MINUTES
SWMMP Steering Committee Meeting #04-08
Hamilton Convention Centre, 1 Summers Lane
Room 201
Wednesday, June 11th, 2008
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Present:
Councillor Maria Pearson
Councillor Russ Powers
Beth Goodger, Director, Waste Management Division
Blair Smith, Manager of Waste Collection, Waste Management Division
Pat Parker, Manager of Solid Waste Planning, Waste Management Division
Ruta Morkunas, Policy Analyst, Waste Management Division
Peter Hutton, Waste Reduction Task Force Member

Regrets:
Councillor Lloyd Ferguson
Councillor Chad Collins
Craig Murdoch, Manager of Waste Disposal, Waste Management Division

1. Adoption of Agenda
The agenda was adopted as presented (moved by Councillor Powers, seconded by Councillor Pearson). CARRIED

2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting from April 9th, 2008
Peter Hutton declared that his comments in the previous minutes concerning battery disposal were his personal opinion only and should not have been included in the minutes. He asked they be struck from the minutes. The Steering Committee agreed and the minutes were adopted as amended.
Moved by Councillor Powers, seconded by Councillor Pearson CARRIED

3. Multi-Residential Public Opinion Survey Results
Pat Parker presented the findings from the “2007 Public Opinion Survey - Multi-Residential” and discussed how the results will be used. This survey establishes a baseline for the multi-residential sector in the same way the single family survey did in 2005. The survey focussed on the awareness of the blue box programme, the green cart launch, the Community Recycling Centres, and communication and outreach material.

Four (4) focus groups were carried out with thirty-four (34) residents participating, half female and half male. Telephone surveys were administered to 525 heads of households.

The goal of the survey was to collect demographic information, determine the level of awareness and use of Waste Management programs, assess the awareness and satisfaction with Community Outreach materials and to identify barriers, operational improvements, and effective communication tools.

Survey results concerning demographics identified the multi-residential population as follows: head of household - 2/3 female, 1/3 male, 38% are over 60 yrs old, 36% are 41 to 60 yrs old, and 26% are under 41 yrs old; 35% are retired, 25% are professional/managerial, 20% are skilled/clerical and 10% are unemployed; 51% of the units have one (1) occupant, 33% have two and 15% of the dwellings have three (3) or more occupants; 14% have children under 18 yrs old; 98% of those surveyed prefer communication in English (please note that this only reflects those who participated); 82% are renters; 18% are owners; 61% own vehicles and 39% use public transit.
The survey generated the following statistics concerning “local major concerns”: health care - 14%; environment 14% (clean drinking water, air quality, energy conservation); landfill & recycling 11%; downtown 10%; taxes 9%; poverty, homelessness and education - 8%; and 27% said no local issues were of particular importance.

Concerning attitudes and perceptions - 40% think tenants and superintendents don’t support recycling and 10% don’t receive any information.

Superintendents/building managers are the key source of information while the City and condo board are secondary. On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being the best), the City rated 7.1 while building operators rated 7.2 in the recycling program. Of those surveyed, 43% do not have confidence in the recycling program. Blue carts are mainly used to store recyclables with 70% of respondents indicating their buildings are using them and 50% of the carts are kept outside. Many buildings (58%) surveyed have garbage chutes.

Beth stated that when recycling containers are outside residents have more to think about (compared to single family residential) before taking items out to the blue cart. Multi-residential residents are not in control of access so snow clearing, safety, etc., can be an issue.

Councillor Powers discussed convenience as an issue, i.e., chutes on every floor versus walking outside to dispose of recyclables.

Councillor Pearson said that builders should be told to include separate chutes in their plans.

When asked about frequency of dropping off recyclables, 68% drop them off daily or several times per week; 29% drop them off weekly; and 3% don’t recycle. Of those surveyed, 50% drop their recyclables off on their way out of the building, while 50% make a special trip to the containers.

When asked about the convenience of recycling, 87% said that recycling is somewhat convenient; 50% said it is as convenient as garbage; 30% said that garbage is more convenient and 20% said that recycling is more convenient.

Green Cart program feedback included the following responses: only one (1) resident had access to the program; 75% are aware of the Green Cart program and would participate; 74% think it is a good idea; 43% aren’t sure their building will perform well (based on their recycling track record). Concerns about nuisances such as pests, odours and mess were raised and those surveyed suggested that the City focus first on buildings with successful recycling programs.

