

COE agenda 6-3-15

COE Website Updates

-I forwarded the Annual Report to Diane Gleissner, who should be updating the site soon. Sue was advised to contact the help desk and can provide updates at the meeting on her efforts to post the meeting minutes.

Plastic Bag Fees

-Mark was going to look into plastic bag fee programs. If he found anything, he can update us on his findings at the meeting

Sustainable MD Certification

-The Leonardtown Town Council passed the "Leonardtown Resolution Supporting Participation in the Sustainable Maryland Municipal Certification Program." I will be trying to find a senior college student to base their St. Mary's Project around the certification, providing more free labor to help Leonardtown achieve a certified status by next year.

Composting

-I spoke with a representative at Green Mountain Compost, the industrial composting facility that I mentioned previously. The Chittenden County, Vermont operation was originally private with some public contribution, but now is completely public. The facility handles the entire county, which has a population of just over 150,000 people and includes the city of Burlington. They average around 4000 tons of food waste per year and around 7000 tons of leaves per year. Private haulers transport the food waste and the leaves are collected from residents and municipal waste. They purchase between 1000 and 1500 cubic yards of chipped wood per year to help with porosity.

They no longer use grass or manure due to persistent herbicides. Even after going through a horse's digestive system and composting, some problematic herbicides remained in the soil, causing obvious problems. As a result, they had to stop sales of their compost for almost 2 years to identify and eliminate the problems. Their finished product sells for \$64 per cubic yard. The estimate on the cost of constructing the facility and some of the equipment was \$2.3 million and after halting sales, they required around a half million in subsidies per year, but feel they are close to getting back to the profitable state with which they started. He noted that this did not factor in the money saved by the county, which has tipping fees of over \$100. He stated that if this were factored into the equation, he imagined the result would be a net positive for the county, but I will be contacting county representatives to learn more about their balance sheet regarding solid waste.

I found this helpful as we had discussed horse manure as a green ingredient, and without further research, I would say avoiding the potential for persistent herbicide contamination would prevent us from wanting to source horse manure. As for the wood chips, we could probably obtain that through municipal waste and Christmas trees without having to purchase much from an outside vendor, but I need to do some more research on how much we accumulate on average in a year. I would advise no longer mulching and giving away municipal waste like we do now, and instead utilizing the resources to produce quality compost. I plan on speaking with the Green Mountain Compost representative, as well as a Chittenden County Public Works representative, in order to strengthen our proposal with specific numbers. I also have an upcoming meeting with John Bohanan to discuss ways to promote and develop support for the project. As a former politician, he has strong connections throughout the area, and as a member of the BRAC (Base Relocation And Closure) commission, he feels that this project may be beneficial to the Base as well as the general community. His support and guidance could prove invaluable with this project and I look forward to the opportunity to meet and discuss this with him.

Healthy St. Mary's Partnership

-HSMP is having their first annual meeting on Thursday, June 4th from 1-4:30pm at the Tech Center in Leonardtown. I have registered for the event, plan to attend, and will report back at the next meeting.