



“LANDFILLED” DISCUSSION SERIES

PUBLIC FEEDBACK

Date: April 17, 2008

Time: 7– 8:30 p.m.

Location: City Hall, Roeland Park, Kan.

Facilitator: Airick Leonard West

Recorder: Mary Henry

Other observers: Dan Blom

Number of participants: 14

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

- Investing in eco-industry park; one company’s trash is another’s product; materials recycling facility
- Dilemma: In Roeland Park, 20 percent of residents recycle, low numbers; suggestion – people pay by amount of water produced with provision that would allow families a cost-effective system with incentives
- Develop a public campaign to increase recycling block-by-block
- Legislation against nonrenewable, commercial products
- Mandatory recycle program with pickup at homes; compulsory recycling
- Municipal program of composting using paper bags rather than plastic; mulching education
- Side note: Old bins cannot be recycled
- Mandatory beverage containers in public places
- Drop (reduce) sales tax pro-rated by amount of recyclable materials

What would compulsory recycling look like?

- Side note: Glass is not picked up by recycling hauler; it must be taken to recycling center
- Recycling in Roeland Park: Currently, residents must take materials to recycling center located in southern Johnson County
- Side note: Crush glass and use it in asphalt
- Local recycling of glass, corrugated cardboard, trees, brush, leaves, compost
- Create industries here to use recycled materials; example - glass into countertops
- Deposit on plastic bottles (at retailer)
- Side note: Conserving by not buying plastic or bottled water

Facilitator: How is hauling of recycled items financed?

- Haulers (Town & Country or Countrywide) paid \$104 per year by household
- In Mission, paid by city at \$100 per year per household; embedded in property tax
- In Leawood, cost is \$90 per year
- *Facilitator summary: Municipalities pay \$10 per month per household; private contractors charge \$14 per month per household*
- Side note: Three comments that much of recycling materials don’t get to recycle center; recycling ends up in trash
- Side note: Composted materials – residents can go get from city facility and use in yard

- Question asked by participants: What are incentives for restaurants, hotels, apartment complexes; how are they encouraged to participate? *Facilitator comment: This discussion will be included in recommendations; discussions with Kansas City and potential action*
- Side note: Restaurants should be regulated similar to health inspections; a mandate more than incentives.

What about a landfill near your home? Concerns, comments?

- Blowing items [in the wind]
- Tons of birds, rodents
- Energy surrounding landfill would be terrible; I would move
- Reality check – seeing more trash

How can we equitably pay for our use of landfill space?

- In terms of transport costs
- Consumption patterns must change; don't see any happening. "Global disposal of trash."

Imagine there is no operating landfill left in the Kansas City area. What issues would arise?

- Japan doesn't have landfills; create plants to use trash; convert trash to fuel; reuse all products; sense of emergency; education now; do it here, we have the technology
- Incinerate trash, but incinerating hazardous materials creates additional carbon dioxide
- Change buying patterns: live simply, sustainability
- There would be a lot more illegal dumping and littering
- Move trash to ocean and space
- Rethink containers, but would require time and energy
- Simplify life

What habits would you be willing to change?

- Creating small garden; grow my own groceries
- Buy everything used – clothing, furniture
- Buy in bulk, less packaging

Do you feel educated about what to keep out of trash?

- Lids, bottle tops (*side Conversation: What do we do with these?*)
- Aerosol cans – did not know they could be recycled
- Hazardous waste
- Compact fluorescents (CFLs)
- Electronic equipment
- Spread the word to others that we know
- Seek info on internet about this topic

Think about all of the items you drop in the trash and the things you buy on an average day. What is the most inconvenient thing about recycling?

- Traveling to take items to recycling center
- Sorting, consistency in rules
- Where do I recycle away from home?
- How to store batteries, old motor oil; it's an inconvenience
- Home storage
- Don't want to drive out to the recycling center every week
- Contaminated products risk contaminating other items, i.e. plastics with metal, combination of materials
- Bottles – how to get ring off; why is not whole product recyclable; develop biodegradable materials of whole product
- Driving long distance to recycle – Is this leaving a bigger footprint? Local recycling is important.

Should there be a reward for recycling?

- Personal reward is enough; saving the world for the future
- Credits for recycling to be used at participating vendors; automatic weighing and posted on account
- Eco-industrial park – pound for pound; make right things easy, wrong things hard
- Carrot and stick necessary; people need rewards; no communal sense mentality; pass legislation; make recycling more personal
- Make personal recycling “Cool thing to do”; community recognition programs for individuals, organizations, businesses; goal is to reduce trash.
- Composting limit, trash limit; employ cost factor – more than 1 bag, you pay.
- Participant Question: What percentage is OK? Is less than 100 percent OK? Democracy issue (people’s choice); education important.

What are our obligations to future generations?

- Obligation to give planet better than what it was given to us; extinction issue
- Too late. Empowers me to do more; pockets of hope, but objectively too late, little political will/issue to make changes
- Kids don’t seem to be concerned
- Commercialism [is an issue that limits opportunities for change]
- Education at schools
- Teaching of recycling in Europe, but they see rest of world not doing it; exploitation of resources
- Ballot box – Is environmental issue important to candidates?

Design your ideal recycling system. What would the system look like for your home or office?

- Full-service recycling center at every municipality parking lot; local recycling; adds to education
- Importance of curbside plus comment above; basic service/utility; part of owning a home
- Recycling part of home, such as built into kitchen – drop recycling into container that is then sucked into or sent to a center automatically
- Barcode on every product that identifies content of packaging for easy sorting; item is scanned at recycling center, then goes into correct bin
- Build recycling centers in home and garage; universal trend; produce kits for remodeling homes
- Cradle to cradle philosophy – lease items, send back to manufacturer for distribution and reuse; private/public partnership
- Marketing – marking products as to content; cap a trade – reducing caps; barcodes on cans – earn back refund
- Provide place for recyclable materials; encourage companies to reuse
- Plastics that are not recyclable – find use or way to recycle
- Recycling center in each city; more education
- Easy recycling – public containers or bins for aluminum cans; make recycling visible
- Public bins for aluminum cans – keep neighborhood clean
- Concern with public bins – abuse and/or appropriate misuse by people

Who are the leaders on this issue?

- Bridging the Gap
- Kansas City, Mo., Solid Waste Management
- Johnson County
- Private sector such as KCP&L
- Public schools, KU
- BNIM (architectural firm)
- Prairie Village government committees
- Home associations for sustainability

What is your role?

- On committees – local, regional
- The nag at work!