

Members Present (Quorum Established at Four or More Members)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jessica Pearson (Chair/Planning Board Liaison)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michael Auteri	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sean DiBartolo (Vice Chair/Plan Review)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kari Baureis	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Martin Golan	<input 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"/> Kevin Ryan (Gov. Body 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"> No members of the public were present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None.
3.	Approval of November 10, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MOTION to Approve: Jess; Second: Sean. APPROVAL: All Members Present AYE. Abstentions: None. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sean will email approved minutes to Township Clerk Kiernan and Steve Neale.
4.	Updates:	
	a) VEC Website Maintenance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are still looking for educational content for upload to the website. The education page has not been fully developed. We are still working on adding an events page that we can populate with past events and pictures as well as promote upcoming events. Fuad had discussed an idea to measure and illustrate township water use and possible garbage and or recycling totals. He termed it Verona Green Footprint. Jess contacted the town and sent Fuad quarterly water usage spreadsheet from 2017 to present. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mike and Sean will work on adding an events tab and populating it with past photos. Fuad has information to begin forming a water usage chart. Frank and Kari will begin to draft short updates on the community garden for the website and social media.
	b) Verona Recycling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new tagging program has begun. No results have been made available as yet. The videos are awaiting scheduling contingent on Steve Neale's availability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awaiting direction from Steve Neale and SV members as to when and how to tackle the video production. Kari, Sarah, and Christen are interested in creating videos. Jess has already emailed Steve with contact information for the interested members.
	c) Sustainable Verona Update: Frank <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Energy Aggregation program is being renewed for an 18-month period and will begin in March 2021 with a new company called Energy Harbor. Verona will be hosting virtual town hall meetings in January to update residents and answer any questions they may have. Community Garden fence was installed 11/19/2020 and the lumber for the beds will be ordered soon. Completion of this project should enable the community to partake in spring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frank gives updates at each meeting. Christen suggested a sign on the outside of the garden to excite the public.

	<p>planting. A Garden Manager, yet to be named, has been nominated and the group is contemplating selecting a master gardener for expert assistance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sustainable Verona will be working with members of the VEC to produce educational videos to aid the public on best practices and commonly made mistakes. There will also be a townwide push for other sorts of educational materials (including videos, as discussed) that will support the new recycling program. 	
	<p>d) New Jersey Composting Council Seminar:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The New Jersey Composting Council held their annual seminar on 11/29/2020. Jessica, Steve Neale, and SV member Ina Denburg attended. ○ The thrust of the morning session was based upon municipal implementation of various different programs including backyard composting support as well as municipal run composting programs. The directors of composting for both NYC as well as Jersey City presented their programs and some of the steps taken to achieve them. The director of Atlantic County presented their program which also includes all yard waste. ○ The afternoon session discussed starter kits and support for introducing various types of municipal composting programs for all different types of towns. For Verona, the most practical type of program has already advanced: Java already provides curbside pickup to many households. ○ Expansion of this existing program would include having the town offer would-be backyarders a choice of composters for purchase and having Java offer educational webinars for support and for purchasing necessary brown materials. ○ Further expansion would include the township setting up a CASP (covered aerated static pile) site where the municipality actively maintains food and yard waste on municipal property. The CASP type of composting is the least expensive, lowest maintenance and sheds the least amount of carbon back into the atmosphere. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jess will be in contact with Steve Neale on forward steps to be taken. ● Members were excited to see furtherance of township support for more composting programs. ● Jess will look into perhaps filming a video of residents doing composting.
	<p>e) Essex County EC Roundtable: Drinking Water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Essex County Environmental Commission Roundtable took place on 11/18/2020. Jess, Sean and Martin were in attendance. ○ The session featured Eric Benson (Campaign Director of Clean Water Action), Kareem Adeem (Director of Newark’s Water and Sewer Utilities), and Matthew Csik, (Director of Water Compliance- New Jersey American Water). ○ Each speaker discussed their challenges in working with the State to see further implementation of controls and safety measures for our drinking water. ○ The roundtable portion took place at the end of the video where each commission shared their progress over the past year. ○ The video can be viewed here: ○ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xDB0GCor3H4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Members are encouraged to view the video on YouTube.

