

Members Present (Quorum Established at Four or More Members)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jessica Pearson (Chair/Planning Board Liaison)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adam Bulger	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sean DiBartolo (Vice Chair/Plan Review)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jean Deo	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sarah Yauch O'Farrell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kelly DiGeronimo (Alternate I)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Vacant	<input type="checkbox"/> Anthony Triolo (Alternate II)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Walter Steinmann	<input type="checkbox"/> Christopher Tamburro (Gov. Body Liaison)	
	DISCUSSION	ACTION REQUIRED
1.	Call to Order by Jess: a) Open Public Meetings Act Statement. b) Roll Call performed.	• None.
2.	Public Comment Period:	• None
3.	Approval of December 10, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes: • MOTION to Approve: Sarah; Second: Walter. • APPROVAL: All Members Present, AYE. • Abstentions: None.	• Sean will email approved minutes to Township Clerk Kiernan and Public Information Officer Northrop and post them to the VEC website.
4.	Presentations:	
	a) Chris Sotiro of NJ Future: Age Friendly Infrastructural Policy: ○ Verona has received an inclusive communities grant for \$250,000 to improve conditions for older adults. There is also a \$70,000 grant. The goals of the project focuses upon eight domains of livability. ○ Applies to the age group 55 and older. ○ Grant monies could be allocated to efforts including: • Events, Rain Garden Construction, Rain barrel initiatives, • Coordination with other groups, like the Library, Senior advisory councils, • Crosswalks in unsafe areas like Verona Park at Cumberland and Porcello, • Fishing clubs, social opportunities • Educational events, i.e. on Stormwater. ○ Other towns in receipt of grant monies include Bloomfield, Livingston, and Montclair.	• No actions needed. Updates when they become available.
	b) Complete Streets: ○ Sean presented the Strans Engineering overview for Bloomfield Avenue's complete street improvements. ○ Discussed some of the materials that were proposed for sidewalks and for curblines, trees, lighting and bump-outs that could aid in stormwater management, but could also lend to unintended side effects such as adding to traffic delays. ○ Sean brings up the issue of bus stops and how to accommodate both bump outs for stormwater mitigation and functional bus lanes. ○ Query of when the recalibration of traffic lights by the County of	• No actions needed. Updates when they become available.

	Bloomfield Avenue will occur remains unanswered	
5.	Updates:	
	<p>a) Peckman Kiosk Plans (Tabled until action is undertaken):</p> <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 awaiting further discussion. • Awaiting meeting schedule.
	<p>b) Spring Newsletter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ideas for the 2026 Spring Newsletter were discussed. ○ Tree Ordinance Update- Story about Tree- For the summer edition. ○ Trash information—Talking Trash guidelines. ○ Expose of Treasured trees - “Tree of the month.” ○ Expose of the trail created by Eagle Scout James Waugh. ○ Know your weed. ○ We can capture pics of birds. ○ Best practices for dog walking - Adam. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jess will contact Elisa to schedule the release of the newsletter.
	<p>c) Sustainable Verona:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Anthony Triolo, newly appointed to the VEC will be the liaison to SV. He will be available for attendance starting in February. ○ Continued energy efficiency program work. ○ Potential for a 2nd EV car course for our first responders. ○ Looking at planning for SV certification for 2027; may look to use Verona students from Capstone to help organize spreadsheets of action for certification. ○ Potential compost program for small segment to be located near recycling center through Java Compost. ○ Research potential Terra Cycle bins to be located at the recycling center. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates as available.
	<p>d) Junior Commissioner Introductions:</p> <p>Violet Palmer: Introduces herself and how excited she is to have joined us. She may want to study pollutions at different temperatures.</p> <p>Scarlett Morin: Excited with projects- trying to reopen VHS courtyard and add garden for a safe space. Using art and photography to illuminate environmental issues in town.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates at every meeting.
	<p>e) Vest Attire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Members have to go to Academy Apparel to try on vests for appropriate sizing prior to any order being placed. ○ Jess is still awaiting member emails on sizes; they should email Jessica their size ASAP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jess will move forward with purchase order once she receives size preferences from members.
	<p>f) WeCare NJ update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 12/3/2026 meeting began with testimony from Planning Board engineer on slope stability in lieu of building plans on edge of slope and WeCare NJ attorney cross examination ○ Tonight serves as the first evening entirely devoted to public comment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates as they are available.

6.	<p>Ordinance Updates:</p> <p>a) Tree Ordinance (Tabled until new updates)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates when they are available.
7.	<p>Plan Review:</p> <p>a) 21-25 Grove Avenue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant proposes 11 Townhouse units on 0.72-acre requesting variances including use variance for residential use in a commercial zone, rear and side yard setbacks where decks, buildings and mechanical equipment are planned, reduced required landscape buffer, building land coverage, height requirements, rooftop decks, parking lot sizes, etc. ○ Tree removals and replacements have not been appropriately specified on plans by a licensed tree expert with health assessment of trees proposed for removal. Trees proposed for the site will not survive in the areas proposed due to lack of necessary sun and potential water logging. ○ The applicant is applying the most advantageous standards from the commercial and the residential zones when it benefits the proposal. In the most similar zone in Verona’s zoning code A-3 Townhouses, the density would require reduction from 11 to 8 units and allowable coverage would be reduced to 55% instead of the proposed 61%. ○ The applicant’s SWM plan is not compliant with Verona’s code: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not treating water onsite. ▪ Not retaining water onsite. ▪ Not proposing or utilizing green infrastructure onsite. ○ The VEC PRC recommended various portions of the site be converted to green infrastructure for stormwater utility. ○ MOTION to approve VEC PRC for 21-25 Grove Avenue: Walter; Second: Adam. ○ 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.
8.	<p>New Business:</p> <p>a) Poster Contest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The 2026 Poster Contest themes: Native Trees and Flowers, Plastic reduction, no idling. ○ Laning’s Principal, Mr. Freund, has agreed to the VEC visiting the school to motivate student participation. ○ Discussion of schedule; help with organizing. <p>b) Earth Day Celebration 2026:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meeting. <p>c) Other Projects/Initiatives 2026:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Additional cleanup 2/22/2026 at HBW and Park Ave. ○ Possible tree giveaway. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jess has sent the information to all 4th grade teachers with a due date of Friday, 3/20/2026. • None. • None.
9.	<p>Adjournment: 9:00 p.m.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Next Meeting Wednesday, February 11, 2026. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Via Internet Conference.

10.	Meeting Minutes Approved: 2/11/2026. <ul style="list-style-type: none">o Jessica Pearson, Chair, Verona Environmental Commission	
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