

Minutes – Regular Meeting
Solid Waste Advisory Board
January 5, 2006
Approved February 2, 2006

Attendance: Linda Bowerman, B J Tipton, Al Vickers, Joe Clayton, Randy Kabrick, Remus Smith, and Jan Sassaman

Staff: Gayle Wilson, Blair Pollock, Wanda McCain, Rod Visser, Paul Spire, Tom Draney and Rebecca Holdway

1. **Adoption of Minutes from December 1 SWAB meeting** Kabrick states that it would be helpful to have a spreadsheet analysis of the Charlotte and Greensboro facilities.

Vickers moves to accept the minutes. Clayton 2nd. Passes unanimously.

2. **Presentation by Chris Wachholz - Building Supply Recycling Center (Proposed for Hillsborough)** The Durham Recycling Supply Center is a 12 – 15 year old business I acquired that operates in the tobacco warehouse at the corner of Roxboro and Pettigrew. We take new, used and antique [building] materials and offer them for sale to the public. We also use them in our own projects - renovating houses, moving houses and deconstruction. Most of our projects are in Orange County. We are a big believer in materials reuse. We are hoping to have a long and prosperous future here. We are planning to relocate to Hillsborough. We have to get out of our current facility because they are renovating for offices. More than that I believe that Hillsborough and Orange County is the right place for this business because of the sentiment and the culture of the value of historic preservation and also the conservation ethic and the public's belief in recycling as well as the governments' support for that.

The plan for the new location is on Orange Grove Road. It is a site that is unattractive and would other wise not be used. On the hill will be the office with a library where people can see what they can do with the materials. The other buildings will be constructed from recycled materials. There will be a building for lumber where people can drive by, similar to a lumberyard. We want to make it a show place of materials reuse as well as renewable energy. We hope to have a demonstration of a micro-hydro site.

The reason I came tonight is that I would like to ask that the Board consider passing a resolution in your minutes, hopefully tonight. I am going before the [Hillsborough] Board of Adjustment on the 11th, and it would be helpful to me to say we have the support of this Board. There is a real need for this in Orange County and Hillsborough. I think that what we are doing complements a lot of the goals that your Board as well as UNC and the governments are trying to achieve with building materials recycling and reuse. Although there is a bit of tension now and then between those of us in the for-profit sector and non-profit sector, I think that our efforts and programs can be complementary and work well with those in the non-

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profit and government sector, provided we work together to create the right environment. I am committed to doing that.

Smith asks how many employees will be needed?

Wachholz replies initially three. We hope to expand. As other re-use centers have done across the country we'd like to have added value by making things out of the reused materials. This could expand jobs here.

Kabrick states that in my tenure on the SWAB, I don't remember the SWAB passing any resolution that endorses this kind of activity. I would ask Gayle or Rod if this is appropriate for the Board to do.

Sassaman states that we might have written a letter to endorse something as a concept in the past.

Kabrick asks where does Habitat for Humanity who runs a not-for-profit similar operation fall because we have plans to add the facility possibly to the Orange County Landfill?

Sassaman states that it is something that we are going to discuss.

Clayton asks if there is some resistance from the City [of Hillsborough] and is that why you are here?

Wachholz replies no resistance. My experience thus far is that the City and County are very encouraging.

Clayton asks about the architectural salvage company that was in Daniel Boone Village?

Wachholz states that they are still there. It is a fairly small operation and most of the stuff she sales is very high end. Most of their stuff is from out of state. I don't see them as competitors. I think there is more room for people in this business. What is holding us back is not competition but not having enough of a market.

Visser states that in response to Randy's question, the SWAB is governed by the interlocal agreement. The SWAB could do what they want with regard to this [resolution].

Sassaman states that basically this is a Hillsborough issue. It is up to Hillsborough to determine if they have a problem with it or not. Our role might be to say it is a good idea or [we like] the concept.

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Visser asks if Habitat of Orange County or any other non-profit were to open one or more operations in Orange County, how would that affect what you are trying to do or would it? The Commissioners have been in off-and-on conversation with Habitat over the last five years about a possible deconstruction materials resale facility. Would that be a threat to you or would you be a threat to them?

Wachholz states that I am a big supporter of Habitat. We do work together on some things. We have had some discussion with Wake Habitat of partnering on some deconstruction projects. I see no reason why we couldn't do that with Orange-Durham Habitat. I had a meeting with Susan Levy [executive director of Orange County Habitat for Humanity] a couple of years ago about having a relationship where we operate the store for them.

This is done in other parts of the county with other non-profits. The for-profit would stock and sell the materials and the non-profit would reap some of the revenue, which is why Habitat runs the stores. They don't use the materials in their affordable housing.

