May 14, 2018

Zero Waste Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

Below is feedback from the Zero Waste Advisory Committee and members of the public at the May 14 Zero Waste Advisory Committee (ZWAC) meeting.

Potential Zero Waste Goals:

- What is doable and can create momentum?
- If we’re going to do it, let’s do it!
- Would pounds/person/day be another way to set the goal?
- Focus on reduction to disposal facilities

Evaluation Criteria for Potential Initiatives

Add:

- Stickiness - things that don't require continuous pushing
- Flexibility to changing conditions
- Carrots (vs sticks)
- Quality of diversion (highest and best use)
- Driven by data
- Culture change

Subtract

- Nothing

Other thoughts:

- Equity: not every neighborhood is the same, solutions may differ

Initiatives/Options

New Services

- Organics - have hierarchy of diversion, prioritize highest and best use
- Think about public/private partnerships for infrastructure development
- Consider economic justice
- Look at more collaborative models/partnerships (e.g., RFP vs IFB)
- Tailor solutions to neighborhoods, not one size fits all
- Provide rebates for garbage disposers in neighborhoods where it makes sense
- Fixit clinics and other reuse - great, changes culture even if doesn’t have big impact on waste
- Consider the timeline for new trash and recycling contracts and what can get done
- Lead by Example is great, but vague; government must internalize.
  - Dedicated staff positions needed in more departments
- Zero Waste at City-permitted events
  - Recycling container next to every public garbage container, and make them dual-stream not single stream
- Metrics!

New Rules
- Are there reporting tools businesses can use?
- Products and packaging reduction- make sure compostable packaging isn’t toxic (e.g., perflourinated chemicals)
- Environmentally Preferable Purchasing- include toxics and recyclability
- Who will define what is reusable for ban on disposal of reusables?
- Address existing buildings in addition to new construction with building codes
- Address rules that cover entire system, not just parts, including living wage,
- Deconstruction, recycling, and source separation of C&D could be expensive and impact relationships with vendors

Outreach and Education
- Add schools, student-informed curriculum.
- Need funding to address infrastructure
- Develop gamification app

Outreach and Education Case Studies-
What else would we like to know?
- What are effective carrots?
- How diversity of population addressed
- How commuter population engaged
- How to dovetail with large institutions already doing education, how leverage other relationships
- Is approach by tenant, building, complex—how measure participation?
- Difference in care between those who own their property vs. rent
- How to introduce people to new programs
- How to get community buy-in to programs so people feel ownership
- Incentives
- Any examples of recycling workers helping with outreach, telling neighbors about their jobs, creating common sense of purpose
- Use of social media- videos and other messaging
- How those who don’t recycle (individuals, populations) are targeted

From Whom?
- Boston Student Advisory Council has Zero Waste presentation
- Minneapolis- has seasons, like Boston
- Boston Public Health – UMass Boston Health Impact Report as resource
Next meeting:
  - Will have subcommittees, as well as full committee