

Minutes of the Waste Prevention Steering Committee May 29, 2008

Attendees:

Erich Kruger, ReNew Materials and Salvage; Chris Beling, EPA Region I; Peter Crawford, VT SBDC; Tracy Tsugawa, VOCAL; Jen Holliday, CSWD; Donna Barlow Casey, CVSWMD; Alyssa Shuren, April Kane, Toxics Action Center; Cathy Jamieson, DEC Solid Waste Program Manager; Doug Robie, DEW Construction; Bill Hochstin, Dartmouth College; Will Colgan, NECI; James O’Gorman, RSWD, Fred Moody, GUVSWD; Tom Gilbert, Highfields; Andy Johnson, Clean Harbors; Robin Ingenthron, Good Point; Pam Clapp, SWAC; Mary O’Brien, Southern Windsor Windham Co. SWD; Jim McCullough, Williston Legislator; Vicky Tebbetts, VT Chamber; Carl Witke, AVR; Brian Mitosfy, Coffee Corner;

Facilitator: Jeff Edelstein

DEC Support Staff:

Dave DiDomenico, Jeff Fehrs, Carolyn Grodinsky, Buzz Surwilo, Julie Hackbarth, Marci Young

Meeting Purposes:

1. Update group on activities since last January’s Steering Committee meeting
2. Identify stakeholder long-term and short-term areas of interest from among report recommendations
3. Discuss action plans and next steps for areas of interest

Top Priorities (in no particular order)

- Require Pay-As-You-Throw/develop radical new rate restructure
- Develop infrastructure
- Require mandatory recycling and phase in landfill bans for designated materials
- Product stewardship
- Enable composting

Updates:

ANR updated the Committee on the current planning processes related to the Waste Prevention Plan

- *Legislated Solid Waste Working Group* - to review ANR's Solid Waste Report http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/wastediv/solid/pubs/Solid_Waste_Report.pdf along with information, including work by other groups, and report recommendations to the legislature
- *Solid Waste Managers' Working Group* - to assist ANR in developing a new state solid waste plan including recommendations related to providing waste reduction services statewide and how to fund them.
- *Legislated Composting Study Group* - tasked with streamlining composting regulations and "improving awareness" of composting (education)
- Composting Association of Vermont (CAV) - reviewing composting regulations and providing recommendations for streamlining and improving the existing regulations (CAV will address regulations from the Agencies of Agriculture and Natural Resources and Act 250.)

Executive Committee of the Waste Prevention Steering Groups work since January

Executive Committee decided it was important to meet with key decision makers to move forward with the Plan. Met with Secretaries Crombie (ANR) and Albee (AG), and legislators. (Unfortunate only two legislators participated, as it was the end of the session. Therefore Next Steps could involve holding another meeting with legislators.) Committee developed a power point presentation highlighting the results and recommendations of the planning process, which is available for others to use. The Committee decided not to do a press conference until all steering committee members had signed off on the report.

Secretary has tasked the Solid Waste District (SWD) managers to craft a vision to help develop a new state solid waste management plan over the next 10 years. Over the summer and fall Solid Waste District managers will be meeting to develop recommendations.

Laura Pelosi, DEC Commissioner update

- Planning goal is to use planning efforts toward developing a new state solid waste plan. (Solid waste legislated committee, Compost Association of Vermont [CAV] working group, SWD managers) will help to fill it in.
- The groups (will look at recommendations of the Waste Prevention report). Entire waste prevention group could meet again when pieces start to come together

Reorganization update

- DEC division managers are looking at streamlining opportunities and how they can shift resources toward these opportunities.
- Reviewed the schedule for adapting new Solid Waste Plan - would like to make significant progress in the next year
- ANR needs to leverage all of its resources
- Have begun discussions with Kevin Dorn, Secretary of Agency of Commerce and Community Development (Economic development) regarding how to grow green jobs

Continuing roles for subcommittees

- Continue organics, develop specifics
- Continue C&D and get more practitioners on board
- group needs to start focusing on legislative changes needed to move ahead with needed changes - to be ready for next year's legislative session
- Is there a role for a big public forum? Forum helpful to share information with the general public, and to get general input for what provisions to include in the State Solid Waste Plan.

