



Preserving Resources,
Preventing Waste

The New Jersey WasteWise Business Network

May 12, 2022

To: Members and Prospective Members of the
New Jersey WasteWise Business Network

From: Steven Rinaldi, Chair
New Jersey WasteWise Business Network
NJDEP, Bureau of Sustainability

Subject: Minutes from the 5/5/22 New Jersey WasteWise Business Network webinar

Minutes:

Welcome –Network Chair Steve Rinaldi (Steven.Rinaldi@dep.nj.gov) welcomed everyone and explained that the New Jersey WasteWise Business Network is the DEP’s free educational program designed to help businesses and other organizations learn more about waste reduction, recycling, and recycled product procurement. Unfortunately, Steve was not able to provide an overview of the Recycling Market Development Council report as planned because the report has not yet been released to the Governor and Legislature. Updates on other councils and commissions were provided, as follows:

Solar Panel Recycling Commission – The commission is moving along and in the process of reviewing the recommendations submitted by its members. In the months ahead, the commission will discuss and finalize its recommendations for the report that will eventually be sent to the Legislature.

Plastics Recycling Advisory Council – This Council held its kick-off meeting last month (4/22).

Food Waste Recycling Market Development Council – Most members of this Council have been appointed and once the Governor’s Office appoints a member to a sudden vacancy, the council will schedule its first meeting (hopefully in June 2022).

Steve also mentioned that the DEP will be kicking off the 2022 DEP Recycling Awards program in a few weeks and that the single use carryout bag prohibition took effect on May 4, 2022.

Book Bin Fundraising & Repurposing Program – Matt Laiacona, Owner, New Legacy Books – info@newlegacybooks.com - New Legacy Books is a for-profit organization with a mission to help give back to the community through the sale and redistribution of collected books. All books will be used in some way. Books will be resold to individuals that can give the books a new home at the same time raising funds for non-profit organizations in communities. Non-profit/charitable organizations receive 15% of the profits earned from the book collection sites. If the books have seen better days and are deemed no longer usable, they will be recycled properly rather than disposed in a landfill. Mr. Laiacona indicated that businesses, municipalities, and other organizations interested in hosting a book collection bin simply need to designate a charitable organization as the recipient of their share of the proceeds from the collection site. New Legacy Books currently has 86 book bin locations (the majority in northern NJ). The company has been expanding into central and southern NJ and would like to team up with more partners throughout the state. (PowerPoint to be available at www.anjr.com)

The Business of Food Recovery & Sustainable Food Waste Management – Gary Sondermeyer, Vice President of Operations, Bayshore Family of Companies, Co-Chair, New Jersey Climate Change Alliance – GSondermeyer@bayshorerecycling.com – Mr. Sondermeyer stated that 40% of all food grown in the United States is wasted and that when disposed in a landfill, food waste generates a significant quantity of methane gas (a powerful greenhouse gas). Mr. Sondermeyer also highlighted the fact that despite New Jersey’s affluence, 11% of the state’s population is considered “food insecure.” As such, more food recovery systems and food waste composting and recycling operations are needed in New Jersey. Mr. Sondermeyer identified five key strategic focus areas, as follows: food waste reduction and donation; food waste management in schools; community scale composting; large scale organics infrastructure; and sustainable animal manure management. Furthermore, thanks to a stakeholder process conducted by the New Jersey Climate Change Alliance in 2021, 17 action items have been set forth that proactively address the food waste focus areas referenced above (see **Note** and **weblink** below). Regulatory reform, end product market development and a need for financial incentives to foster sustainable organics material management were highlighted by Mr. Sondermeyer as especially important action items. Mr. Sondermeyer also mentioned that businesses which implement food waste recycling programs benefit through “cost avoidance” in not producing waste requiring disposal, which is costly in New Jersey. The food waste recycling program established by Merck & Co. was cited as a good example of a successful business food waste recycling initiative. (PowerPoint to be available at www.anjr.com)

Note: As mentioned above, Mr. Sondermeyer is the Co-Chair of the New Jersey Climate Change Alliance. The organization’s **Sustainable Organic Material Management Plan (August 2021)** can be found at <https://www.bayshorerecycling.com/wp->

[content/uploads/2021/09/Organics-Workgroup-SOMMP-Final-Sept-2021.pdf](#). It contains detailed information about sustainable food management, including the 17 core opportunities for action referenced above.