I am having a meeting with someone tomorrow from Habitat to discuss how we might work more closely together. I hope that we could work together rather than not work in concert at all. I have made a large personal investment in the property and will make a sizable additional investment in it and would be concerned if the County would use taxpayer funds to give Habitat an operation that would do what we are doing.

Smith asks if the storage building would be open or closed sides?

Wachholz states closed.

Spire asks how would you treat a citizen that may have a door or window [to dispose/donate/sell], would they be able to stop by?

Wachholz states: We take donations now. Sometime we buy material based on the quality of it and whether we can resell it or reuse it. They would have to deliver it during business hours. We wouldn't have a means for them to leave it at the gate. I expect it will happen any way. I can't say we will take everything. If we can't reuse it or sell it, we can't take it.

Vickers asks would you be philosophically opposed to taking things from the salvage shed if it were useful?

Wachholz states: I still poke through the green boxes now.

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Vickers asks that if people drop off building materials that might have a use at the landfill in the salvage area, is it possible to bring it to you?

Wachholz replies absolutely. In our construction business we take materials that we are not using to the landfill regularly and there are things that I wish I could take back with me but I'm not allowed to.

Pollock asks where do you see stuff you want – in the C&D pile?

Wachholz replies yes in the C&D area and mixed wood.

Tipton states that I have been to a lot of deconstruction conferences in the past three or more years and it's probably safe to say that there are not a lot of these [salvage stores] in the south.

Sassaman states that it seems that we have two issues before us – are we in favor of the concept and does the [Wachholz] plan to move to Hillsborough have any adverse effect on anything else we might want to encourage later.

Kabrick states that before we make a motion or put something in the minutes, we need to have a discussion on where we are with Habitat. I can't see anything going into the minutes tonight.

Sassaman asks Wachholz when would you need something from us.

Wachholz replies that anytime is valuable but I am going before the Board of Adjustments on the 11th and it would be nice to have something then.

Kabrick asks where are you in the permitting process?

Wachholz states that the Board of Adjustment will be the last meeting. Once I get their approval, we are good to go.

Sassaman states that we don't have any decision-making authority here. This is basically a Hillsborough issue.

Vickers states that the only issue here is a private enterprise trying to make reuse of materials, which is the general purpose of waste reduction. We need to come to whether we encourage Habitat or someone else. We are not in the business of selecting who is in business.

Kabrick states that we have had a lot of discussion about building a facility on our property and have Habitat run a similar business.

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Wilson states that there have been on and off discussions for about five years. A former commissioner was very supportive in advocating county involvement including financial assistance to have Habitat develop some similar type of resale store. That has waxed and waned over a period of time without any interaction between us and Habitat. There has been some recent communications with Habitat. They state that they are now ready to sit down and explore the issue with the county officials. The current Board may not be as generous financially.

Tipton states that at the time the Habitat issue came up there wasn't another organization in the area doing this.

Clayton states that there is one in Hillsborough.

Tipton states that it is an antique store not deconstruction.

Clayton states that I've never seen Habitat go in and deconstruct anything. I don't think that Habitat and this is in the same league. Even if they are, it may be better to have three or five stores.

Sassaman states that basically what's happening is an ongoing operation is moving to Hillsborough. They are still in the Habitat metropolitan area. In reality, the distance from the present landfill site to Hillsborough isn't much different from the distance of the site to the location of the store. The comment about supporting a competing non-profit entity with county funds is well taken.

Smith states that the piece of property he's talking about is not very desirable. Personally, I don't want to be on the Board of Adjustment or Planning, that is not part of the duty that I'm sitting here tonight. This is strictly Hillsborough. I think that SWAB should only be involved if he wants to put this on SWAB land or something controlled by SWAB. Same with Habitat.

Kabrick – I agree.

Vickers states that the only thing that's possible for the SWAB to do is to encourage his operation to do recycling.

Kabrick states that I don't think SWAB should be endorsing businesses we don't know anything about. I think the concept is great. If the SWAB wants to endorse the concept, that's great.

Sassaman asks if there is a motion?

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Vickers moves that as a general principle we think that architectural recycling is consistent with solid waste goals in the County.

Smith 2nd.

Pollock states that to Randy's concern Chris did not bring any documentation and what I say is only hearsay but I have seen their work it's sound and high quality and they take some care in what they are doing.

Kabrick states that my concern is that he is a late addition to the agenda and gives us a request for a resolution of adopting his center and that's all the information we got. If he wants to give us more and have us look at this later that's fine. My general impression is that we are not in the business of endorsing business one way or another.

Sassaman states that the issue is that we endorse the concept as opposed to a specific business.

Motion passes 6-0.

