

Monroe County Climate Action Plan Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Monroe County Fleet Center / Zoom
August 7, 2023 (3:30 – 5:00 p.m.)
Drafted: August 25, 2023
Approved: September 11, 2023

Members: Matthew O'Connor, Michael Yudelson, Sean Delehanty, Richard Milne, Kathryn Walker, John Botelho. Lola DeAscentiis, Anna Yatteau, Mike Garland

Absent: Akilah Skerrette-Banister, Alden Smith,

Staff: Clement Chung, Madison Quinn, Pat Gooch, Yasmin Guevara

Guests: Molly Gaudioso and Tom Robinson from Bergmann;

Attending via Zoom: Victoria Zelin & Jonathan Cloud, Possible Rochester; John Steinmetz, Bergmann; Padraic; Loretta Morrell, Federation of Monroe County Environmentalists & Color Greece Green

Welcome, Introduction and Announcements (Co-Chair O'Connor):

Meeting called to order at 3:31 P.M. by Co-Chair O'Connor.

Approval of Minutes (Co-Chair Yudelson):

Motion by Matthew O'Connor to approve minutes from July 10, 2023 meeting; seconded by Richard Milne. The motion passed unanimously.

Legislative Update (Legislators Yudelson, Delehanty and Milne):

Monroe County/Town of Pittsford Food Scraps Collection Pilot Program, Referral 23-0239. Intergovernmental Committee – Legislator Hebert asked if the CAPAC had reviewed/approved program; Role of the committee is plan development; implementation falls to the County staff DES)

Presentation: Mike Garland gave overview of Food Scraps Pilot Program

- Regulatory Drivers & Local Drivers
- Climate Smart Community (CSC) grant – Organic Management Plan
- Request for Quotes for vendor – lowest responsible vendor was Natural Upcycling
- Goals – county waste diversion - starting with 2 county facilities & reducing food waste to landfills and preventing food from going down the sink to Water Resource Recovery Facilities
- Aim to create replicable, scalable, adaptable model; proof of concept to identify solutions
- MC Hospital & Jail – pilot collection at both facilities – Phase I greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction – pre-consumer due to lack of centralized cafeteria/ neither facility staffed to handle post-consumer waste separation
- Pittsford selection factors – second community approached, eager to partner; existing yard/organics collection programs, environmental initiatives (including Clean Energy Community Program); population density
- QR code survey – Name, Email, Date, bucket fill volume, and comments. Surveys will help inform improvements; provisions made for those without smart phones to use written feedback card the town will enter data into the database
- Town will begin registering residents this week, assuming adoption by County Legislature & Town Board]; Program to run September 2023 – September 2024.
- Anaerobic Digestion Overview
 - Digester on site and electricity used at Noblehurst Farm in Livingston County
 - Not putting gas into a pipeline or transporting anywhere
 - Resulting liquid is land applied, solid used for cow bedding
- Budget – \$25,000 in total costs; grant funding to cover \$18,750; Matching funds of \$6,250
- Expect estimated 36,000 gallons of food scraps for the year to be collected through this pilot

Committee discussion:

- Would facility would be open to Monroe County residents and will the resulting composted material would be available to participants; will this resource be returned to the residents?
 - Like curbside recycling material hauled/taken for processing; paying for collection/transportation to DEC-authorized organics recycling facility. Benefit is the organics diversion and information gathered on level of interest/participation in program
- Differences between Anaerobic Digestion vs. Composting; the City of Rochester has a pilot composting program. Will we compare the outcomes with the city's pilot?
 - Both are methods of organics diversion, but with different processes; The County was agnostic on what method to use, the goal was organics diversion from landfills.
- Will we know if we have a diverse sample of participants – big families, etc.; different volumes would be expected from

