

MEETING NOTES
Regional Solid Waste Plan Advisory Committee
***Citizens Stakeholders Meeting #2**

Date of Meeting: 6:30 PM, Thursday, August 26, 2010
Meeting Location: Union County Government Center
155 North 15th Street, Lewisburg, PA
Meeting #: **Citizens Stakeholder Meeting #2**
Attendees: See Attached Sign In Sheet

Joyce Hatala opened the meeting. Everyone introduced themselves. Joyce reminded everyone to please keep track of their mileage for the grant match. Joyce would like to go over the questions on the survey she sent out (see attached). Joyce asked the group what they would like to see in the solid waste plan, what's working well, what issues need the most attention, when it pertains to recycling, waste collection, burning, trash, etc.

Brian Johnson from Columbia County said outside burning continues to be a problem. He's noticed it in urban areas where the density is high but said the township does a good job trying to keep it under control. He lives in a rural area and there is no ordinance whatsoever. He said people are burning everything. There's no constraint on how it's being burned. He's surprised that in an era where people express a concern for the environment, this is one area that no one wants to deal with. Farmers that burn their brush is a different issue than burning trash and recyclables. Joyce asked if he'd like to see no burning at all, and Brian said he would like to see NO burning of household hazardous waste or recyclables. Burning brush is a different thing all together. Bloomsburg Recycling Center is doing a great job. If it was better organized we may get more recycling in rural areas. Steve Tucker asked if they had some recycling in the rural area before the recycling fee went away. Brian said yes. Now there is no recycling coordinator. The Township had biweekly drop off. It was something, not ideal but at least it was something. Other townships had contracted with certain haulers to pick it up, and it worked better. Joyce commented that if there was money like there was before, they could focus on it, or at least bring back recycling.

Terry Hoover of CCPC commented about incentives. His township provides curbside pickup to densely populated areas. It was helpful to have funding reimbursement. He finds a lot of residents don't put out curbside recycling and he doesn't know why. His recycling is single stream so it's pretty easy. Lisa Gibson commented about living in the Washington, DC area previously. She said there weren't any incentives, citizens just did it. She believes it was due to more education and knowing about it for the citizens to recycle. Sam Pearson commented that Lower and Upper Augusta Township stated that if the citizens knew more about what they are burning, they may not do it, since everything costs money to burn, and it is harmful to the environment. Education, even to children, and having bins, help people recycle also. Gwen Jones stated that in rural areas there needs to be an incentive. Joyce stated that education definitely helps people know how to

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do it. Sam Pearson commented that volunteers helped run a program on the campus. They used radio broadcasts and that has helped people understand it. If they can get a better sense of the priorities, they can get more air time/radio. It doesn't always have to cost money to get the word out. If the County recycling coordinators worked with her or some media to provide them the priorities, it would get the word out quicker and cheaper. Gwen stated that Debbie Wolf does a "trash talk" newsletter and it doesn't cost her anything. Snyder County Times is now allowing her to add it as a column. It's so informative. The weekly newspaper's love "filler articles" and people like to read that. More people read Snyder County Times than some other newspapers. Charlotte said public radio might do it for free. Sam said all radio stations are required to do public announcements so it would be worth checking into.

Matthew Rogers from CCPC stated that the hours are the only negative to the program. It is never opened when it's convenient. It would be nice to be opened one Saturday a month (Columbia County). Gwen said Union County is always open, it's convenient, and it's a drop off. Sam said Union County is threatening to close due to illegal dumping. The New Berlin site is staffed sometimes. They had more recycling than the rest of the County it seemed.

Joyce asked how we're going to pay for all of it. She did not know if we could run all the programs with volunteers and at no cost. We talked about funding things voluntarily. Debbie Snyder stated that if people were being charged over \$1 to come into the drop off, then recycling goes down. Some citizens suggested to charge a fee to the haulers as one suggestion, charge a huge fine if someone is caught burning would be another suggestion. Recycling needs to be easy to manage and easy for people to do. If you take away the costs of trash, it encourages recycling. Charge for everything else and recycling is free (path of least resistance). Dave commented that most residents in the 5-county region have a subscription program for waste collection, so it may be difficult to implement a recycling program that operates differently. Steve Tucker said some programs allow mandated communities to opt out of curbside if you show them what you're going to do in lieu of curbside.

There's money out there, commented Matthew Rogers of CCPC. There are recycling grants but the grants are funding much less. Gwen stated that there are quite a few places to recycle. They county received a grant and they are going to have a larger recycling center near Selinsgrove (close to 522). The plan is to have this recycling center open longer hours and more days. They are hoping those who don't have a great recycling program can just drop it off with the County and then go along their way. Joyce asked if it would be considered more of a consolidation center. Matthew commented that it's just a place to drop it off, to make it easier for people to recycle (and not burn it). Finding

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ways to increase the hours in at least one recycling center (in a hub area) and providing education will assist them in understanding that they don't have to burn it. If we do that for a few months, educate people, and teach them how it all works, they will understand the concept. After that, it's just a matter of money – they don't want to pay for recycling but education can overcome the reluctance to spend money on recycling.

