection of flora and fauna.

IV. Sustainable Jersey: Green Team Resolution discussed at the Jan. 8 meeting:

- ⤴ Verona is not yet registered.
- ⤴ Steve Neal is in the Green Team too and he'll make a list of actions listed in SJ that Verona is already doing.
- ⤴ Gloria supplied the list of potential volunteers and explained the need to create the Green Team by Ordinance (recommended by SJ) or Resolution. Gloria supplied Sample Legislation as well as a copy of the 2014 SJ list of actions.

- ⤴ The Manager will give Councilmen a list with his recommendations and he'll take care of a Resolution to create the Green Team.
- ⤴ Based on SJ recommendations Gloria advised to have 12 or 15 members which will form smaller working groups.
- ⤴ The Manager mentioned that the Grants' dead line is on June. SJ says January 26, 2014, in its Web site.

VEC members agreed to support a Resolution to create the Green Team, even though an Ordinance would be better, a Resolution is better than nothing.

V. Green Building Policy: As suggested by Jerry; Gloria contacted Larry and Jim to start researching this topic. Municipalities are encouraged to amend their Site Plan checklist to include green design standards. The purpose of this new Master Plan element is to encourage and promote, among other things, "the efficient use of natural resources [and] ...the impact of buildings on the local, regional and global environment...through site orientation and design." Jerry, Larry and Jim were not present so this topic will be discussed during the next meeting.

VI. 2014 Verona Garbage/Recycling Brochure and related information discussed at the Jan. 8 meeting:

- ⤴ Gloria got a copy from Kevin at the Jan. 8 meeting. The new brochure still says to put Chipboard in the Garbage and implies that Plastic Water Bottles should go in the regular garbage too. Helb asked Gloria to send him her comments asap. Gloria sent the VEC comments the following day.
- ⤴ Status of Recycling Vendors - Verona Recycling Center: Do we have any information about monthly tonnage, cost and revenue? This question was not answered at the meeting.
- ⤴ Electronics: Waste Industries is neither R2 Certified nor e-Stewards® certified. EPA encourages customers to choose certified electronics recyclers, such as Advanced Recovery Inc. (\$250 per pickup, and free of charge if Verona does the delivery). Gloria supplied printed information about certified Electronic Recyclers to the Manager, but looks like he made his mind already.
- ⤴ Gloria explained that recycling certain items listed by ECUA is mandatory, not optional. Some attendees disagreed. Steve said that once the current recycling info is approved he'll add a page to the Township's website.
- ⤴ Commingled: Waste Industries accepts plastic containers type 1 and 2. Do they accept type 5 as well? Atlantic Coast Fibers does. Helb and Martin said that Waste Industries doesn't care about what type of plastic it is.
- ⤴ Status of Solid Waste and Recycling Vendors - Curbside collection: Do we have any information about monthly tonnage, cost and revenue? Not answered.
- ⤴ Waste Industries picks-up White Goods-Metal-Bulk Items every other week. Can we reduce it to one per month? Helb and Martin explained that 2 picks up per month are necessary and a good service to ensure that the township is clean and doesn't cost them anything extra. Also PW picks up more often if necessary.
- ⤴ First Occupational Center of NJ picks-up junk-mail/magazines, newspaper and commingled every other week. Do they accept plastic type #5? Could they include chipboard in their paper collection? Same answer about #5. Helb said probably yes about Chipboard but it will have an extra cost.

- ⤴ The VEC recommends: Stop picking up corrugated cardboard with regular garbage and add a corrugated cardboard recycling pick up once a month. When Kevin explained that we were thinking about replacing one Bulk pick up with corrugated pick up Helb said that there is no enough volume and that putting it in the garbage doesn't affect our garbage cost either.

VII. Environmental Education: Recycling video and signs, VHS projects.

- ⤴ The commission is cooperating with the VHS Environmental Club and its President, Lucas Freschi in the production of a video and signs. The video will inform residents how to recycle boxes (and the difference between corrugated cardboard and chipboard/paperboard).
- ⤴ Gloria informed the Manager and he welcomed the idea and asked to give Steve the video for VTV and website after approval by Helb.
- ⤴ Lucas and VHS students Julie and John reviewed a draft of the video script. Tony and Gloria will help producing it. The video will be recorded at the Recycling Center during the Spring with proper authorization.
- ⤴ VHS students are also planning to create signs with examples of chipboard boxes in a laminated collage art work to be displayed at the Recycling Center.

VIII. Update on the proposed Steep Slope ordinance and Municipal Organic Lawn Care: Commissioners will discuss the proposed Steep Slope ordinance. The manager said that is is problematic (because of the new fields and other developments) and he'll meet with several town authorities to discuss it. Plans for Municipal Organic Lawn Care: the Town Manager said that there is a lot of progress in this area. Only the following areas will be treated few times per year: the Bloomfield/Pompton triangle (because nobody walks there), the Pool before and after season, and the Civic Center during times when there is no school. True Green is not been used anymore. The Manager said a better vendor was chosen.

IX. Suggestions and updates for www.veronaec.org – Gloria made some changes to the Recycling page. Virginia and Jerry will review it.