- empty nesters vs. busy families who may be less likely to participate;
 - Not currently collecting household data, but could be a follow up survey, halfway through
- Will there be data analysis regarding contamination levels?
 - Contamination, volumes, and feedback from vendor will be collected; the County's solid waste term contractor Barton & Loguidice will analyze data;
 - Pilot program will be used to evaluate amount of waste diverted, resident participation, contamination levels, challenges, resident feedback, vendor performance, GHG analysis, & other outcomes
- Did we look at MCC as a county facility?
 - MCC has small composting program focused in the Student Union; collect food scraps, transport to a pig farm; Could revisit this, but MCC not ideal as early adopter due to security protocols/limited access for vendors
- Why proceed with pilot prior to completion of Organics Management Plan/feasibility study? Why are we agnostic to process, AD vs Composting? Did we communicate to compost companies about needing to be under \$20,000?
 - Specification in RFQ was DEC-approved food scrap recycling, which includes AD or composting
- Questions around community choice; was Village of Fairport contacted?
 - Several communities fit selection criteria; Brighton was approached, declined, Pittsford eager to partner
- Concern with sending resources outside Monroe County. If a local company was selected, money could go towards creating jobs in the county, developing capacity in Monroe County
- How does GHG emissions from trucking to out-of-county AD facility that compare to the food waste we get and the diversion from landfills?
 - Natural Upcycling is already here, servicing Fairport and Pittsford Wegmans locations
- Is there any way to stop those not signed up from dumping at the drop-off site?
 - Operating in good faith; the QR data collected will be compared to the hauler info; if there is a mismatch, due to overwhelming demand, we can address that

Climate Action Plan Phase II Update (Presentations by Molly Gaudio (Bergmann)):

1. Public Workshop #2

- Held July 26, 12 PM virtual & 6 PM in person at MCC Brighton – 111+ attended across the 2 sessions
- Q&A compiled, recording of virtual presentation on website; Goals/Strategies Survey launched; Sector poster boards as breakout discussion stations

2. Survey

- 82 respondents as of 8/7/23, 68% over age 45; 57% female; 95% white;

3. Draft talking points – developed per committee request to assist with public outreach, distributed ahead of the meeting

- What will the plan do?
- Why do we need a plan?
- How is climate change affecting us?
- Is Monroe County a climate resilient community?
- What are benefits of taking action?
- How can you take action now?
- Highlight topics for the plan: cost savings, equity, economic development, public health, ecosystem protection

4. Goals & Strategies

- Structure: goal statement, reduction target, & county-specific actions; potential partners; recommended actions for municipalities/organizations; funding opportunities; recommended actions for public
- Goal statements for each sector (in Google Drive)

5. Google Drive Resources

- Advertising Material
- Public Meeting #2 Boards
- Talking Points
- Draft Goal Statements
- Committee Meeting Slides
- Public Input Summaries
- Stakeholder Resources
- Pop-up Events & info Materials

6. Next Steps

Committee:

- Take & share goals survey!
- Review talking points draft

Consultant team:

- GHG inventory report (in development)
- Draft goals & strategies framework further developed

New Business: None

Public Forum:

Victoria Zelin & Jonathan Cloud – Possible Rochester

- C-PACE is approved in Monroe County but not taken advantage of because of desired threshold for attractive investment
- Commercial Building emissions are a large challenge – it's a challenge for owners to go green. The County could support as a Phase II goal
- Possible Rochester is a nonprofit; have reached out to a lot of nonprofits that listed professional expenses (bankers' minimum project size \$500,000) mixed with fees they need to pay as barriers to participating. Projects in Monroe County may get up to \$250,000 but not big enough to get to the threshold financiers want. "Electrify" program – local banks, &/or credit unions could be engaged with the program;
- Has to be a different cost structure to accommodate small businesses, who want to go green, but don't have \$500,000+ projects
- Parent organization, Possible Planet, stewarded New Jersey PACE law. Committed to Rochester and have had interaction with developers, contractors, but have had difficulty finding interest. Those suffering most from high energy costs are supportive, but can't front the money for electrification projects.
- Recommendation made to Possible Rochester to meet with MCDES staff to further explore concept.

Next meeting: Monday, September 11, 2023 at 3:30pm in-person at the Monroe County Fleet Center Building 1 Conference Room. Changes or updates to the meeting venue will be communicated to the committee via email.

Motion to adjourn by Richard Milne; second by Matthew O'Connor. Meeting adjourned at 5:00pm.