

Regular Meeting Minutes:
Wednesday, March 12, 2025, at 7 p.m.
Via Internet Conferencing

Members Present (Quorum Established at Four or More Members)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jessica Pearson (Chair/Planning Board Liaison)	<input type="checkbox"/> Adam Bulger	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sean DiBartolo (Vice Chair/Plan Review)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kelly Peña	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sarah Yauch O'Farrell	<input type="checkbox"/> Philip Beaulac (Alternate I)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fuad Dahan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Christopher Tamburro (Gov. Body Liaison)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Walter Steinmann	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant Seat (Alternate II)	
	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 Public Comments
3.	Approval of February 12, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MOTION to Approve: Sarah; Second: Kelly. APPROVAL: All Members Present AYE. Abstentions: Sean. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sean will email approved minutes to Township Clerk Kiernan and Public Information Officer Northrop and post them to the VEC website.
4.	Updates:	
	a) Peckman Kiosk Plans (On hold) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jess, Walter and Sean still need to meet to discuss content and design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lock replacement underway. Meetings should occur for layout and content between Sean, Walter and Jess.
	b) Newsletter: Spring 2025 focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adam has submitted a waterway quiz and is working through a short story on the Peckman. Jr. Commissioner Trey drafted an article on river pollution. Jess has added a page with information concerning the Native Plant Sale, plant lecture and other Earth Day info. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spring Release date is 3/20/2025.
	c) Sustainable Verona <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussed the Home Energy-Audit program and the Township has submitted for a grant to cover some costs. Will be giving two \$500 scholarships to VHS students. Attended Recreation Committee meeting to discuss natural grass fields, but there was an artificial turf installer that presented before Sustainable Verona was to present to the group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updates at each meeting.
	d) Junior Commissioners' Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trey: Not Present. Noella: Wants to draft an article for the summer edition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No actions necessary.

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	<p>e) Earth Day Plant Sale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The plant sale is active, and we have received over \$700 in plant orders. ○ Jess has hung posters at a number of stores in Verona and Cedar Grove. If anyone knows of a local business that would hang our poster, we need more PR if anyone wants to help. ○ Keeping a spreadsheet of orders and moneys due/received. ○ Plant Sale closes Friday, 4/11/2025 with all orders and money due by this date. Plant pick-up is Saturday 4/26/2025 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Hillcrest Farms. We need VEC members to show up and help with this. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jess asks that everyone attempt to help at Hillcrest
	<p>f) 2025 Poster Contest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Have received all posters from FN Brown; a few posters from Forest Avenue. ○ The video is in production. ○ Entries are due by 3/21/2025 and the Awards ceremony is scheduled for 5/5/2025 in Council Chambers at 7 p.m. ○ Jess will purchase gift cards in April and coordinate with Municipal Clerk Kiernan to organize the awards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jess will contact Municipal Clerk Kiernan to ensure scheduling of the ceremony. • Asks that members make themselves available to attend the 5/5/2025 Council meeting for the awards ceremony.
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ordinance Updates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
	<p>a) Tree Ordinance (Tabled until new updates)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Last update was in January 2025. 	<p>Updates when they are available.</p>
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Plan Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
	<p>a) 107 Hillside Avenue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant seeks impervious coverage variance to construct an addition and extend the patio on the rear of the home. ○ Applicants' plans include a drywell on the side of the home, even though they did not require it. They proposed to add 45 square feet of new impervious whereas the minor stormwater ordinance is triggered when 400 square feet of new impervious surface are added. ○ VEC recommended to direct downspouts to the drywell and plant perennials and or shrubs to aid with stormwater mitigation. ○ PRC sent low impact development checklist and recommended adherence. ○ MOTION to approve VEC PRC recommendations for 107 Hillside Avenue: Jess; Second: Sarah. ○ APPROVAL: All other Members Present AYE. ○ ABSTAIN: None. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VEC PRC memo was emailed to the appropriate Board prior to this meeting.
	<p>b) 176 Grove Avenue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant seeks to subdivide a property to construct a second home on the lot. The existing home is a non-conforming 2-Family, which is why this subdivision will be heard by the Board of Adjustments. ○ Applicants' plans to expand the existing side driveway to approximately 18 feet wide and extend driveway to the proposed rear lot. The extension of the width will necessarily cause the removal of multiple trees, which are not listed for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VEC PRC memo was emailed to the appropriate Board prior to this meeting.

	<p>removal within the application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The extension of the driveway triggers, at the very least, minor development stormwater mitigation, with the addition of a home, this could become a major development, which would trigger all necessary mitigation of stormwater impacts required for major developments. The VEC recommended installation of permeable pavers for the driveway to help with stormwater mitigation. ○ The VEC noted that the rear of the property is listed by the NJDEP as a habitat for the Wood Turtle, a threatened species. According to our Stormwater ordinance, no disturbance for the installation of any stormwater BMPs should be placed in areas that are environmentally critical. We, therefore, recommended that any approval should be conditioned to prohibit tree removals, and any installation of pavement, improvements, disturbance or stormwater mitigation in this area. ○ MOTION to approve VEC PRC recommendations for 176 Grove Avenue: Sarah; Second: Walter. ○ APPROVAL: All other Members Present AYE. ○ ABSTAIN: None. 	
	<p>c) Everett Field Updates: The Township revised plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Township revised the plans for Everett Field ○ The plans presented were found to be lacking in many details surrounding the tree removal/replacement plans; the stormwater plans and the limits of disturbance into the steep slopes. ○ The VEC comments were reviewed in detail, led by Sean. ○ MOTION to approve VEC PRC comments for Everett Field Plan Updates: Walter; Second: Fuad. ○ APPROVAL: All other Members Present AYE. ○ ABSTAIN: None. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VEC PRC memo was emailed to the Council and Manager prior to this meeting.
7.	d) New Business	
	<p>a) ANJEC Webinars</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3/18/2025 to 3/20/2025 via Zoom ○ You must register for these – All VEC members may attend for free. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended for all members.
	<p>b) New Business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sarah and Kelly: Invasive Plant Walk; map and plan route. ○ Peckman Trail Cleanup at FN Brown: 6/7/2025. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans in the works
8.	<p>Adjournment: 8:23p.m.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Next Meeting Wednesday, April 9, 2025. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Via Internet Conference.
9.	<p>Meeting Minutes Approved: 4/9/2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jessica Pearson, Chair, Verona Environmental Commission 	