

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sean DiBartolo (Vice Chair/Plan Review)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kari Baureis	
<input type="checkbox"/> Martin Golan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fuad Dahan (Alternate I)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sarah Yauch O'Farrell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Christen Dietz (Alternate II)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Frank Ceccacci (Sustainable Verona Liaison)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Christine McGrath (Gov. Body Liaison)	
	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
1.	Call to Order by Jess: a) Open Public Meetings Act Statement b) Roll Call performed. c) This is the first meeting for Ms. Dietz as Alternate II and she was welcomed to the VEC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None.
2.	Public Comment Period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No public attendees were present. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Comments
3.	Approval of November 13, 2019 Meeting Minutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MOTION to Approve: Fuad; Second: Kari. APPROVAL: All Members Present AYE. Abstentions: Sean DiBartolo and Christen Dietz Objection: Councilwoman McGrath (Gov. Body Liaison) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sean will email approved minutes to Township Clerk Kiernan and Steve Neale.
4.	Upcoming Events/Actions: a) Annual Report Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Report was prepared by Jess for review by the VEC and members were sent an outline to review. The VEC: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Participated in six or more cleanup events. Co-sponsored new green business ribbon cuttings to welcome greener practices into our business community. Recommended and supported six environmentally-based Ordinances and helped with public education campaign for the Open Space Trust Fund Question. After many years, a meaningful Tree Ordinance was passed and the Open Space Trust fund was enacted via public vote. Held 11 meetings this year and attended multiple conferences, roundtables and other organizational meetings of similar interest. Plan Review Committee has reviewed 18 land use board applications, some which had multiple submissions and revisions. Installed a Perennial Garden at Grove Historic Park and Nature Preserve. Supported the Community Garden, slated for installation in 2020. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members were sent an outline to review. Fuad sent a revision to Jess and his corrections were added to the report. Sean added further revisions and information concerning the Boy Scouts. Frank offered that in addition to the organized cleanup events, members regularly cleared our local trails and parks of debris, trash and recyclable items. Sean will finalize report. Jess will submit report to Mayor, Council, Manager and Town administrators.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ MOTION to approve the final revised VEC 2019 Annual Report for Submission to the Mayor and Council: Sean; Second: Jess. ○ APPROVAL: All Members present: AYE. 	
5.	Updates:	
	<p>a) VEC Website Progress (Mike A.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mike A has been working on redesigning the VEC website to be more navigable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presentation was tabled until the 1/7/20 meeting.
	<p>b) Stormwater Ordinance/Webinar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Verona’s Stormwater Ordinance is in the early phases of review. ○ Jessica, Sean, and Christen participated in the Webinar on 12/9/19 presented by Chris Obrupta of the Rutgers Cooperative Extension, as well as by ANJEC. ○ The Webinar focused upon many aspects of the Rules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The inception and history of the Stormwater rules and how they evolved to meet increased flooding in NJ. b) The two basic types of Stormwater management: Structural (i.e.: detention basins) and non-structural (ie: swales or rain gardens.) c) Three mandatory portions of the rules: quantity, quality and recharge. d) Emphasized that it is the Township’s responsibility to uphold the Stormwater Management rules. ○ The nine non-Structural Strategies, which include rain gardens, swales, disconnecting storm water for sheet flow, preserving natural lands, low maintenance, natural landscaping, vegetative conveyances, lower percentage of disturbance of a site and less soil compaction on a site. ○ Non-point source pollution and total solid sediment removal. ○ The new State rule updates may include requiring the implementation of green infrastructural Stormwater management utilities throughout a site. ○ Sean expressed interest in issuing a statement on site designs at Cameco in support of integrating green stormwater design criteria at an upcoming Council Meeting. ○ It was not known whether the plans for this redevelopment were still in a conceptual phase or if they had moved forward and were somewhat more developed. Therefore, VEC thought it would be more effective to issue written recommendations from the entire VEC supportive of green infrastructure design for Stormwater management on the various upcoming redevelopment sites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued input from Jess and Sean when warranted. • Jess and Sean recommend watching this webinar which will be available on ANJEC’s website for viewing in coming days. • Jess and Sean will draft a letter to the Council in support of the use of Green Infrastructure on the Cameco and other sites. • Councilwoman McGrath will check the upcoming hearing schedule for Cameco and update Sean and Jess. • Based upon timing of these redevelopment plans and in the event that a special meeting can’t be scheduled, the letter may be sent prior to an official vote set for the 1/7/20 meeting.
	<p>c) Organic Garden Forum Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sarah and Kari have been attending the Organic Garden Forums. ○ Kari indicated that the forums have been well attended and excitement seems to be growing over the Organic Gardens. ○ The speaker at the Forum has offered a wide range of vital information to attendees spanning from basic garden maintenance to the formation of committees for organizational 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah, Kari and Frank will keep the VEC updated on forums and Organic Garden progress. • Update next meeting.