Residents were surveyed about the Community Recycling Centres (CRCs) and 50% are aware of CRCs while only 12.5% have visited them. Awareness of CRCs is similar to single family residential awareness rates however usage was much lower. The most common material to be dropped off at the CRCs is paint. Of those surveyed, 40% admitted to putting HHW in the garbage. Getting HHW to a CRC may be an issue as 61% of those surveyed own vehicles and 39% use public transit.

Peter Hutton mentioned that he would like to see additional research concerning transit usage. He would like to do some back checking against other surveys, findings and statistics.

With regard to Community Outreach materials, respondents cited that lists, labels, blue bags, and posters were working where they exist. Newspaper and TV advertising were also noticeable. Tenants mentioned the lack of a waste calendar (there are no calendars for apartments since they are day specific), not enough lists, labels, blue bags, magnets and posters. They also said there was no feedback on how they are doing and what happens to recyclables, e.g., where does it go? Residents would like to see better relationships between superintendents/building managers and the City.

Beth mentioned that during the roll-out of the multi-residential recycling program (2003/2004) there was temporary staffing and when the roll-out was completed the position ended; consequently, there was little follow up.

Councillor Powers liked the fridge magnet (green cart) as a good tool for communication.
Ideas for improvement include: creating a calendar for multi-residential dwellers, regularly distributing lists, bags, cart labels, fridge magnets and posters focusing on acceptable materials and how to prepare them. All communications material should be appealing and functional. Response was that the print size that we are currently using is too small.

Peter Hutton said he recently saw a study discussing which fonts are easy to read and what people prefer. Clean and thick print styles are more effective.

Other findings for improvement include: City/superintendents/property managers work together, that on-site volunteers be recruited to be building champions, that residents be engaged so that everyone counts, set up a multi-residential help line, produce a newsletter and provide to building tenants.

Peter Hutton suggested forming relationships with students through the off campus association. Councillor Powers suggested that we have a booth at the student fairs. Peter mentioned that the student population does a major flip every September. Councillor Powers mentioned that a lot of students do come into the Dundas Municipal Service Centre to get a blue box. He suggested that we work in partnership with the visual arts department at Mohawk to produce and run a video about where everything goes and how it all works.

The results from the survey will be used to assist in the evolution of a new communications strategy. More particularly, the results will clarify the target audience as a female skew, confirming that seniors are generally committed to the program but younger residents need encouragement. Communication materials should be distributed regularly and be sustainable. Consider generating a waste collection calendar for tenants and updating print material such as the acceptable items list, posters and bin labels. More blue bags need to be distributed. There is a need for ‘positive impact’ messages to share information concerning how recycling helps to preserve the planet, and what happens to recyclables after they materials are collected. There is a need for a “hot line” as well as to work closely with superintendents and property managers on an on-going basis.

Key learning’s include: knowing there is a lack of confidence in the recycling program - need to put our best foot forward; multi-residential householders require more attention compared to single family residents since they are not scrutinized on a unit basis; commitment by residents varies as it is impacted by the commitment of superintendents; the City has higher authority and should enforce the rules with property owners; residents are interested in feedback as to how they’re doing and what happens to recyclables after they materials are collected. There is a need for a “hot line” as well as to work closely with superintendents and property managers on an on-going basis.

Pat Parker advised that products for cleaning green carts will be included in the superintendents’ packages.

Councillor Powers asked if the Planning Act was changed dictating that bins need to be right by the exit in order to reduce accessibility excuses. Staff are aware of some buildings that have refuse rooms on every floor. Councillor Pearson said it would help solve the accessibility problem. Other alternatives include multi-chute systems and possibly tying this in with health and safety issues.

The Green Cart program roll-out will be completed to multi-residential buildings at the end of 2009.

The next multi-residential public opinion survey will be in 2010.

Councillor Pearson moved to receive information. Seconded by Councillor Powers CARRIED

4. Waste Management Services for Festivals and Special Events

Blair Smith advised that the report is ready to go to Public Works Committee on Monday, June 16. Waste Management is requesting that an additional $40,000.00 be considered as part of the 2009 budget process to provide green cart collection at not-for-profit festivals and special events in 2009. Festival operators apply to the SEAT committee and request waste services. Councillor Pearson said
that festivals will ask that this be provided in-kind, but the funding will be through the Community Partnership Program. A $1,000 security deposit will be required to ensure containers are returned and recycling and green cart streams are not contaminated. There will be no waste management staff present at festivals, however, staff will ensure containers are delivered and removed and provide community outreach material.