Steering Committee members voted on their top priorities for waste reduction from three prioritized lists:

1. list of 27 priorities of the Waste Prevention Plan
2. list of priorities recommended by the Executive Committee of the Waste Prevention Steering Committee
3. list of priority actions recommended by ANR to take on.

The top priorities identified by the full group were:

- Require Pay-As-You-Throw/develop radical new rate restructure
- Develop infrastructure
- Require mandatory recycling and phase in landfill bans for designated materials
- Product stewardship
- Enable composting

Breakout groups were formed based on the top priorities

- Landfill material bans and mandatory recycling
- Infrastructure development
- Product Stewardship
- Organics

Breakout group questions:

1. Who are the potential partners/key players/potential opponents
2. What's next? What needs to happen in the short term

3. Obstacles and challenges

Brainstorming Session notes identified for the top priorities of organics, product stewardship, infrastructure and mandates and bans:

1. Partners , Key Players and potential opponents and their concerns
2. Next steps
3. Challenges

Organics

Next Steps

- Revise regulations with the Agencies of Natural Resources and Agriculture, Health Department, ACT 250. This process has begun through the CAV process and internally at DEC. DEC is also working with Agency of Ag.
- Revising the rate structure to provide incentives to composting (incorporate with the PAYT and rate restructuring mentioned in the Waste Prevention Report) (One comment on the rate restructure process, illegal dumping could be an issue)
- Need to develop regional facilities
- Investigate ways to improve collection route density
- Subsidize startup programs -- provide seed money in the form of tax incentives or provide materials or services to startup companies for small scale composting on a residential scale.
- State or others should have staff training available for the food service industry (Central Vermont SWD does this for NECI and AVR, could potentially do it statewide).
- Start a program "So, you want to start a composting facility?", similar to what is used in the hospitality industry now.

Partners

- haulers, processors and landfill owners
- Regulatory partners should include Dept of Health, the Agency of Agriculture, VTTrans (potential use of material and potential provider of feedstock)
- Economic development component to market the product and potential create jobs
- VT League of Cities and Towns for the local issues
- Solid Waste Districts - promotions and infrastructure
- Neighbor groups (potential opponents)
- Restaurant groups

- Lodging and Food service industries - could be opponents due to the added space and training required for sending organics to be composted
- Food Bank

Challenges and Obstacles

"It's Messy"

It's another step for the food processing industry that people don't really want to do.

Permitting issues

Space issue for some in food industry

Should provide alternatives to composting, such as garbage disposal - as the wastewater treatment plants may be capable of managing the material for process at the plant.

General discussion topics:

- Need a definition of composting - there seem to be several out there and they can vary for size or type of operation.
- Composting meat may be an issue
- Enforcement of the material going into the organics bin - needs to be clean with no or limited contamination.

Product Stewardship:

Mary O'Brien, Jim McCullough, Chris Beling, Jen Holiday, Peter Crawford, Tracey Tsugawa

Next Steps

- Hold meeting about developing a product stewardship council in Vermont with Product Stewardship Institute, Product Policy Institute, Washington and Minnesota product stewardship people, SWDs, ANR staff, VLCT, and legislators (held on June 6). This meeting will review what is happening elsewhere. If the idea of a council or something similar catches hold, a larger meeting will be convened later with additional stakeholders.
- Talk about product stewardship with the legislative solid waste study group and include how to improve solid waste management in the discussion.
- Develop buy-in from the administration on product stewardship and tie the discussion to necessary resources (re-allocation of existing resources), climate change goals, and the re-organization of ANR.
- Network with other initiatives outside of Vermont.
- Educate the general public, SWD boards, legislature, chambers of commerce, local and national retailer associations about product

- stewardship and utilize a diverse group of educators (SWD staff, retailers, manufacturers, other stakeholders) to develop buy-in.
- Prioritize products to focus on (e.g., paint, e-waste, etc.) and criteria for prioritizing (e.g., volume, toxicity, etc.)
- Develop framework legislation that all products can be plugged into (rather than developing legislation for individual products)

Key players/partners/opponents:

- legislators (partners)
- SWDs (partners)
- ANR (partner)
- Chambers of commerce (partners)
- Manufacturers (partner/opponents)
- Retailers (local and national) (partners/opponents)
- AVR (partner)
- Advocacy groups (partners)
- National players (PSI, PPI, other product stewardship councils, etc.) (partners)

