

Draft SWAAC Meeting Minutes
Albemarle County Solid Waste Alternatives Advisory Committee
June 9, 2022

Attendance:

SWAAC: Christine Hirsh-Putnam, Peggy Gilges, Anne Johnson, Jesse Warren, Margaret Eldridge, Betsey Soulsby, Teri Kent, Navarre Bartz, Monty Harris, Victoria Walsh
Liaisons: Jim Andrews, Elizabeth Jones, Phil McKalips
SWAAC members absent: Sage Bradburn
Other attendees: Randall Dix, SWAAC applicant

Action Items

- Christine and Jesse will touch base about contacting Jay Zook of GFL about plastic bag and glass messaging and possible glass hauling in the region.
- Elizabeth will follow up with Loudoun County about the Standard Operating Procedures for Loudoun's hauler requirements ordinance as a model for Albemarle County.
- Christine and Monty will pursue school composting efforts for 2022-2023 school year once this school year wraps up.
- Anne and Monty will discuss EPA grant opportunities to fund recycling/composting needs/programs.
- Victoria will share her C2C slides with SWAAC and is happy to field questions next meeting if there are any.

Old Business

- June agenda was approved.
- May minutes were approved.
- Randall Dix introduced himself. He has applied to join the SWAAC. He is a former chef and student of food and agriculture policy who now lives in Scottsville-Esmont area and works for a climate justice group in Louisiana. He is a compost enthusiast and advocate.
- Phil has updated the compost info on the RSWA website to include that compostable food ware is acceptable.
- Lance sent an email to the SWAAC on 6/9/22 regarding the SWAAC's request that he ask consultant GBB about doing a waste characterization study of Albemarle so that we could get an idea of the breakdown of trash and recyclables in our area—such as how much of the trash is organics or recyclable, what kind of contaminants are in recycling bins. GBB gave an estimate of \$90,000 to do a very detailed study. This is not in the County's budget for the coming year.
- Anne stated that her company (Resource Recycling) regularly does these studies for communities and recently did one for a small community in northern MI for approximately \$25,000. She thought a useful, basic study could be conducted for less than we were quoted. Anne has invited Annie White to join the SWAAC. Annie is well versed in waste characterization studies; she was a sustainability manager for Washington D.C. before moving to Albemarle. Anne thought we could also reduce the

cost by using students to do the waste audits, but Jesse said although students might participate voluntarily to some extent, they would likely need to be paid to take it on as a project.

- SWAAC would like to know if the City of Charlottesville asked GBB to do a waste characterization study as part of their waste diversion consulting engagement with GBB. Lance might know. Teri emailed the Center of Eco-technology who had interviewed her for the City's waste diversion study to find out if a waste characterization study was done for C'ville. Krystal Riddervold and Susan Elliot might also know if a waste characterization study is being done. If so, it could be applicable to the County.
- The Plastic Waste Prevention Advisory Council met locally to discuss strategies for increasing plastic recycling capacity in VA. As chairman, Anne organized several presentations on how other states obtain revenue to invest in recycling infrastructure in their states. Anne provided SWAAC with the links to all the presentations.
- Peggy attended and liked what other states are doing to raise money for recycling infrastructure, such as adding a surcharge to tipping fees. Anne stated that because VA receives a lot of out-of-state waste, VA could consider placing a surcharge on tipping for out-of-state waste.
- VA is not investing adequately in facilities, and some communities such as Chesapeake are giving up on curbside recycling as a result. TFC, the local MRF, is struggling to pick up and process recyclables due to labor shortages. Private MRFs need bigger facilities with new technology such as optical scanners to sort plastic.
- The PWPAC will present several ideas to the state legislature about what can be done in VA to improve the situation. Del. Ken Plum (H.D. 36) attended the PWPAC meeting in person, and made the request that the committee continue its work another year, but it's unclear what more can be done if the legislature does not take up any of the suggested ideas.

Planning and Vision Group

- Navarre will assist Peggy and Christine working on hauler requirements.
- Peggy shared information about the progressive California organics bill (SB 1383)-- which requires a 75% reduction in organic waste disposed in landfills by 2025 to reduce methane emissions that are contributing to climate change. 20% of CA's methane emissions are produced by organics in landfills.

County and RSWA Operations Group

- Victoria will consider taking over leadership of this group from Jesse.
- Nelson County has decided not to participate in the glass recycling effort that Ops has been working on. The reason is the proximity of their landfill; Nelson County feels the emissions generated by trucking glass to a recycling facility rather than the nearby landfill outweighs the benefits of recycling the glass. Nelson also felt that we were overestimating the amount of glass that would be coming out of Nelson.
- Ops will talk further with Fluvanna and Greene about recycling glass. Private entities may also decide to participate in glass recycling with Albemarle directly.

- Phil said that the Happy Little Dumpster business was recently sold to a Charlottesville resident who might have an interest in assisting with a glass recycling initiative.

