

Members Present (Quorum Established at Four or More Members)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jessica Pearson (Chair/Planning Board Liaison)	<input type="checkbox"/> Michael Auteri	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sean DiBartolo (Vice Chair/Plan Review)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kari Baureis	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Martin Golan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fuad Dahan (Alternate I)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sarah Yauch O'Farrell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Councilwoman Christine McGrath (Gov. Body Liaison)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Frank Ceccacci (Sustainable Verona Liaison)		
	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
1.	Call to Order by Jess: a) Open Public Meetings Act Statement b) Roll Call performed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None.
2.	Public Comment Period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christen Dietz attended the meeting. She will be appointed to the Commission as Alternate 2 at the 11/18/19 Council Meeting. She expressed her excitement about working with the Commission. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members welcomed Christen to the Commission.
3.	Approval of October 16, 2019 Special Meeting Minutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MOTION to Approve: Jess; Second: Frank. APPROVAL: All Members Present AYE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sean will email approved minutes to Township Clerk Kiernan and Steve Neale.
4.	Upcoming Events/Actions: a) Asking the Right Questions in Stormwater Review Webinar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Webinar is scheduled on 12/2/19 at 6 p.m. It is highly recommend that all members register and take the webinar to further their knowledge of the NJ rules and regulations on Stormwater for municipalities in the State. Jess shares that there is a webinar on Friday 11/15/19 at 1 to 2 p.m. on "Lead in our Drinking Water". 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jess will email members the links to register for both webinars after the meeting this evening. Members will discuss the results of the webinar at the December meeting.
5.	Updates: a) VEC Website Progress (Mike A.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mike A. has been working on redesigning the VEC website to be more easily navigable and simple. Mike A. has taken over the URL ownership for the time being before it expired, ensuring continuity of oversight by the VEC. The township will become a co-administrator of the website once the updates occur. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presentation was tabled until the December meeting. Jessica has asked Matt Laracy to issue a check in the amount of \$15.16 to reimburse Mike A. for paying for the domain renewal. The township will also have access to the website with additional emails added to the URL for access.
	b) Tree Ordinance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ordinance passed 3-2 with the stipulation that the Council would revisit it after a number of months and based upon resident and township feedback of its utility. The VEC was overwhelmingly supportive of this Ordinance and was stunned by our Council Liaison, Councilwoman McGrath's vote against the effort to preserve and replace removed trees in the Township after having expressed strong support days earlier and for the 5 to 6 weeks prior to the vote. Eight residents rose at the Council meeting on 10/21/19 to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No actions required.

	<p>express support for the measure. Not one person rose to speak against it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Councilwoman McGrath's objections focused upon her contention that 6-inch DPM (diameter at point of measure) trees are too small to be considered for replacement and therefore will place a burden on residents looking to do small landscape projects. This was thought by VEC members to undermine the entire utility of the ordinance. ○ Some townships require that 4-inch DPM trees trigger permits and replacements whereas Verona relied upon the larger 6-inch DPM tree. 6-inch DPM trees can be 20 to 30 feet tall and would not fit into the category of a "small landscaping project". ○ Councilwoman McGrath indicated that perhaps two large tree removals (i.e.: 30-inch DPM trees) should require a planning board hearing (which costs a minimum of \$400 for application fees and the possibility of hiring professionals for the hearing) when the township is allowing for up to 2 tree removals per calendar year without such a hearing. This suggestion would potentially become burdensome on the resident. ○ The VEC generally asked for more clear and consistent communication and coordination with their Council Liaison. ○ Councilwoman McGrath noted that she discovered her dissenting viewpoint after discussing the Ordinance with other Councilmembers prior to the vote and offered that she will be more communicative with the Commission in the future. 	
	<p>c) Sustainable Verona Update from Frank:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community Garden forum took place on 11/6/19 and one was taking place tonight in the Annex. ○ Frank mentioned that Sustainable Verona is in the process of applying for a Silver Certification. This process includes a great deal of paper work and research within a tight timeline. Steve Neale has therefore been very busy. As a likely result, there have been no Sustainable Verona meetings and therefore there is no update. ○ Sarah attended the 1st and a portion of the 2nd Garden Forum and will give an update at the next meeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Frank's updates will be a constant agenda item so that the VEC can maintain updated information on Sustainable Verona's initiatives and partner with them when we can. ● Sarah and Kari will update the Commission at the 12/10/19 meeting on the Garden Forums.
