

Yard Waste Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, September 28, 2005

UD Paradee Building, Dover, DE

Members Present:	Dick Pack	(Grizzly's)
	Steve Masterson	(Waste Management)
	Tony Lemper	(Lemper's Landscaping, Inc.)
	James Werner	(Chairman, representing DNREC/DAWM)
	Stephen Lange	(ITMS)
	Jeff Deats	(Seaford WWTF)
	Wesley Roan	(City of Dover)
Members Not Present:	Dick Cecil	(Delaware Association of Counties)
	Tom Houska	(DSWA)
	Dave Keifer	(DE Chapter of the Sierra Club)
	Hetty Francke	(University of Delaware)
	Clyde Roberts	(DeIEASI)
	Bruce Georgov	(Independent Disposal Service)

Non-Members Present:	James Short (DNREC)	Paul Sample (Legis. Council)	Steve Thomas (Headwaters)
	Janet Manchester (DNREC)	Lee Ann Walling (Gov. Office)	Diana Golt (Kent County)
	Katie Bennett (DNREC)	Greg Gause (Rehoboth Beach)	Justin Masterson (Waste Mgt)
	John Neyman (Allied Waste)	Charles Jenner (Landscape D&C)	Paul Wilkinson (RPAC)
	Alice Jacobsohn (M-DSWA)		

Introductions

Chairman Jim Werner called the meeting to order at 1:15pm. All attendees introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes from August 31st Meeting

Jim Werner explained that the draft minutes had been posted on the website, and the link had been e-mailed to committee members and the interested party list. Dick Pack moved to accept the draft minutes. Steve Lange seconded, and the minutes were adopted by a voice vote.

Subcommittee Reports

Jim Werner asked that each subcommittee report orally on its activities and findings and then give a written report to Janet Manchester for posting on the Yard Waste web page.

A. Separation/Collection/Transport - Reported by Steve Masterson

The subcommittee met on September 8 at Steve's office in Wilmington. They concluded that:

- The private hauling industry is prepared for the ban. Municipalities will have to address their issues individually, but some already have the framework in place.
- The existence of several facilities around the state to handle the material would ensure a smooth transition (at least one per county would work best).
- Capacity exists to accommodate a ban on disposal of yard waste.
- A ban start date of 01/01/07, would allow enough time for haulers to gear up for the changes.

- The hauling industry cannot be held responsible for enforcement. This must be the responsibility of DNREC, municipalities, and/or counties.
- A review committee composed of an assortment of stakeholders should be established to ensure that the process remains on track and addresses issues as they arise.

There was general agreement that facilities should be required to have scales so that the public would be able to make comparisons in tipping fees.

B. Processing – Reported by Stephen Lange

The subcommittee has not met. Odor will be a big concern for the public and therefore must be a focus of discussion for the subcommittee. Jim Werner noted that regulations or guidelines could help give citizens some assurance that facilities would operate properly; he suggested looking at other states' programs. Steve Masterson raised a concern about comments made at the last meeting about pesticides, herbicides, etc., that might remain in the compost. Steve Lange and Dick Pack said that if the process is properly managed that should not be an issue. Jim Werner asked how the use of compost would affect a certified organic grower, to which Steve Lange replied that OMRI certification would address that issue.

C. Marketing/Business Model – Reported by Dick Pack

Much of the large woody waste is already being processed. This market would be little affected by a ban on yard waste disposal. There could be some disruption in prices because of the increased quantity of yard waste available for processing. At the same time, in our neighboring states the amount of yard waste compost almost never meets the demand, and DE residents are currently purchasing such compost produced out of state while their own yard waste goes to the landfill. There is a need for commercial grade compost, and a subsidy will be needed to help develop the capacity to produce this material.

Discussion of zoning-related difficulties in setting up composting operations ensued. Diana Golt suggested surveying the three counties to determine what their zoning requirements are for these types of operations. Others agreed that this should be done. Lee Ann Walling offered to put the State Planning Office to work on this issue.

D. Education – Reported by Janet Manchester (on behalf of Hetty Francke)

The report consisted of an identification of the groups that would be impacted by a ban on yard waste disposal, identification of the issues that each group will need to receive information about, and recommended tools for delivering the information. Jim Werner suggested that the subcommittee attempt to determine the amount of money (e.g., dollars per person) that should be spent on education/outreach.

Discussion of Possible Site Visits

Jim Short agreed to chair the Road Trip Subcommittee. He will send out three possible sites to visit. Suggestions included: Grizzly's, Gloucester Township (NJ), Atlantic County (NJ), Lancaster (there are several small operations), Upper Marlborough (MD), Seaford, and mushroom composting operations.

Committee Work Products

Jim Werner emphasized that the work product must reflect a consensus of this committee. He suggested a letter with an attachment signed by all committee members. He then went offered some points that the members may be able to agree on. Lee Ann Walling said that she believes the legislators will give serious consideration to the committee's recommendations because the members are experts on the yard waste issue. Jim Werner asked whether anyone was uncomfortable with any of the points offered. Three suggestions were made:

1. There must be some governmental oversight of processing facilities.
2. The document should include the statement that there are no assured processors.
3. The land use issue must also be addressed.

Jim Werner said that DNREC will incorporate the suggestions into the bullet points and send them out before the next meeting.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 26, at 1:00 p.m. at the Smyrna Rest Area.

Before the next meeting, members will see the following:

- Site visit proposals;
- Processing subcommittee report;
- Land use information; and
- Draft points of agreement.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.