5.	Ordinance Updates	
	<p>a) Stormwater Ordinance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jess, Sean, and Town Engineer Mike DeCarlo have met multiple times to discuss edits on Stormwater Rules to be implemented in Verona's required Ordinance update, which is required to be approved by 3/3/2021. ○ All of DeCarlo's suggestions on many of the terms were included. The inclusion of single-family detached homes is his strong recommendation, as Verona is a residentially based community with continuous build-out occurring on single family lots. ○ Residential Site Improvement Standards (RSIS) has a stormwater section for single- and two-family detached homes that is lenient and does not stipulate any control measures for additions of increased impervious surface. ○ Jess and Sean attended a webinar on RSIS vs Municipal Stormwater Ordinances on 12/2/2020. The Video of the webinar may be viewed here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IjOGnBnCQbg ○ The proposed Verona ordinance does stipulate actions to be taken for single- and two-family detached homes. In order for these requirements to be effective, the Stormwater Ordinance must become part of our Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 150). ○ DeCarlo has sent the draft to the town's planner for review on how to achieve this expanded version of a municipal Stormwater Ordinance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update at next meeting.
	<p>b) Land Use Ordinance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Manager Cavallo and Zoning Administrator Mike DeCarlo are in the process of drafting a new Land Use Ordinance. ○ No further updates are available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Ordinance is a work in progress. ● Jess will follow up with Manager Cavallo when he is available.
6.	Plan Review	
	<p>a) 1 Cypress Avenue, Verona NJ.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The applicant proposes to build a covered, open, front porch which will extend further into the front yard setback. The addition may increase total improved lot coverage to just over the 40% maximum allowable coverage. ○ PRC noted that no trees were to be taken down to prepare the site for the buildout. ○ The PRC recommended that the applicant use low impact development techniques, green building materials and dispose of all construction waste properly. ○ MOTION to approve VEC PRC Memo 1 Cypress Avenue: Sean; Second: Frank. ○ APPROVAL: All Members Present AYE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The VEC PRC received this application on 12/8/2020 and therefore this is an addition to the agenda that was not known at the time of publication. ● Sean had sent this memo to the appropriate Board Secretary on 12/9/2020.
7.	New Business	
	<p>a) VEC 2020 Annual Report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The report was sent to all members for review and was 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jess and Sean will finalize the edits and Jess will forward to

	<p>discussed at the meeting for any edits or updates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The report will be forwarded to the Mayor, Council and Township Manager upon finalization. ○ MOTION to approve VEC Annual Report 2020: Frank; Second: Martin. ○ APPROVAL: All Members Present AYE. 	<p>the Mayor, Council and Township Manager.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sean will amend the total amount of applications reviewed by the VEC PRC from 11 to 12.
	<p>b) Improved Public Access to the Peckman Trail/Verona’s Open Space:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sean would like to know if the town can create more publicly accessible ingress routes to the Peckman Trail. Currently, the only widely used access exists from behind F.N. Brown Elementary School and at certain points in our recent history, access to the trails has been limited or shuttered. ○ Sean points out that there may be a pathway from the foot bridge area on the west side of Franklin Ave or from what appears to be an easement between two homes on Cypress Avenue (13 and 15 Cypress Ave). ○ Additionally, Sean asked about Peckman access through the former Kruvant property, recently purchased by the Township. This 11.5-acre site is deemed open space and borders the east bank of the Peckman River between the end of Commerce Court and the ends of Brookside Terrace and Oak Lane. ○ The Peckman Trail and the former Kruvant site are tied together by the Peckman River. It also appears that Verona owns a strip of property that extends from the north eastside of the Peckman Trail, along the riverside, to the southern side of the Kruvant site. Another question asked was whether this strip of property can be used by the public to walk between the two Verona open spaces. ○ The VEC will plan to designate this site as one or more of our cleanup events in the Spring. We understand that there are large items (tires, chairs, and other larger debris) located at the site that would need to be removed so this site can become a Green Space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sean drafted an email that he will forward to Jess for any additional information or questions. The email will be sent to Manager Cavallo for answers. ● Update next meeting.
	<p>c) CDBG and Rain Gardens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sean mentioned that at the 12/7/2020 Council Meeting, the Town manager had announced the receipt of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Sean asked whether any portion of these funds could be used to help fund the creation of public rain gardens. Jess and Councilman Ryan understood that CDBG funds were only to be used for underserved areas mainly for the improvement of ADA accessibility. ○ The rain garden project was one that the VEC had received an ANJEC grant for in May 2018. Due to delays on construction planning, the VEC had to forgo the grant and relied upon the township funding for this project. ○ Upon application of the CDBG in 2018, it was thought that the funds would help with repaving the Community Center parking lot, which was where the VEC and the town had decided was the best location for the rain garden. This would have given the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Councilman Ryan will ask the Manager whether it is possible for these funds to help defray the costs of installing a public rain garden on town property. ● Update next meeting.

	<p>town an opportunity to install the garden while the parking area was being repaved and curbing was being replaced. Unfortunately, the CDBG funds for the parking area were denied and the rain garden project has yet to be installed.</p>	
8.	<p>Adjournment: 9:03 p.m. Next Meeting Wednesday, January 13, 2020 at 7 p.m.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Via Internet Conference.