	<p>d) Plastic Bag Ban:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Steve Neale is the lead on this initiative. ○ The Council is hoping to begin reviewing an ordinance for introduction sometime in December of this year. ○ Sarah cited that Planet Civic is active now and is polling users on their opinion of a potential bag ban in Verona. Poll revealed 42-24 in favor of the ban as of this meeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Frank and Jess will keep members updated on new information when it is available.
	<p>e) Site Plan Review/Stormwater Ordinance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A proposed Stormwater Ordinance is still in the early phases of review. ○ No update on Site Plan Review Ordinance. ○ The State will be updating the State requirements for Stormwater Rules soon. At that time, the Township will be required to update its municipal rules to be as or more strict. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continued input from Jess and Sean when warranted. ● Update next meeting.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sean and Jess have been working with Mike D. to tailor our updated ordinance to the average property in Verona. ○ The new State Ordinance will require applications to integrate the nine non-structural measures for stormwater controls. ○ Councilwoman McGrath suggested that an explanation of the new rules occur sometime at a future Council meeting. 	
6.	VEC Plan Review Committee Comments and Findings	
	<p>a) 33 Gerdes Ave.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant seeks variance to build a deck expansion in their yard which will increase their improved lot coverage to over the 40% limit. ○ A great portion of the new decking will actually be located in West Orange, although the entire home itself is in Verona. ○ The application represented the existing coverage at 39.7% and proposed at 43.4%. However, the VEC calculations find existing coverage to be 45.4% and proposed at 49.1%. VEC recommends a recalculation of coverage for consistency. ○ VEC recommends adding rain gardens and/or plantings to help mitigate water runoff from the addition of improved lot coverage to the property. ○ VEC suggests using green building products for their construction project. ○ MOTION to approve VEC PRC Memo for 33 Gerdes Avenue: Jess; Second: Sarah. ○ APPROVAL: All Members Present AYE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sean had sent VEC PRC comments to the appropriate Board Secretary at their due date.
7.	New Business	
	<p>a) Social Media Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ VEC reviewed Township rules regarding social media use for public sites. ○ A recent post elicited some objectionable name-calling and abuse. ○ VEC members may hide incendiary posts, but may not remove the posts. We should contact the Township if continued objectionable posters become abusive or when posts seem to fall outside of the acceptable policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jess will send all members Verona's social media policy for review.
	<p>b) Annual Report due in January:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jessica has begun compiling the Annual Report to be submitted to the Council by 1/1/20. ○ Councilwoman McGrath suggested that the report or its highlights may be presented at a future council meeting. Members were amenable to a brief presentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Members will be sent an outline for review and any omissions or additions should be emailed to Jess for incorporation into the Report.
	<p>c) Rescheduling of meetings for December 2019, January and April 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Members have some scheduling conflicts for some upcoming regular meetings scheduled on 12/11/19, 1/8/20 and 4/9/20. ○ Alternate dates were floated and consensus chose the following new meeting dates, pending township approval: 12/12/19, 1/7/20 and 4/15/20. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jess will email Jen and the Recreation dept. to ask whether the meeting room will be available those evenings. ● Meeting dates will be confirmed during our regular December meeting.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 4/8/20 is Passover. Members are asked if they could attend a special meeting on 4/15/20. 	
	<p>d) Councilwoman McGrath Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Congratulated Verona in general and the VEC for the passage of the Open Space Trust Fund. The VEC was in support of this public vote initiative. ○ Asked the VEC if any actions had been taken towards a Gas-powered Leaf Blower ban. Martin is a major supporter of this sort of initiative and has worked on bans for other towns like Montclair. Some towns have succeeded in passing these types of Ordinances but have endured lengthy court proceedings. Most towns that have bans stipulate only a partial year ban and only against commercial blowers. Residents are not included in the bans. The VEC agrees that gas-powered blowers produce both noise and air pollution and would be interested to know if the Council would support such restrictions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No actions necessary at this time.
8.	Adjournment: Next meeting December 10, 2019 at 7 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCC Meeting Room