



Verona Environmental Commission

600 Bloomfield Avenue
Verona, New Jersey 07044

VEC Public Meeting at the Verona Community Center – February 19th, 2014
Started at 7:30 pm - Adjourned at 9:30 pm

Members present: Gloria Machnowski, Gerard Shimonaski, Virginia Citrano, Anthony Saltalamacchia, Jessica Pearson, Larry Lonergan and Council Liaison Kevin Ryan. Guests: Peter Marcalus (Rocket Composter Representative), VHS Environmental Club president Lucas Freschi, and club members Julia Capuano, Zack, Nate and John. Public participation: Dennis Handel.

Minutes

I. Members approved January 19th, 2014 minutes.

II. Rocket Composter presentation by Peter Marcalus from NATH:

- ⤴ Food waste composter installed in Bergen Community College and Chatham High School. Model A500 costs \$23,000, usually purchased with grants money.
- ⤴ Food waste capacity 80 gallons per week. Uses 12 Kwh per week. Should be installed outdoors under open shed.
- ⤴ In 14 days turns equal volume of food waste and wood chips into compost which is then either sold or made available to town residents.
- ⤴ Student learning tool with a hands-on environmental curriculum. It has a USB port and heat data logger.
- ⤴ Reduces food waste disposal cost and carbon footprint.
- ⤴ Several towns in the U.S. already do town-wide composting and provide curbside collection of food waste.

Normal procedures regarding public participation were waived to allow the public to ask questions of the vendor. VEC and Superintendent of Schools Forte last year considered to install one at VHS and develop a Sustainability course.

III. The VEC will celebrate Earth Day either on April 5 or 26.

- ⤴ Members considered to host a cleanup at the Verona Recycling Center. But it is not safe for residents to collect items between dumpsters.
- ⤴ The commission decided to host a cleanup in the woods by the Peckman River, similar to the one hosted last year.
- ⤴ Gloria will coordinate the details with Mr. Martin and arrange the delivery of DPW supplies and removal of collected materials.
- ⤴ Lucas will invite VHS Env. Club members to participate. Verona Junior Women's League will be invited as well. Kevin will announce it at the Council meeting. The commission will produce a press release, post it on VTV and the Web site.

IV. Status of 2014 Verona Garbage/Recycling Brochure: Kevin got his brochure in the mail but none of the VEC members received it. Kevin will inquire about the mail situation and he added that many of the commission's suggestions were included in the brochure.

V. Environmental Education: The VEC and VHS Env. Club are collaborating to produce an educational video focused on chipboard and cardboard recycling. The video will be shot at the Verona Recycling Center on May 10th, 2014 with Tony's help. Lucas will take care of recruiting VHS volunteers. VHS students are also working on a Chipboard display with Jerry's help to be placed in the Verona Recycling Center before Earth Day.

VI. Update on Sustainable Jersey: Verona registered in the program and Steven Neale is the Green Team coordinator. VEC members recommended Kevin that the council should establish the green team by ordinance or resolution asap and invite residents that signed up to the first green team meeting.

VII. Green Building Policy: commissioners asked Lonegran, Planning Board member, to research this topic. Jerry gave him printed information about it. Mr. Handel raised the issue of his right to access written information between commission members. Mr. Lonegran correctly advised him that the commissioners are allowed to share information as part of the normal workings of the group and these are not part of the public record. Any official recommendations and comments made by the commission become part of the public record and he can access them at that time. As a courtesy he was told about the general nature of the document he questioned: 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 installation and usage of renewable energy systems".

VIII. Update on the proposed Steep Slope ordinance: Kevin informed that a working group from the Planning Board, including the Planning Board Attorney Greg Mascera and Township Engineer James Helb will meet and discuss it sometime between June and September.

IX. Updates for www.veronaec.org – Virginia said that the new information in the recycling page looks good and she will send Gloria additional information.