

Brunswick Sustainability Committee Meeting September 22, 2020
Meeting via Zoom: 5:00-7:00

Members Present: Harry Hopcroft, Steve Weems, Dieuwke Zolas, Steve Wood, Kay Mann, Chrissy Adamowicz, Jenn Hicks, Marie Caspard joined at 5:30
Absent Members: Jamie Ecker

Staff Present: Jay Astle (Public Works Director), Steve Walker (Town Councilmember), John Eldridge (Town Manager) joined at 6:30

Call to order by the Chair 5:06

Request by the Chair to admit citizen Fred Horch, candidate for Dist. 49 Maine House, who has questions about the recycling of glass.

Request approved

Approve Last Meeting's Minutes

Discussion:

S Wood offers two corrections. One is to add at the end of P 1, next-to-last PP, the phrase "in order to transfer materials most efficiently". Second is to add on P 2, center of last PP, sentence reading "Packer tracks may be a short-term solution.", the word "transfer" before "solution".

Motion by Wood to approve as amended. Second by Hopcroft

Approved unanimously by those present

Agenda Modification requested by the Chair to allow citizen input at this time.
Approved by all.

Citizen Fred Horch notes issues seen on his FaceBook page about stopping glass recycling. Offers two suggestions

- 1 Create a "Go Fund Me" type of website to cover the monetary losses associated with glass recycling
2. Explore town owned crushing equipment and resale of crushed glass.

Discussion:

S. Weems notes the second has been considered, and not practical. The first will be reviewed by the Options Subcommittee and reported back

Staff Updates

Jay: Organics recycling bin in place by the end of next week, with first pickup on Oct 5

Review of Solid Waste Handling Options - Steve Weems

Steve circulated a document reviewing primary and unlikely options. This document will be shared with a working group of town staff & solid waste subcommittee members.

These options are:

- A transfer station & processing facility at Graham Road or at another location

- Retaining just a processing facility & directly hauling of curbside materials

- Retaining just a transfer station

More unlikely options:

- doing some or all transferring & processing in a nearby town

- separate processing of special stream & curbside recycling in two separate locations

”destination blind”: Town enters into a curbside collection agreement with a hauler, which chooses how to process the material. This option is not acceptable because it leaves us without control over processing & greenhouse gas emissions. The town manager would like the subcommittee to work on options for a solid waste management future.

Motion to rename the “Short-Term Solid Waste Implementation subcommittee” to “Solid Waste Options Subcommittee.” by Steve Weems

Seconded by Kay & Dieuwke

Discussion

This doesn’t restrict the scope of options inquiries, like swaps. Our current charge is very collaborative with the town staff and the ultimate decision resides with the town staff & council.

Approved unanimously by those present

Motion to “direct the Subcommittee to consider only options that provide the Town of Brunswick to specify where curbside recyclables and refuse will go after collection” by Steve Weems

Tabled until next meeting

Education Subcommittee Report - Kay

A press release about the cessation of glass recycling was issued Sept 1. It was also printed in the Times Record, covered by Hannah LaClaire. It is also reported in the Portland Press Herald, and Harry’s weekly column in the Times Record. Links to the press release have been shared on NextDoor.com, Support Brunswick Facebook Page, Town of Brunswick Facebook Page, on a banner on the Brunswick website, shared with members of the Brunswick Public Schools, Curtis Memorial Library, and the “Bring Your Own Bag” group. The message will also be sent to Brunswick Downtown Association & People Plus.

Margaret Chingos has created a new YouTube Channel called Recycle Brunswick:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOaPspZGyyW4c5iCPmkf8gg>

Videos will be aired on the local cable network as Public Service Announcements.

They will be embedded on the Brunswick website by Jay. Kay shared folders

containing files created by Margaret with the committee. An additional video about

organics recycling by the organics recycling subcommittee will be added later as well.

Action Marie will work with Kay to share the message with Bowdoin Community Members.

Organics Recycling Committee Update - Chrissy

The organics recycling drop off site is up and running, courtesy of Jay. The committee has prepared language for the organics recycling webpage, including information about the three prongs (home, curbside and drop-off organics recycling) as well as FAQs to share with Jay. The “depackager” will remove packaging, however this will not be emphasized on the website, to reduce tonnage of “non-bioidigestable” materials.

The World Resources Institute is still considering which community to work with for their survey. The subcommittee will also explore the option of the local biodigester at Brunswick Landing.

Action Chrissy will share website materials with the education subcommittee & Jay.

EcoMaine Tour - Steve Wood

Harry, Marie, Jamie & Steve Wood participated in a presentation & tour of the EcoMaine facility with Kevin Roche, Matt Gamache & Lissa Bitterman. Kevin emphasized waste sorting & recycling not done by other service providers & education free of charge. They emphasize shipping recyclables to US & Canada-based processing facilities. EcoMaine takes glass & crushes it to use as an aggregate in concrete, landfill cover. EcoMaine would be interested in discussions with the Town Council.

Solar Energy Development - Steve Weems

Sustainability is an important mission of our committee. Solar has become much more economically viable & should be considered by the town. Maximum project size went up to 5 MW. Power can be generated remotely. Private industry can work with municipalities to take advantage of the federal tax credit, which municipalities cannot use directly. Steve would like to suggest setting up a solar subcommittee to collaborate with . Steve Weems is the director of the Solar Association of Maine. He would like someone else to chair the subcommittee. Kay works for Power Market. General agreement on formation of the subcommittee, but no formal motion or vote.

Climate Action Plan Entry Discussion

Portland & South Portland have released a joint climate action plan. Initiatives & ideas from this plan could be incorporated into Brunswick’s Climate Action Plan.

Action Committee members will read the article in the PPH and the report for further discussion next meeting.

Next Meeting October 27, 2020 at 5:00 on Zoom

Meeting Adjourned at 7:00 PM