

## **NOTES OF WORKING GROUP MEETING 6, JULY 11, 2003**

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m. by Terry Gray, co-chair.

Members present: Tom Armstrong; Bob Bibbo; Clayton Carlisle; Geoffrey DiCenso; Patrick Fingliss; Tom Getz; Terrence Gray; Leo Hellested; Dante Ionata; Bob Lamoureux; Mike McGonagle; Steven Mutter; Timothy Reagan; Barry Schiller; Jeanne Tracey-McAreavey; Harold Ward;

Observers; Atiyah Curmally; Nick Bayard.

There were no comments concerning the June 13<sup>th</sup> Working Group meeting Notes.

A discussion of the re-draft of Part 4, Institutional Arrangements, was led by Mr. Ionata who suggested major portions could be eliminated for brevity's sake. Some members said Part 4 was not too long, that it provides valuable orientation and context, and need not be shortened. Mr. McGonagle said some outdated elements could be eliminated. Mr. Ward suggested portions could be placed in an appendix.

Mr. Gray recommended a citizens group be established to advise RIRRC and DEM concerning solid waste management. Mr. Schiller said the RIRRC'S Citizens Advisory Board (which has been allowed to become inactive) should be reactivated. Mr. Mutter agreed.

Discussion of RIRRC-funded construction of ramps at I-295-Scituate Ave was initiated by Mr. Carlisle.

Mssrs. Ward and Schiller agreed that contributions since 1996 by each organization described in Part 4 should be briefly summarized. Mr. Ward also recommended that the Economic Development Corporation no longer be included in Part 4 because it has never been involved in solid waste management.

Mr. McGonagle said more data should be included concerning the activities of municipalities and private sector. Mssrs. Fingliss and Ionata suggested incorporating in the Plan data concerning all aspects of municipal solid waste management practices collected by the RIRRC in a survey which had been suggested by Mr. Mutter.

There were no comments concerning the re-drafts of Parts 1 and 3, which had been submitted to the Working Group at previous meetings. Mr. Ionata said written or verbal comments can be filed at any time with him, Mr. McGonagle or Mr. Gray.

Mr. Mutter led the discussion of the report submitted by the Municipal Recycling Subcommittee. Section 1 of the report recommends that RIRRC and DEM encourage municipalities to adopt Pay-As-You-Throw programs to increase the recycling rate and extend the life of Central Landfill. Mr. Fingliss cautioned that a sharp increase in the volume of recyclables could exceed the MRF'S processing capacity. Mr. Gray said the Plan could include a recommendation to increase the MRF's processing capacity.

Mssrs. Gray and Ward said it would be important to report on the percentile improvement in the recycling rate since the Plan was last issued in 1996.

Mr. Gray said it has been reported that a major legislative effort will be undertaken in 2004 to enact a bottle bill. A bottle law would have severe negative impacts on the municipal curbside source separation and recycling program.

The Municipal Recycling Subcommittee report recommends that RIRRC commission an "independent study of the municipal waste stream" with emphasis on waste analysis, recycling program participation and capture rates with recommendations to improve both. There was no discussion of this recommendation.

Mr. Mutter presented the Subcommittee's recommendation that RIRRC develop and promote alternative reuse centers to eliminate disposal of materials with a useful life. Mr. Gray questioned whether non-profit (social service) organizations dedicated to reuse actually recycle.

There was discussion that while State law mandates recycling, there is little or no enforcement of the law and that a ban of recyclables from landfilling would be easier to enforce.

Mr. Gray said DEM cannot and will not police violations of the municipal curbside recycling program or seek to enforce the law that mandates curbside recycling. Mr. Gray said the DEM does not have the resources and does not expect to have either the staffing or the funding to monitor or enforce the recycling statutes. Mr. Gray said the DEM does not and will not have either the funding or the staff to do any more with respect to solid waste management than it is now doing.

Mr. Mutter wanted to know who enforces recycling regulations. Mr. Gray responded that it is very difficult to enforce either the municipal or commercial recycling regulations.

There was an extended discussion of the difficulty of enforcing the municipal or commercial recycling regulations; unsuccessful compliance and enforcement activities undertaken in the past by DEM and RIRRC; and different methods of enforcement and compliance that could be undertaken, with Mssrs. Lamoureux, Mutter, Gray, McGonagle, Schiller, Ward, DiCenso and Ionata participating. It was agreed past failures should not preclude innovative attempts to improve compliance.

The report recommended that DEM create a position "to oversee enforcement" of municipal recycling regulations, that recyclables be banned from the landfill, and compliance with recycling regulations and laws be enforced via disposal contracts with landfill access the fulcrum on which to lever compliance.

The Municipal Recycling Subcommittee recommended that textiles be "removed from the list of mandated recyclable materials and dealt with as a material which DEM advocates for alternative recycling methods."

The subcommittee recommends that leaf and yard debris be classified by DEM as a mandatory recyclable, that municipalities with disposal contracts be allowed to dispose of leaf and yard debris tip fee free and that RIRRC provide financial assistance to municipalities for their leaf and yard debris management. The subcommittee also recommended that DEM make leaf and yard debris composting regulations more "municipally friendly." Mr. Mutter said DEM-mandated compost sampling and testing requirements are so onerous and expensive that composting of leaf and yard debris by municipalities is discouraged. Mr. Gray said DEM will review the leaf and yard debris composting regulations.

The Working Group discussed the subcommittee's recommendations that computer monitors be made a mandatory recyclable and that RIRRC establish regional drop off and collection points for electronic equipment.

There was discussion of the recommendation that "the RIRRC encourage and promote the recycling of tires at the facility. . ." Mr. Fingliss and Mr. Ionata described RIRRC'S arrangement with Exeter Energy under which tires brought to the landfill are burned to generate electricity and the resultant ash residue is used as landfill cover and upon which Exeter Energy depends for survival. Mr. Gray reported that DEM is considering a proposed tire recycling project involving EDC.

Mr. Mutter presented the subcommittee's recommendation that RIRRC and DEM seek reuses for glass cullet alternative to its current reuse as landfill cover. There was discussion that addressed its use in batching asphalt.

Mr. Mutter concluded by presenting his subcommittee's conclusion that various new recycling initiatives should be undertaken to increase recycling rates which have stabilized under existing programs.

Mr. Gray reiterated his earlier statements that DEM will have neither the staff nor the budget to do more than it currently is doing in solid waste management.

Mr. Bibbo proposed that the Working Group meet with the Environment Business Council a group of environment business professionals. A meeting will be arranged.

Mr. DiCenso wanted to know what was to be done in the area of compliance monitoring and enforcement. Mr. Gray suggested that an enforcement subcommittee could be established later in the planning process.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 am.