Obstacles/Challenges

- Misperception about possible high cost.
- Public ignorance about product stewardship
- Opponents (manufacturers, retailers)

Mandates and Bans

Julie Hackbarth, Buzz Surwilo, Pam Clapp, Doug Robie, Andy Johnson, April Kane

Next Steps:

- Look at feasibility of state wide single stream.
- Assess/evaluate/study PAYT and mandatory recycling for the state.
- Collect baseline data to determine if in the future the programs that are launched are effective
- Develop list of materials for mandatory recycling and bans. Identify those materials and corresponding schedule for requirements to be effective, either immediately or at some later date.
- Inventory existing infrastructure and curbside collection opportunities. Evaluate what is working well and what changes are needed. Evaluate convenience to minimize the amount of vehicle miles. Evaluate transportation options.
- Seek funding sources for infrastructure. Develop incentives.
- Evaluate transportation options and routes to minimize transportation and to avoid duplication.
- Get key players involved to help establish the programs.

- Find a legislative sponsor for a statewide mandatory recycling law.

Key players/partners/opponents:

To avoid a large percentage of the Vermonters & businesses from opposing a mandate or ban, will need to ensure that easy, convenient, and free collection opportunities are available. In particular - single stream. Key players are haulers, solid waste managers, legislators, solid waste districts and towns.

Possible obstacles/Challenges:

Access to infrastructure for businesses. An obstacle for implementing these types of improvements/ changes at the town level can be local politics/favors/network.

Infrastructure

Next Steps

1. Develop a GIS based map of all waste resources (create an inventory of all the materials you want to manage. Identify the flow of materials (collection, transport routes, end markets...). Look at transportation routes and materials flow.
2. Get State Department of Economic Development on board.
3. Generate generic business plans and provide to Economic Development

Other steps

SWDs could make recommendations related to infrastructure

Districts have party status in Act 250. Districts could play a larger role in diverting materials

Key players/partners/opponents:

- Private sector waste industry
- end markets
- State Agencies: economic development agencies, Dept. of Corrections, VTrans,
- solid waste districts,
- Sustainable Jobs Fund,
- Vermont Law School,
- VOC Rehab,
- Community Action Groups,
- NGOs,
- Affordable housing groups,
- federal delegates,
- VT Community Foundations,
- Used building retail stores,
- Builder Assoc.: General Contractors, Home Builder Associations,

- State, local and institutional purchasers,
- VT League of Cities and Towns,
- private sector trucking companies

Raw Notes from the brainstorming sessions

Most important in blue
Most interested in working on in green

Executive Committee Proposed priorities:

- PAYT (incentive, need infrastructure in place) 7 votes (radical new rate restructure)
- Mandatory recycling - phased-in material bans 8 votes/4 votes
- State leadership 3 votes/1 vote
- Infrastructure 7 votes/7 votes
- Product stewardship 6 votes/5 votes
- Enabling composting (currently in progress through the Composting Association of Vermont - CAV) 3 votes
- Education/social marketing 1 vote/6 votes
- Greenhouse gas focus
- Legislation 2 votes

ANR's Proposed priorities:

- Set of phased-in multi-material bans - organics, e-waste, C & D, and traditional recyclables (to encourage product stewardship, infrastructure and market development)
- Radical new solid waste rate structure (such as paying for organics, paying consumers for recyclables - Recycle Bank, infuse \$\$ for infrastructure, creating economic markets, providing incentives, statewide PAYT, and creating structures for resource management).
- Social marketing/behavior change (holistic, personal responsibility, consumption responsibility) (dialogue amongst stakeholders, partnerships)
- Energy and GGE reduction focus (ANR decision-making will consider energy and GGE savings; i.e. if a ban is passed, energy

and GGE savings will help guide which materials are banned, in addition to volume, toxicity, etc.)

- State government holistic approach to waste prevention/diversion (walk the talk)
- Product stewardship

Waste Prevention report's 27 priorities

Traditional Recyclable Products (glass, metal, plastic, etc.)

