

**Northampton Energy & Sustainability Commission**  
**Approved Waste Sub-Committee Minutes**

**August 18, 2020**  
**8:00 - 9:30 pm**

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**Online meeting via Zoom:**

<https://zoom.us/j/94979382131?pwd=N29xUXVkZFFuVjl1L0RkZDRCbTFkUT09>

Meeting ID: 949 7938 2131

Passcode: 671972

Phone-in number: (929) 436-2866

**Commissioner Contact:** Ashley Muspratt, murray.ash@gmail.com

**Present:** Alex Jarrett, Ashley Muspratt

**Minutes:** Alex Jarrett

1. Discuss how this subcommittee will present to NESC (15 min)

- Ashley suggested that we present to the commission with bite-sized proposals, in parallel with the CRRP, putting forward waste management ideas for the City. We could serve as a model for how our Commission could be operating by encouraging pro-active behavior among other subcommittees. This would hold ourselves and other subcommittees accountable for continually moving ideas along.
- Alex reported that he has heard that ordinances are in the works about waste, and may be referred by City Council to NESC.
- How do we present our changes to CRRP, given that the plan will likely be simpler? We discussed making sure that the high-level outline includes legitimate emphasis on prevention of waste in the first place, and also fosters repair and reuse. We discussed some low hanging fruit: banning black plastic and styrofoam, and encouraging or requiring diversion of food scraps.

2. Discuss legislative versus executive branch decisions (15 min)

- It's clear the council makes ordinances that apply to non-municipal functions. What is not so clear is if and how the legislative branch can set policy that the executive branch carries out. Clarity on that could open up power for the council to take action ahead of the executive branch. One example is last year's pesticide ordinance.
- Task for Alex: Get the opinion of the City Solicitor as to the how the legislative branch can set policy. Seek out other opinions.

3. Outline minimum changes / additions to Climate Action Plan - what do we want the waste framework to look like? (45 min)

We discussed the following ideas:

- Zero-waste framework. Apply targets for different waste streams. Limit the use of single-use items, only allowing those materials that are easily recycled or compostable. Make sure waste diversion streams are available for compostable alternatives before banning non-compostable items.
- Legitimate emphasis on prevention of waste in the first place. Foster repair and reuse. Sharing opportunities: tool libraries, car sharing, home sharing. Encouraging people to know their neighbors to share items and avoid buying duplicates.
- Look at all levels: commercial, industrial, residential.
- Ashley suggested an ordinance to require all service providers to offer organics to customers, or to require all residents and businesses to divert organics. Alex noted a possible conflict of interest for him as an owner of Pedal People, and indicated he would not participate in discussions and decisions about this.
- Ordinance to require that edible unsold products be donated.
- Reducing C&D waste. Permitting ordinances. Example: In order to get a permit for certificate of occupancy, you must reclaim X% of material and recycle X% of material, to encourage deconstruction over demolition. Create a speedier permit process for deconstruction vs. demolition. Older and newer buildings – both may have useful items, newer ones may be in better shape. Tax incentives associated with donation.
- Plastic bag ban? Requirement that stores charge? Would that be a regressive tax on low-income shoppers? What is the effectiveness of current voluntary charge – most grocery stores now charge for bags.
- Education for waste management: reducing consumption, reusing, repurposing, recycling, composting. Schools – establish programs (Zero Waste lunchrooms etc.) to encourage new behaviors at a young age, to normalize organics diversion, etc.
- Lead by example: city has most control over public buildings and can demonstrate what's possible. Food waste: cafeterias could practice offer vs. serve (education in this area), prevention of food waste, donation – including share tables when allowed (such as oranges, packaged foods, or unopened milk cartons), external donations with food rescue organizations, composting. Procurement: policies around procuring used office furniture, and deconstruction and renovation policies. Recycled content, cleaning supplies.

#### 4. Wrap-up: next steps, action items (15 min)

- Next steps:
  - We will report on this meeting at the 8/27/20 NESC meeting.
  - Should we establish a broader invitation list for this subcommittee? We decided to wait and clarify the role of this subcommittee so we have a better understand of the process before a broader invite.
- Action items:
  - Ashley: Talk with Susan Waite about ordinances to require or encourage organics diversion.
  - Alex: Get the opinion of the City Solicitor as to the how the legislative branch can set policy. Seek out other opinions.