Sam Pearson said that one of the most important forms of recycling is composting. It is a potential for waste reduction as well as cost savings but education and adding it into the equation is key. People don't know they can recycle, or they don't know how/what to recycle. Joyce said food/kitchen waste is still a permitted item but it would be great to educate the public that the best grass recycling is just leaving it on their lawn.

Joyce asked if there was a way to increase composting sites. Steve said there are sites that are doing great things with composting in Union County for free (private). Citizens can go free to the municipalities too (per Sam Pearson). Charlotte Resek said it would be helpful to have security cameras at the sites and high fines to those who dump. The fines would pay for the security cameras.

Joyce asked the group to provide recommendations of what they feel would be the best recommendations for Charlotte to take to the Steering Committee: recycling centers opened longer hours, fees paid for some costs (hauling, longer hours, cameras, etc). Matt suggested the municipality buildings have a drop off. For hauling purposes have them haul it based upon the area.

Chandler Couch mentioned mixing recyclables to reduce energy costs associated with driving there. He asked if sorting at the recycling center could deal with 8-9 recyclables in one roll off. Dave Minnear responded that they could but chances are that there would be more contamination and increased costs at the facility, and he's not sure if it would increase the amount of recycling. Dave asked if there was a way for us to come up with a way to do curbside recycling in all 5-counties. Sam Pearson said only if it was a comprehensive curbside. It would have to be comprehensive in order to work or it just adds to driving other material to a recycling center. Steve Tucker said that if you had a green bag for glass, a white bag for containers, a brown bag for fiber, etc., then the hauler can pick up the garbage and the recycling at the same time. Charlotte said most people probably wouldn't want to buy bags. Samantha said it could work where every household is given a certain amount of bags per year. She believes the haulers would love to get involved in everything. The colored bags make sense. No matter what method is used, it's going to cost money. If we don't want to take green or brown glass, we can provide a center place (municipality) to source separate just that.

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If you do curbside recycling with the hauler, he's going to get more subscription service, he's going to have more weight on the truck, he's got to pay the tip fee, etc., so he'll want to get something for that. Citizens said he'd have to make 2 trips – one with recycling and one with garbage. No tipping fee for recycling.

Leslie O'Malley asked who would have to pay for the bags. Steve Tucker said they should be available for citizens to buy them at the store. Sam Pearson commented that people would just go back to burning. Joyce asked about the sticker to buy through the township (that you don't live in). For the sticker fee of \$20 or so, you would be able to bring recyclables to a neighboring drop off site. Leslie O'Malley felt it was something people would do (she would do it). Gwen suggested that the recycling coordinators buy the bags and make some money on trying to sell them to the residents. Bloomsburg said he could take a lot more material if it was source separated. Charlotte asked if the 2-trip thing makes sense in rural areas. Either it's not moving and getting burned or, if it is moving, they have to bring it together. Chandler Couch suggested that we encourage people to use bags by giving them to the haulers and giving the haulers the incentive (as a discount on their bill). The hauler would work harder to get the subscription. Gwen Jones said she could have 2 bags of garbage per week. If the hauler is making money on the recyclables, maybe he will be willing to supply the bags.

Sam Pearson suggested the use of colored stickers instead of colored bags, and asked if that would make it harder to sort. Tags or zip ties would work too. Charlotte said stickers make more sense, it's cheaper, it would eliminate the drop offs and save on plastic used for the bags. Haulers would love to do it if they got paid.

Matt asked why haulers could not have a specific region to haul from? Steve Tucker responded that that is called flow control and the haulers will not have it. Gwen said that education is huge but most people don't care. They are going to burn anyway.

Joyce asked about use of a clearinghouse website for listing recyclables that aren't typically collected. Samantha said keeping it updated is the hardest part. If there could be a fee charged with a service that's provided, then there's a way to do it. It depends on how expensive you want to get. There are 24-pages in their booklet that take back things. Charlotte commented that she would try to get a Bucknell student to do something like that booklet). Joyce said some of it starts with volunteers and you can get it very detailed. You could put the website management out to bid, just as the state does with the recycling hotline. There is a lot we would do if we had some money to work with. She said that is difficult to do the website with volunteers only.

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Charlotte is the representative to the Steering Committee. Joyce asked if Charlotte had any comments about the steering committee. Charlotte responded saying that it was interesting; it was more detailed than what we talked about at the stakeholder meetings. She got the impression that in this plan we're not going to address burning. It has to be state wide it seems. Dave said that he would write a model ordinance and provide it for individual municipalities to adopt if they chose. Brian Johnson commented that he would be disappointed if it wasn't mentioned in the plan.

Charlotte commented that there are other Universities that will do group work-studies and they need concrete projects. Joyce asked if these students could staff the drop offs (or is that too open?) The students would only be able to work during school time.

Dave commented to everyone about making an effort to view the plan's website. If you come up with a great idea, please email us. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, October 7, 2010 at 6:30 P.M.

The meeting adjourned 8:10PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Johnson
EfficientC