Beth Goodger said that approximately twenty-six (26) festivals would be eligible for funded waste management services. All events held on City property that meet the eligibility for funding criteria will be required to participate starting in 2009 and will be required to pay the cost of the service based on user fees outlined in the report. Functions held on private property will be able to use the services based on the established fees if resources are available.

Councillor Pearson mentioned there were no festival barrels at the Battlefield Park re-enactment. Blair Smith indicated that the event may not have applied for barrels but mentioned that this type of issue would be resolved by next year as it will need to be included in the application.

Councillor Powers remarked that there were blue barrels and green carts at the lobster festival in Dundas and they seemed to be well used.

Councillor Pearson moved to accept the information, seconded by Councillor Powers  CARRIED

5. Diversion Options Implementation Update

Pat Parker presented the Multi-Residential Green Cart roll-out update chart and advised that 414 small buildings have been added to the program, increasing to 89% units complete for small buildings and 7% units complete for all buildings. The current participation rate is 67%. A2 zone (Dundas) is currently up while A1 and B1 are down from 80% to 72% and 64% to 42% respectively. Pat remarked that staff will keep checking these zones and hopefully these rates will improve.

Councillor Pearson moved to accept the information, seconded by Councillor Powers  CARRIED

6. Update on Battery Recycling

Pat Parker said that research on battery recycling has been started but more is needed. Pat requested that it be put in the “Outstanding Action Items”.

Moved by Councillor Powers, seconded by Councillor Pearson  CARRIED

Councillor Powers spoke about Toronto’s public space litter containers - garbage containers are combined with ashtray bins or used battery collection areas. He heard that they are well used and a lot of batteries are collected. Pat Parker said that staff would follow up with Toronto staff to see how the program is going.

7. Waste Reduction Task Force Update

Peter Hutton informed the Committee that the Waste Reduction Task Force is currently focusing on battery collection and battery disposal. The Task Force would like to invite Steering Committee members to a future Task Force meeting. Pat Parker suggested that the meeting take place in the fall when scheduling would be easier. It was noted that Council meetings and Councillor Powers Community Council meetings are on Wednesdays.

8. Material Recycling Facility Update

Blair Smith advised that building renovations are scheduled to be completed in July. The landscaping and clean up still needs to be completed. The container sorting line will be assembled in the next few weeks and will be up and running by July. The project is being completed within the approved budget, although unforeseen conditions required some of the work to be revised or deferred.
9. **Glanbrook Landfill Operations Update**

Eight (8) members of the public attended last month’s open house on the proposed Certificate Approval amendment to expand the service area to receive impacted soils for daily cover.

The landfill gas to energy project is on schedule for start-up in September.

An open house is scheduled for June 21st between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Shuttle service will be provided from the Binbrook arena.

The amended Certificate of Approval for the landfill was received from the Ministry of Environment at the end of May and staff are reviewing it.

10. **Other Business**

Councillor Pearson raised the issue of how to address businesses that want to put out a large amount of paper for recycling. Staff responded that bin service may be most suitable. To determine whether or not they are eligible, they should contact Mike Stelmach at extension 5506. Councillor Pearson remarked that she has noticed one business on King Street with a blue cart, but there are many businesses without recycling carts.

The issue of plastic grocery bags was raised. Oakland, California has struck down the decision to ban single use plastic bags. The report says that manufacturing paper bags is more destructible to the environment than the manufacturing of plastic bags.

Councillor Powers asked if we were accepting Halton’s compost yet and staff confirmed that we were. It was noted that Halton’s diversion rates are higher than Hamilton’s because they only have garbage collected every second week.

Councillor Powers asked if the new glass processing plant - Unical - was open yet. Staff advised that it is scheduled to open in late July.

Comments concerning the Liberty Energy Certificate of Approval need to be made within the next thirty (30) days.

Pat Parker advised that a Public Information Centre concerning land use planning for private waste studies will be held on June 26th.

Staff played the Central Compost Facility video.

8. **Next Meeting: September 10, 2008 in Room 320B at the Hamilton City Centre**

Please note that the meeting will begin at 9:30.