United States Green Building Council (USGBC) Overview and Sustainable Building Opportunities – Medea Villere, Program Manager, U.S. Green Building Council and Wayne DeFeo, Principal and Founder, DeFeo Associates - mvillere@usgbc.org and wdefeo@defeoassociates.com - Ms. Villere serves as Program Manager at USGBC in Market Transformation and Development for the Middle Atlantic and New England Region. She stated that the mission of the USGBC is to transform the way buildings and communities are designed, built, and operated, enabling an environmentally and socially responsible, healthy, and prosperous environment that improves the quality of life for all. Ms. Villere indicated that LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is a certification program for buildings, communities, and cities that guides their design, construction, operation, and maintenance towards sustainability. Thus far, the program has certified more than 41,000 buildings to LEED, totaling more than 6.5 billion square feet of space, across 167 countries and territories. The USGBC has also developed LEED Zero, a complement to LEED that verifies the achievement of net zero goals in existing buildings. There are 4 categories for LEED Zero: Carbon, Energy, Water and Waste. In regard to the latter category, the USGBC’s TRUE certification program helps facilities to define, pursue and achieve their zero waste goals through project certification and a professional certificate program. (PowerPoint to be available at www.anjr.com)

Mr. DeFeo discussed the significant environmental impact associated with buildings. For example, 30% of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions are due to building operations. In addition, 136 million tons of demolition waste are generated each year in the United States. Mr. DeFeo next touched upon the “Triple Bottom Line” - economic prosperity, environmental stewardship, and social responsibility – and how the three can work together in sustainable building. It was noted that sustainable building does not cost more than traditional building and can be used in all types of buildings and for all income groups. Mr. DeFeo discussed the importance of using recycled content products in building projects to stimulate demand for the recyclable materials that are collected. The use of recycled content plastic fencing was highlighted, as was the use of insulation made from recycled denim. Mr. DeFeo showed numerous other examples of recycled content products being used in business settings and made it clear that sustainable building makes economic sense. As an example of the latter, a PNC Bank study was cited that showed that LEED certified bank branches yield \$461,300 more per employee than non-LEED certified branches. Mr. DeFeo also discussed the recycling system – collection, processing, and marketing - in relation to recyclable components of construction and demolition debris and highlighted the cost savings resulting from recycling these materials rather than disposing of them as waste. LEED credits are available for such activities. LEED Zero was also featured, as was the Colgate-Palmolive Burlington, NJ facility which has proven to be a top performer in this program. (PowerPoint to be available at www.anjr.com)

The Delaware River and Bay Authority's (DRBA) Award-Winning Office and Public Space Waste Reduction and Recycling Program – Al Fralinger, Environmental, Health and Safety Manager, Delaware River and Bay Authority – albert.fralinger@drba.net – The DRBA is a bi-state transportation authority that oversees a network of bridges, airports and the Cape May – Lewes Ferry. Mr. Fralinger stated that five years ago his office conducted an environmental compliance review of the Authority, including a systematic review of its waste management and business practices, and found both information gaps and opportunities for improvement. Of note was the finding that there was no measurement or tracking of recycling or waste disposal. A lack of recycling infrastructure for staff and customers was also found in this review. Thus, the DRBA established a waste accounting/tracking system. The Authority now tracks 25 different recyclable commodities and provides a tonnage grant report to its host municipality. Mr. Fralinger mentioned the importance of procurement and supplier management and discussed the recycling containers purchased for staff offices and for public spaces, such as the ferry loading area and the ferry itself. The goal of the DRBA is to make it easy for staff and the public to recycle. The DRBA also established partnerships with other organizations that helped further the Authority's sustainability efforts. In addition, the DRBA established training and environmental education programs for staff and the public. The DRBA's green business practices stress pollution prevention and include the following strategies: Form a Green Team; No polystyrene foam use; Reducing Plastic Use; Closed Loop Restaurant; Cooking Oil System; No Plastic bags for take-outs; Total Enclosed Roll Off Containers; and Stormwater inlet litter guards. The DRBA has won numerous awards for its environmental efforts, including the USEPA's 2021 WasteWise Partner of the Year (Government category) Award. (PowerPoint to be available at www.anjr.com)

SR: Minutes May 5 2022