- Require Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) programs in all sectors across the state. 4 votes
- Require mandatory statewide recycling. 3 votes
- Enact landfill disposal bans. 2 votes/1 vote
- Expand Vermont's bottle bill.
- Promote waste prevention in schools. 2 votes
- Promote recycling away from home. 2 votes

Construction Waste and Demolition Debris (C&D)

- Institutionalize waste prevention, deconstruction, and recycling in project design, specify waste diversion in construction bid documents. 2 votes/1 vote
- Develop regional reuse and recycling markets. 3 votes/3 votes
- Use economic incentives to build infrastructure.
- Institute a phased landfill ban of select C&D wastes.
- Educate the public about C&D waste reduction.
- Collaborate with national and regional organizations.

Organics

- Expand the existing perishable food redistribution network. 1 vote/1 vote
- Expand/improve statewide infrastructure for composting 5 votes/3 votes
- Enable small and large scale composting.
- Develop economic incentives, as precursors to mandates, to encourage organics waste prevention. 3 votes/1 vote
- Within specific timeframes, mandate composting for all generators.
- Increase general public and school education about organics waste prevention, reuse, and diversion. 3 votes

Electronic Waste (e-waste)

- The State will take a leadership role in promoting the use of Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT) standards for computer purchases throughout state government.
- Collect, expand, and standardize statewide data on e-waste generation, recycling, reuse, and disposal.
- Review existing regulations and environmental standards in use (other states, federal government) for e-waste recycling (best management practices) and adopt standards appropriate for Vermont.
- Expand and sustain public education about e-waste. **2 votes**
- Assess the existing infrastructure for collection of e-waste.
- Develop businesses and markets for e-waste recycling and recycled materials in conjunction with state economic development initiatives. **1 vote/1 vote**
- Implement phased landfill bans that include computers and peripherals, CRTs, televisions, uninterrupted power supplies /transformers, VCRs/DVDs, copiers/fax machines/printers, and cell phones.

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW)

- ANR should develop a long range, 10-year HHW Management Plan that focuses on public awareness, infrastructure improvements, and extended producer responsibility to reduce the types of materials requiring management by municipalities.
- Establish a legislatively-appointed Advisory Council on Toxic Substances to assess hazardous, toxic, persistent, and bioaccumulative chemicals in consumer products and waste. Make recommendations to the Legislature and the Departments of Environmental Conservation and Health on methods to reduce impacts to human health and the environment. **2 votes**
- The State of Vermont should take a leadership role in product stewardship strategies for waste prevention and toxics use reduction in consumer products.
- The State of Vermont should take a leadership role in Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) to encourage the elimination of priority toxic substances in products and services purchased by the public and private sectors.

Steering Committee comments on ANR & Executive Committee priorities

Steering Committee comments on ANR priorities (see priority list below)

- Need state government coordination (i.e. Health Department re food waste storage resulting in vermin in compost)
- Can't have bans without markets, need more economic development

- Governance - who is delegated to implement the programs?
- Tough economic times - don't know how the private sector will embrace initiatives.
- Still need to get message across that we need to change
- How to do long-range planning with drastic changes in economy (such as volatile oil prices)
- Need leadership at the top to create a culture of change
- It will be an easier sell to increase landfill costs, will be easier to incentivize diversion
- Need to consider whether waste forms an energy source (competition)
- Need to capture materials for its best use for that material (based on life cycle analysis) to create a sustainable structure
- Holistic approach needed within state government

Executive Committee presented its straw proposal of priority areas (see priority list below)

Comments

- No recognition of market development
- Priorities don't address sludge from wastewater treatment plants

General Comments on all the priorities

- Resource value in food production is critical (compost)
- Jobs creation is a critical selection criteria
- Infrastructure is the missing link

What topics are people interested in taking the lead on?

Tracey/VOCAL - Product stewardship (PS), education, setting up a product stewardship (PS) council in VT.

Jen/CSWD -- Working with local and state government to create PS and formalize.

Karl/AVR -- Partner with state to educate kitchens about organic collection.

Bill/Dartmouth - work with Economic Development

Jim/Williston legislator -developing legislation

Fred/GUVSWD - infrastructure planning

What pieces would you help others with?

Tracey/VOCAL - PS and legislation

Vicky/VT Chamber - help work with VT restaurants

Bill/Dartmouth - work with composters

Chris/EPA - MA DEP developed good organics materials

Karl/AVR - education, outreach assistance

