

Minutes Waste Subcommittee

Monday, March 21, 2016

Present: Mary Ann Hodge, Mike Bloxam, Janice Howell (chair) and Carrie Warring (guest UWO graduate student)

Regrets: Ken Birchall (Caitlin Kushnir and Jamie Baxter are no longer members of ACE nor this committee)

Organic Waste

The Waste Subcommittee **Work Plan** highlights both: managing organic waste and providing input on alternative ways for financing waste diversion

Our committee plan is to advise on changes that have the greatest impact on waste diversion, in terms of a realistic, timely and affordable goal for the near future of London.

Green Bin (GB)

Interest and discussions regarding the Green Bin program have been revived in part due to the strong support from several city councillors. (Particularly at the City Budget discussions).

Advantages

- 90% of the community does not want the GB program to be delayed (survey in Interim Waste Diversion Plan 2014-2015)
- solid participation rate (50-65%) in other Ontario communities
- GB program is timely, included in the City's Road Map 2 plans
- 50% of residential waste is food scraps/organic waste
- can divert 45% waste from residential garbage bag flow (Greatest impact)
- increases life of W12A landfill
- reduces methane gas emissions from landfill (Green House Gases)

- helps to meet Province's goal of 60% waste diversion (Waste Diversion Act).
- positive community participation/contribution to a cleaner, more environmental friendly city
- could provide quality compost to Londoners
- could contribute to biogas to generate electricity to the grid (Storm Fisher Anaerobic Digester facility), Currently Storm Fisher generates enough electricity to supply 2500 houses/year in London.
- more organic waste can be put in GB than can go in backyard composters (ex. meat)
- estimate GB will divert 12,000 to 14,500 tonnes/year
- reduce truck traffic to landfill and noise levels for neighbours

Disadvantages

The main roadblock to initiating a Green Bin program is cost

- residents need regular education on proper source separation
- Yuk factor, some people find it unpleasant

COST OF INACTION

- delaying the GB program only puts off the inevitable...organic waste will have to be dealt with in the near future
- London is the only city of its size in Ontario that does not have a GB program (Windsor also does not).
- cost of planning/building new landfill (lifespan of W12A is running out, approx. 10 years)
- pollution from methane gas from organics in landfill
- more land lost to new landfill
- cost to a healthy society, encourage citizens to be responsible and conscious about waste they produce

The discussion stressed the importance of a 'Circular Economy' in that resources from the earth (plants, vegetables) eventually return to the earth in a clean, beneficial way (compost).

Financial options

- unlike others cities, we are fortunate to already have industrial facilities in production that can process organic waste (ie. Orgaworld, Storm Fisher)
- disposal fees for compost facility are cheaper than landfill tipping fees? Generate income from selling composting?
- disposal fees for Anaerobic Digester facility, cheaper than landfill tipping fees
- biweekly garbage pickup can partner with GB and increases participation in GB program, decreases cost of garbage pickup
- possibility of User Pay garbage system, paying for each garbage bag put to the curb can increase the GB participation, reduce garbage pickup costs?
- proposal of 5 new landfill customers from outside London could add extra revenue of which a portion could be dedicated to a GB program. It would also help counterbalance the shortening of the life of W12A with more customer disposals by increasing the lifespan with GB program.

Direction for Ace Waste Subcommittee

- follow City's progress/provide input on Resources Recovery Centre
- follow City's progress on the Interim Waste Diversion Plan 2014-2015, talk with City staff on future of GB in London
- examine other projects or possibilities for organic waste composting
(community groups, neighbourhood group projects, ie. Wortley Village Restaurants)
- ACE tour Storm Fisher Digester facility in May
(put on agenda at next meeting)
- discussions around the value or reality of a GB system in London versus other composting projects.

- meet with city councillors that support GB system, i.e. Stephen Turner, Virginia Ridley
- become familiar with Waste Free Ontario goals
- talk to Dirk Jaekel from Storm Fisher regarding how a GB program could work with his facility
- Public-Private partnerships?, see Surrey B.C./partnership with Orgaworld
- examine how Cities that have very high participation rate in GB programs succeed (ie. Markham, Toronto, York region, Halton)
- possible media discussions/publications