

**Regional Composting Working Group Minutes  
Durham Town Hall, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room  
Monday September 27, 2021 4 pm**

**Members present:**

Maggie Morrison (ORCSD)  
Dean Rubine (Lee Sustainability Advisory Committee)  
Chloe Gross (UNH Sustainability Institute)  
Nell Neal (Durham Integrated Waste Management Advisory Committee)  
Mary Caulfield (Durham Integrated Waste Management Advisory Committee)

**Members absent:**

Jenn Andrews (UNH Sustainability Institute)  
Chuck Cox (Lee Sustainability Advisory Committee)  
Evy Ashburner (ORCSD)

**Public Present:** N/A

**Call to order:** 4:05pm

**I. Approval of minutes from August 5, 2021, August 26, 2021**

Nell moved to approve Aug 5 minutes, Maggie 2nd. 3-0-2 Approved unamended. Nell, Mary abstained.

Aug 26 minutes, Chloe moves, Maggie 2nd, 5-0 approved unamended.

**II. Public comment** N/A

**III. Updates**

Maggie: High school Sustainability Club continues to be vibrant and dedicated to the issue of food waste.

Jon Bromley was concerned with everyone being in school that there'd be more competition for students, but they're still interested in the Sustainability Club.

Food waste is on the agenda. Been brainstorming. Group continues to be interested in classroom composting.

Nell: Are they still composting in the cafeteria?

Maggie: Not sure, I'll check on that.

Mary: Sustainability club has a logo.

Maggie: Yes, a green bobcat.

Maggie: I'm not sure where the middle school is with their student group. 5th grade teacher Sarah O'Brien will be running it. She's on maternity leave until February. She has a colleague that will pitch in while she's gone. Not sure the level of activity, if they've started. They put it under the umbrella of social justice. Students break out into meetup rooms.

Nell: Perfect

Maggie: The high school is also trying to position it as a social justice issue.

Dean: At the LSC meeting Chair Paul Gasowski raved about how good Chloe's report was.

Dean: According to now enacted HB413, new municipal compost regulations are due 9/30/2021.

Nell: Durham now collects twice as much as we used to, including the greasy bottoms of pizza boxes. Latest challenges: We don't want to drive all the way to the transfer station. It would be helpful to have a place in town to compost. Asked Hannaford if we could put some toters there, they said NO. Right now we don't have a site for collection.

Mary: Too bad there isn't something like a truck that could be used for collection.

Nell: No money for any equipment.

Maggie: We need a plan for the final report. Part of me wants to make it simple, but honor the school district and UNH effort. Maybe it's just an executive summary of where we're going. People's thoughts on the final report. Form and process, expectations.

Dean: It seems that a possible plan would be to start in Lee, try to build it in size, eventually take waste from Durham, UNH, and ORCSD.

Chloe: Hire outside party to do curbside pickup; at this point that's where the public is.

Nell: Even another site in Durham, we don't even have a truck for it.

Maggie: Should we each take our own town and institutions and write recommendations? We did take that path for Durham; curbside recycling. Maybe Lee has a supportive public works / transfer station.

Maggie: UNH has major issues; this is off the grid for them.

Chloe: No capacity.

Nell: I was hoping because UNH was involved in this committee.

Maggie: COVID and retirements put UNH in a totally different place than before.

Maggie: From ORCSD's point of view we would focus on education. The Sustainability Club is doing that. The ORMS group will be advocating for compost there.

Chloe: Do you see Durham trying to implement a Garbage to Garden curbside program?

Chloe: Durham agreed to a flat rate with Mr. Fox.

Mary: Our neighbors do Mr. Fox directly: sixteen dollars a month, twice a month, they pick up food waste, they give you a bag of finished compost per year in return. Not that expensive. It's the kids that influence the parents to make it happen. How do you get people to decide this is an important issue? Chloe's report is persuasive.

Chloe: Targeted education to residents and business to Garbage to Garden, even cheaper than Mr. Fox. Come every week, Medford MA example. They advertise in working with communities. They're in the Portland, Maine, Waterville area.

Mary: Is Mr. Fox reaching capacity?

Chloe: GtoG has a bigger capacity, expanding.

MM: Should we get some of these questions answered?

Chloe: I'm mostly doing UNH work, still this too.

Maggie: Can Chloe do additional research about GtoG?

RCWG: That would be great.

Chloe: I can find out how it works.

Maggie: We can just say to explore the viability of switching compost companies to see if Durham can get a more favorable rate, ORCSD can do the same thing. Chloe can ask GtoG.

Chloe: We would do both the education and implement GtoG. I don't see GtoG as just the only thing; there needs to be education.

Maggie: Can we get someone from Medford to talk to us?

Nell: OR get DPW in Medford to talk to DPW in Durham?

Maggie: Should we put that as the recommendation?

Nell: I would talk to Sam and Rich and ask if they'd be interested in exploring that. About a week and a half ago, I got an email from Waste Zero: pay as you go, they collect clothes curbside; if you get enough the town gets money. Sam said to explore that.

Maggie: Dean, do you think it would be helpful if the DPW directors from Lee and Durham met with the GtoG DPW from Medford.

Mary: It's a great recommendation.

Dean: I think the LSC as a whole would want to decide whether and when to involve the town management.

Dean: How about the idea of collection bins around town.

Nell: Jasper, Canada has green bins that keep bears out. But in Durham we'll get "not in my neighborhood."

Mary: People want to get fresh veggies.

Maggie: We want UNH land or a publicly accessible place, near a parking lot, utilizing old landings, put bins there. Easy access, off Rt 4. Look at spots like that.

Mary: Worry about contamination, people throwing cans in there.

Maggie: Public access off a main road, parking, local. Oyster River forest?

Mary: Communal containers more in neighborhoods; people take care of it.

Maggie: Assign compost czars within a neighborhood.

Nell: They're collection bins, not compost sites.

Mary: One for every twenty households, metal boxes.

Chloe: Neighborhood bins can be part of the recommendation. If you want curbside you can pay \$15 a month; if you and your neighbors want to split it for a common neighborhood site.

Maggie: Next meeting we hammer out more recommendations, part of the minutes.

Maggie: We could write them individually, but having this discussion, this back and forth, helps formulate the recommendations.

Chloe: Everybody generates an executive summary about the most important points in [Chloe's] report for a public summary.

Maggie: Highlight Chloe's report, send Chloe an executive summary per town for public release, come up with recommendations.

Nell: We'll talk about it at our next IWMAC meeting/

Dean: I'll look at the new regs to see if they impact us.

Let's continue to brainstorm with each other for our final doc.

Next meeting

Oct 25 4:15 pm Durham

Dean will send Nell, group information about the new law requiring new municipal compost regulations.

**VIII. Next meeting date:**

October 25, 4:15 pm, Durham Town Hall

**IX. Adjourn**

Adjourned: 5:08 pm

Respectively submitted,

Dean Rubine