



Verona Environmental Commission

600 Bloomfield Avenue
Verona, New Jersey 07044
www.veronaec.org

VEC Public Meeting: April 15 at 7:30 pm – VCC Annex Building, 2nd floor.

Attendees: Gloria Machnowski, Anthony Saltalamacchia, Jessica Pearson and Council Liaison Kevin Ryan.

MINUTES

I. Members approved March 18, 2015 minutes.

II. The Peckman 4-11-2015 Cleanup was a total success, about 50 people showed up, including a large group of students from VHS and Montclair University. Volunteers filled over 6 large recycling containers with cans and bottles and several garbage bags. They collected discarded boxes, bricks and large pieces of metal including hauling an old water heater from the river. The trail entrance was mulched and trails were raked and extended. Volunteers also installed a bat box, a Screech owl house and a Bluebird house that the commission purchased with grant money. A few fallen trees were cleared from the path.

The VEC is planning to install the geocache soon. Gloria contacted the Montclair Environmental Commission to get their leftovers from the tree sapling giveaway and plant them by the trail. Jessica informed members that the commission has about \$100 left from the ANJEC grant and could use it to purchase plantings for the trail. There is one tree that we planted last year that is not looking good and we'll probably replace it.

III. 42 Grove Ave. Project: Kevin will contact the town manager again to make sure that the adjacent neighbors are notified about the plans to preserve the woods and create a pocket park and nature trail. Gloria sent Mr. Martin information about the project that he could include in the letter. Julie Ostering from the Verona Historical Society told Gloria that their trustees approved to match the Juniors' contribution with another \$2,000. The commission will try to schedule the donations' presentation for the Council meeting in May. Members will ask Jim to present his landscape design during that same meeting. Helb didn't provide the legal boundaries of the property yet. The commission also requested a title search to be done and/or a copy of the deed, the township didn't supply it yet. Members would like to adhere to sustainable design and green installation guidelines.

IV. HBW Environmental Club report: Tony explained that students didn't create the script to produce a video detailing the recycling procedures at the school, so he'll probably just shoot several videos with the students and later on work on the editing. Students are also working on informational posters for the cafeteria. The science Teacher, Mrs. Thomas, was interested in growing vegetables with the students. Gloria is in the SCA Beautification Committee and the committee has the money to purchase a cedar raised bed to be installed in back of the

school, for an organic vegetable garden. Tony will talk to teachers to see if they can coordinate this activity and involve the students in the process. We'll also need to install a water spigot there, Gloria will contact Mr. McDevitt.

V. Steep Slope Ordinance (SSO) update. The VEC drafted a resolution over a year ago and recommend the SSO to the governing body for adoption. The VEC is asking the township professional expertise to review it. The VEC continues seeking commitment from elected and appointed officials, and from the Planning Board, to study, adopt and enforce the SSO. Kevin agrees and continues pushing for an effective SSO. Regulations for development on and disturbance of steep slopes can prevent erosion and reduce the risk to damage property and infrastructure, harm water quality, and degrade wildlife habitat. These regulations can also preserve the aesthetic character of visually prominent hillsides by discouraging vegetative clearing and excessive earthwork to accommodate development.

VII. VEC participation in Verona Green Fair. Gloria is in the Sustainable Verona committee and mentioned that fair will be held outdoors in the Civic Center, 600 Bloomfield Ave., on May 30th from 11 am- 3 pm. Gloria recommended to charge a small fee for the table, similar to Verona's Fair in the Square and look for sponsors such as PSEG and Waste Industries. The VEC could focus on local recycling information and games.

Next Meeting: May 20 – 7:30 pm at the VCC Annex Building, 2nd floor.