



“LANDFILLED” DISCUSSION SERIES

PUBLIC FEEDBACK

Date: Jan. 24, 2008

Time: 6:30-8 p.m.

Location: Leavenworth Road Assoc., Kansas City, Kan.

Facilitator: Jill Cornett

Recorder: Liana Riesinger

Other observers: none

Number of participants: 8; 6 women, 2 men

As we watch landfill space disappear and consider the possibility of trash costs rising, what actions do you think we should be taking now?

- Recycle! But it needs to be inexpensive and easy. All plastics should be recyclable, even #4s, #5s. And you should not have to sort your recyclables.
- The biggest motivation for recycling is the ease of it. If it is easy, then participants said they would do it. If it is too complicated, they will not participate.
- Use canvas bags to take to the grocery store. Have stores stop giving out plastic bags, so you have to take your own.
- Need to make the current closed landfills safer.

Imagine there is not operating landfill left in KC. What issues would arise?

- People would start burning their trash
- Eventually there won't be a choice of whether to recycle or not. It will become mandatory because there will be too much trash to manage. So we must begin diverting trash from the landfills now.
- All agreed that they are responsible as citizens to change their behavior if landfills are at capacity.

What stops someone from recycling?

- The inconvenience of having to take it somewhere, plus they don't want to put it in their cars.
- Some participants were concerned about storing recycling containers in their garages, or around their properties for fear of it attracting dogs, rodents and other pests.

What lessons are you children learning about recycling in school?

- Kids, grandkids will be accustomed to recycling because of what they are learning in school about recycling.
- Schools encouraged kids to bring their families' recyclables to school and they, in turn, get money for their classroom.

Do landlords have a responsibility to provide recycling services?

- Landlords should be responsible for providing recycling for their rental units. Dumpsters could be placed beside the trash dumpsters for this.
- Renters could be charged for this service through an add-on fee to their regular trash service.

What do you usually pay for trash? Would you be willing to pay for recycling services?

- One of the participants said that they heard their trash bill will go from the current rate of \$6 to \$9.95 per month in order to add curbside recycling. And that everyone's bill will go up, whether they participate in recycling or not, so you might as well!
- A participant pointed out that if Wyandotte County residents don't start participating, their costs may go up even further because if area landfills fill up, trash will have to be shipped out of the region resulting in even higher trash removal costs.

What does your perfect recycling system look like?

- Would include a scanner or automatic sorter for all items.
- Bins with lids so items wouldn't blow out, and it would keep pests out. It must be neat and tidy, if it isn't then they won't participate.
- Tall trash barrels.
- No permanent structure on curbside.
- Well-trained collectors for curbside recycling.
- A huge educational campaign to explain the project and give instructions around what is and isn't recyclable, and information on composting.

Would you consider composting if it would lengthen the life span of our region's landfills?

There was little interest among any of the participants for composting, but it was pointed out for those who might be interested in composting, some neighborhoods wouldn't allow it, i.e., new housing development in the west end (110th St.) aren't even allowed to plant tomatoes, so composting would be out of the question.

Do you feel any responsibility to future generations to deal with these issues?

One participant feels no responsibility to children or grandchildren and says it will be their issue to deal with.

Who should be taking a leadership role on this issue?

- Commissioners
- Neighborhood leaders