Outreach, Communication and Education Group

- Will Tucker and Christine met with the manager for Darden Towe to see the athletic fields there.
- Discussion of artificial turf will return, and it's important to understand the complexity of the topic. The plastic turf carpet breaks down causing migration of microplastics into our environment— the field at CHS is “shedding” microplastics very obviously.
- Betsey has been working consistently at McIntire as a recycling ambassador. John and Alvin, who work there, are doing a great job helping people and keeping McIntire tidy.
- Betsey has been organizing the “Electronics Unplugged” community e-waste drives for the past two years every four months. She has been receiving e-waste in the parking area of her company until now, but needs a larger space. Let her know if you have location ideas.
- We discussed the status of materials accepted at McIntire and the potential for changes. For example, very little newsprint is collected nowadays, so newsprint is often combined with mixed paper for recycling. Christine asked if the newspaper collection bin should be given over to #5 plastics. Phil said we do not have a nearby place to send #5, and that you need to amass a certain quantity before it is cost effective to ship anywhere, but it could be a possibility if markets develop.
- Anne said that an advanced recycling plant in Ohio can take #5s. Volume would come not so much from food packaging as from durable goods.
- Phil gave an update on the planning for a new baling facility to replace the Paper Sort, saying that it will be upwards of \$5 million and requires funding from both City and County.
- Growth in waste at the Ivy transfer station has been robust. Ivy reduced its tipping fee from \$66/ton to \$52/ton, and with fuel prices high, haulers are interested in using the closest available option. The Ivy transfer station is receiving 170/tons per day, up from about 40/tons/day since reducing the tipping fee. Waste intake could increase to 200 tons/day, so that there will be no extra room on the tipping floor to accommodate recycling efforts. The original plan was to keep 25% of the tipping floor for recycling. We do still recycle some metals pulled from the tipping floor.
- The tipping floor is so busy with trash that the staff no longer has time to pull reusables off the floor for the Encore Shop.
- Phil said that we do not have a very good idea of how much our recycling has increased, but collection of recyclables has also increased. We do not have a scale at the Paper Sort. We combine recycling from Ivy and McIntire there for baling and shipping so we do not have a good sense of how much recycling each of the two recycling locations generates. A new baling facility will have a scale and will help us keep better metrics for RSWA recycling programs.

Presentation about C2C by Victoria Walsh

The term “cradle to cradle” is a term we have been hearing recently with regard to artificial turf. Because Victoria has extensive experience working with MBDC prior to her current job at IPG, she gave us a presentation about how products can obtain Cradle to Cradle certification, what the various levels of certification mean and how the standards are being raised to require companies and products wishing to obtain or maintain certification to do more.

- Products can be identified as C2C certified on the Institute’s registry on its website (c2ccertified.org).
- Certificates are valid for a 2-year period. If a company decides not to renew its C2C product certification, it is removed from the registry at the expiration date.
- C2C certification is not “one and done”; a company has to continue improving its product to remain in the program/renew its certification. C2C is a framework to achieve an optimized product.
- Certification levels range from Bronze to Platinum. Most products are at the Bronze level.
- Products are assessed across five criteria: safe and healthy materials, material reutilization, renewable energy, water stewardship and social fairness . The overall rating for a product is equal to its lowest category achievement level, so a product may meet Silver or Gold requirements in some categories but if it is Bronze on any, it will have an overall C2C rating of Bronze.
- Sometimes products or processes are described as “cradle to cradle”, but are not C2C Certified-- very different things.
- C2C was developed out of a desire to source products with healthy materials and manufactured with consideration for things like water and energy use, treatment of employees and impacts to communities.
- The Cradle to Cradle Certified Products Program is in the process of transitioning from version 3.1 to 4.0 of the Standard. Products already certified will have to renew their certifications to the higher standard by 1 July 2024 to stay in the program. The most significant changes relate to the social fairness and product circularity categories.
- For C2C certification, companies must collect data and submit information to an accredited assessor.
- Many manufacturers don’t have full knowledge of the chemicals in their own products. To get to the 75% material assessment required for Bronze level takes a lot of time and effort. If you have a sub-optimal material in your product, you need to develop a strategy to get rid of it in order to continue with certification.
- On hazard and exposure risks, the 4.0 version updates the restricted substances list and places new restrictions on persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic substances at and above the Silver level.
- Materials reutilization criteria looks at whether products are made using renewable and recyclable materials. Is the final product designed for re-use? Are recycling and composting available where the product is sold?

- Cradle to Cradle uses the concept of nutrient cycles, one for biological nutrients (BN) and one for technical nutrients (TN), which are typically separate. Products should be designed so their materials remain in the appropriate cycle. This is done with a combination of material choice and design for disassembly. Example: If you take a piece of paper (a BN) and coat it with a chemical and it's no longer able to be safely returned to soil through composting, that creates a problem. Companies need to be careful about additives used to make products.
 - Renewable energy standards. At the Platinum level you are responsible for the embodied carbon in your product and making it only with renewable energy.
 - Water stewardship--both going in and coming out. Are you taking water from a water-scarce environment and failing to return it to the watershed? Are you ensuring the water leaving your facility is as clean as possible?
 - Social fairness assesses treatment of employees and the community in which you are extracting materials and manufacturing.
 - 4.0 list for chemicals incorporates three significant changes. The restricted chemicals list now has different thresholds based on scientific data on chemical classes and application. Assessment is content and context specific. If you are producing something that could be in contact with children, level would be different than if used in a product where contact is unlikely.
 - Victoria will share her slides and welcomes SWAAC members to email her with any questions about C2C, which she can address at our next meeting.
 - Victoria is willing to give a short presentation to us about the work she is doing at IPG and the products they make, eight of which are C2C certified.
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- Jim announced that we will begin meeting in person again in September.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30, next meeting will be held July 14.