	<p>management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ She added that multiple other communities are greatly successful in managing and growing their organic gardens and memberships. Maplewood's garden is referred to as a model for many other communities to follow. ○ Kari indicated that the fencing was the largest expense, estimated at \$10k to \$12k. Sustainable Verona is applying for a PSE&G grant that will help to defray that expense. The grant announcement will occur in April 2020. 	
	<p>d) Sustainable Verona Update (Frank)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sustainable Verona has not met for a few months due to scheduling difficulties for members. ○ Frank indicated that there is an upcoming Community Garden Conference on 3/7/20 in Morristown, which will offer a wide array of classes and discussions. He stressed that Verona's garden will require 'champions' to help in its organization. ○ Jess added that SV and the VEC may join together for Earth Day's 50th Anniversary celebration. Steve Neale mentioned that the Library has an interest in participating in that celebration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frank to continue providing VEC with updates from Sustainable Verona at each meeting. • Sean will electronically distribute the registration information for the conference. • Jess will contact Steve Neale to find out more about the potential Earth Day event with SV and the Library. • Update next meeting.
	<p>e) Plastic Bag Ban:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Plastic Bag Ban is still under consideration for introduction after the New Year. A snow event caused the last Council meeting to be cancelled, which likely caused a delay in any introduction of an ordinance for this calendar year. ○ The State has begun to take up this issue. S2776 passed through the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee. Should the State pass this bill before mid-January 2020, Verona would not need to pass its own individual regulation. ○ A brief discussion about Planet Civic ensued, where the only initiative listed for public input was a question on the plastic bag ban. Public voting on this initiative was up to 60 in favor and 30 against it as of this meeting. ○ No further updates are available at this time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frank and Jess will keep members updated on new information or events. • Councilwoman McGrath will update the VEC as to when a potential plastic bag ban could be introduced by the Town Council.
6.	<p>VEC Plan Review Committee Comments and Findings</p> <p>a) 21-25 Grove Avenue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant requests C and D (use) variances to construct a 4-story, 40-unit residential building in a C-2 Zone (office and retail). As proposed, the building and parking will extend into the 50-foot required set back by 35 feet and will not meet RSIS parking requirements. ○ Sean presented a summary of the VEC PRC Memo. ○ MOTION to approve VEC PRC Memo: Sean; Second: Jess. ○ APPROVAL: All Members Present AYE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sean had sent VEC PRC memo to the appropriate Board Secretary at their due date. • Jessica reminded the VEC that the hearing for this application is Thursday 12/12/19 and encouraged attendance.

7.	<p>New Business</p> <p>a) VEC Standing Rules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rules were reviewed with members of the VEC to familiarize all members to the current rules set forth for the Commission. ○ MOTION to approve the updated VEC 2019 Standing Rules: Sean; Second: Jess; ○ APPROVAL: All Members Present AYE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sean updated the rules to reflect that meetings generally occur on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the VCC meeting room, with no meeting in August. • Sean revised the review date of the rules to occur every 2 years in April (instead of February) so that any changes in leadership or rules will occur prior to a new Council reorganization. • The next review of these standing rules should occur in April of 2021.
	<p>b) Tree Give-away and Grove Park Cleanup</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Grove Park Cleanup and Tree Giveaway is scheduled for 4/18/20 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day. ○ A park cleanup and perennial garden maintenance will coincide with the tree giveaway. Jess suggested that weeding and mulching of the garden should occur at this mid-April event. ○ Jess will update the VEC as new information becomes available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jess sent the application for 300 seedlings to Manager Cavallo on 11/27 for his review and approval. • Jess will speak with Steve to see if SV wants to participate in this celebration. • Jess will ask Mike A. to design an e-Flyer for use on the Verona Township Website and on Facebook for advertising our event.
	<p>c) Downed Tree Across Peckman River (Kari)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Informed the VEC about concerns over a downed tree across the Peckman River near the Franklin Street Bridge. ○ Her concern was that the tree would dam up the river and cause flooding in the surrounding area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kari will send pictures of the downed tree to Sean. • Sean will forward concerns and pictures to Mike DeCarlo to inform the Township.
	<p>d) Historic Signage Possibility for West Essex Trail (Frank)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expressed interest in having a marker or historical signage placed at the entry of the West Essex Trail either on Fairview Avenue or on Durrell Street. ○ Since the West Essex Trail is a County property, this request would require County approval. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frank will begin research about what sort of information should be included on an historical marker. • Councilwoman McGrath will put Frank into contact with Julius Coltre, Verona's Essex County Liaison.
8.	<p>Adjournment: Next meeting Tuesday, January 7, 2020 at 7 p.m.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCC Meeting Room