

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, January 10, 2024 – 5:30 – 7:30pm**

**MEETING NOTES**

**SWAC MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Amy Maron, Chair Robin Barr, Vice Chair Adam Diamond, co-Secretary	Troy Cavell Carol Jones Fred Kranz Heidi Lovett Chaz Miller	Ellen Ryan Mark Symborski (M-NCPPC rep, non-voting)
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**SWAC MEMBERS ABSENT:** None.

**DEP STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:**

David Frank, RRMD Waste Reduction and Recycling Section

Lisa Shine, RRMD Executive Assistant, RRMD

Anthony Ekweozoh, RRMD, Chief, Planning, Design, Construction & Monitoring Section (PDCM)

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** Alan Van Order, Compost Crew

**Update on MRF Improvements (Anthony Ekweozoh):**

Mr. Ekweozoh oversees a team of five in his section, which includes 3 engineers and one planner.

The MRF Upgrades project is delayed by 1.5 to 2 years, because there were challenges with addressing data gaps identified by the contractor during the initial Basis of Design (BOD) and Construction Procurement Phase. To address these data gaps, the contractor recommended that the project be redeveloped to include a condition assessment of the existing infrastructure before initiating solicitations for a building modification contractor and equipment vendor.

At this time, the scope of work has been finalized. The pre-design and facility condition assessment are currently underway and are 90 percent complete and will be completed in January/February 2024. The Basis of Design (BOD) process is entering the 30% design phase, and by July or August 2024, the design contractor, B&L, will share progress with stakeholders. The full design phase is expected to take at least one year and should be completed in the March-May 2025 timeframe. There will also be engagement with stakeholders during the 60% design phase, and 90% design phase, by which time permits should be approved. The actual construction is expected to begin in May 2025 and should be completed in October 2026 (FY27).

A revised capital improvement plan (CIP) for the MRF Upgrades was released to the public on January 8, 2024. Upgrades to the MRF are funded through Solid Waste

Revenue Bonds, which will be paid back from funds from the Solid Waste Enterprise fund, which is self-supported through user fees.

The PDCM section is also overseeing replacement of the scale and scale house at Shady Grove which should be completed around July 2024.

Discussion by SWAC members: Members were surprised that the project is still in the design phase, and noted there could be changes during the 30%, 60%, and 90% design phases, which could delay the overall current timeline. Construction was originally to be completed in FY2025 (per the Capital Budget), but will not be completed until 7 years after funding was initially available.

Members asked staff (1) how much has been expended so far; (2) if they expected the County Executive to request more funding for out-years; and (3) how might the delay in this project affect other RRMD plans and programs. Staff said they would check on these questions and get back to SWAC.

### **RRMD Updates (David Frank)**

DEP has requested funding under the MWCOG's Priority Climate Action Plans (PCAP) for:

- 1) Consumer education campaign for household food waste source reduction.
- 2) Upgrading the Dickerson compost facility.
- 3) Acquiring advance waste treatment capacity to add more precision to the sorting process for the recycling waste stream (to reduce the discard rate).

The Priority Climate Action Plans are deliverables for the Climate Pollution Reduction Planning Grants received by MWCOG for the DMV Metropolitan Statistical Area, and by MDE for the State of Maryland for the purpose of planning for climate mitigation (aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, including through reducing food waste). Actions need to be included in a PCAP to be eligible for inclusion in a Climate Pollution Reduction Implementation Grant proposal due April 1, competing for funds from a \$4.3 billion pot of federal funds established in the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

DEP is also considering applying for funds from the Recycling Partnership for new recycling carts for comingled materials.

Members inquired if any grants were being sought for the Save-As-You-Throw effort. Staff were unsure, but would seek a response.

New SWAC membership (Lisa Shine): Five new members have been selected and await approval from County Executive and County Council.

### **Question from Public**

What would the Dickerson expansion consist of?

A: We are currently looking at doing a Gore cover system (aerobic) and to add food waste to the Yard Trim Facility.

## **SWAC Updates**

**SAYT:** SWAC members discussed the challenges facing DEP to implement a new unit-based collection program given how solid waste management is fully funded in MoCo with dedicated waste enterprise funds, financed through solid waste fees, not from general fund revenue. DEP Refuse Collection fund policy states that a 10-15% reserve is to be maintained, which appears to be for the purpose of self-insuring against costs incurred with loss of contract services.

Robin Barr suggested that the County could use the reserve fund to initiate the SAYT program. DEP could let people know that a new pricing system is provisional, pending revenue data after program implementation.

Carol Jones noted that the reserve was discussed in relation to consolidation of service regions. A big unknown is how much variability in revenue there will be under SAYT, given the County favors using carts rather than bags for trash, there will be three sizes of carts with different costs, and how many of each will be requested is unknown.

However, Chaz Miller noted, there should not be a lot of variability in revenue estimates once customers decide on cart size. Estimates of program cost should be very good, and it is anticipated there will be restrictions on how frequently customers could change among the three potential cart sizes.

Budget Letter for County Executive regarding RRMD budget approved

December minutes approved

November minutes approved

Scheduling meetings during 2024:

- We will retain the standard first Wednesday of the month meeting schedule, except the March meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 20, delayed as usual until after the County Executive's budget is released to the public and sent to County Council (March 15).
- No holidays appear to conflict with the first Wednesday of the month.
- The regular schedule does not include meetings during July, August, or December, but please keep a tentative hold for an "as-needed" meeting on July 10 (to avoid the week of July 4).

Fred: What happens to MoCo recycled plastic. Chaz: MES sends recycled plastic to buyers-. #1, #2, and #5 recycled the most. Income from plastic recycling \$1 million+ for MoCo.

Having MES and our own MRF with high quality materials increase yields for recycled plastics.

Organic options report from contractor EA could be topic for March meeting, if it is released by then.

Meeting Adjourned 7:32 p.m.

## **ACRONYMS**

C&D Construction and Demolition  
CC County Council  
CE County Executive  
CNG Compressed Natural Gas  
CPI Consumer Price Index  
DAFIG Dickerson Area Facilities  
Implementation Group  
DEP Department of  
Environmental Protection  
DMV District Maryland Virginia  
(metropolitan area)  
EPA U.S. Environmental Protection  
Agency  
FTE Full Time Employee  
FY Fiscal Year  
MDE Maryland Department of the  
Environment  
MC Montgomery County  
MES Maryland Environmental Services  
MRF Materials Recovery Facility  
MML Maryland Municipal League

MCPS Montgomery County  
Public Schools  
MWCOG Metropolitan Washington  
Council of Governments  
OLO Office of Legislative Oversight  
PAYT Pay-As-You-Throw  
CPRG Climate Pollution Reduction  
Grants  
RRF Resource Recovery Facility  
RRMD Recycling & Resource  
Management Division  
SA Service Area for County collection  
SAYT Save-As-You-Throw  
SCA Sugarloaf Community Association  
SF Single family  
SWAC Solid Waste Advisory Committee  
SWMP Solid Waste Management  
Plan  
T&E Transportation and Environment  
Committee  
TPD Tons per Day  
TPW Tons per Week  
ZWTF Zero Waste Task Force