3. Principles/Values of Selection of MRF to Process Orange County Recyclables

Wilson states that Items 3 and 4 are related in that at the solid waste work session on November 9 the County Commissioners requested that the SWAB draft two sets of general principles – to govern the selection of a materials recovery facility if we used a private facility and to govern the selection of a landfill to which we would eventually transfer our waste. The general principles are not regulatory. They would be non-technical and social types of principles.

In their request they wanted the MRF principles before the tour of the MRFs so I did a draft and submitted it to them stating I would bring this back to the SWAB later. The attached is what I thought was the essence of their request. You are welcome to use this or come up with your own standards you would like to see when making a decision about which MRF to deliver to and which landfill to deliver waste.

Kabrick states that one thing that I would add to the employee safety is to have a safety standard wherever we go with our material.

Wilson asks if the measures for that are accidents per hour worked?

Kabrick states that there are a lot of OSHA measures.

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Vickers states that my experience with [looking at] OSHA metrics for 48 plants is a difficult thing because you can have a facility doing really well but have one accident and using time averaging it takes a long time to recover. As plants have more automation and less manual labor there are fewer accidents. It's the same with MRFs which are very manual labor intensive; they are more likely to have more accidents.

Kabrick states that the point is to have a sustainable enterprise. Which means safety [and] the economic conditions of the workers are above OSHA standards.

Sassaman states that, in addition to employee health and safety, there should be some words for environmental compliance.

Clayton asks if any of the [MRF] plants are ISO certified?

Draney replies no.

Wilson asks if the environmental compliance standards should be above the state/federal regulatory standards?

Kabrick states that there should be a minimum history of being in compliance with their air, water and solid waste permits.

Clayton notes that in terms of injury and accident rates if a plant uses day labor or possibly illegal temporary help, the accidents may not be reported.

Kabrick says any facility should be subject to audit against our standards and these things will show up.

Draney states that when we put out the curbside bids there was a requirement for safety compliance, policy and records, we disqualified one firm on safety standards. There is history with the County requiring safety records as part of a bid.

Vickers states that the only problem I see is what standards are we going to pick. There is words and reality.

Draney states that we didn't request specific standards, but we wanted to see that they had policies, a safety plan and were going through safety training.

Vickers states that in the policy it will be easy to write a statement that we want to do something like this but it will be hard to determine what we actually measure and what are good parameters.

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Kabrick - I disagree. There can be a checklist of minimum standards. If they don't cross that threshold, we don't hire them. There are a lot of ways to do this.

Sassaman states that we have a straw man. One suggestion is for those of you who have specific knowledge and ideas in this area to take this and refine it and bring it back to the next meeting. I am concerned that we include environmental as well as worker health and safety.

Vickers and Kabrick volunteer to work on both [principles].

Clayton volunteers to work on the MRF [principles].

4. **Principles/Values for Selection of Landfill to Receive Transferred Waste** Discussed with Item 3.
5. **BOCC Planning Retreat Request for SWAB Input** Sassaman states that I am looking for input or comments on this.

Smith approves of it as it is.

Vickers moves to accept the document as written.

Smith 2nd

Motion passes 6-0.

Kabrick states that as a note I have been talking with Bill Strom about the notion of a new landfill in Orange County. He suggested that I petition the County Commissioners and the Town to direct Orange County SWAB to look at whether there might be a potential landfill in Orange County.

6. **Multi-Family Recyclables Collection** Pollock states that what we are doing is bringing SWAB up-to-date about some of the details of the multi-family program from an operational standpoint. What we're doing now, what the potential is and what the options are. The table shows the current collection amount and the potential to be collected so you can see what we're not getting far outweighs what we're doing now. Productivity is 158 pounds per unit per year compared to 192 pounds per unit in rural curbside. The level of quality is high and we get premium prices for our material because most people are doing a proper sort, but there is still a long way to go especially if we add mixed paper.

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We think that there are some structural impediments to why we are not getting more material. One is the 6-way sort that we require. Going towards commingled might improve performance.

We don't provide generally bins to apartments like we do for curbside, but some apartments are treated like curbside units and therefore get that type of service with a bin and are billed for it. Other structures that look like homes such as fraternities but are treated like multifamily units have recycling carts.

In February we are giving out bins for a pilot project in the apartments to see if bins increase recycling rates there. We did a baseline study and after we put out bins we will look at collection rates again and see if they improve.

We did a public education project door to door last year and that was the only variable that might have explained the 6% rise in recycling tonnage.

Clayton asks how many apartments were added during last year?

Pollock says, a few complexes, not that many.

Right now we are doing source-separated. Going to a commingled program would enable us to reduce the number of carts. We may need to keep the carts at least dual stream to make people exhibit a certain level of care, even if it were collected single stream it might be easier to look into two separate carts for contamination. That would be a way to get people to pay attention to what they're doing. Sonoma County didn't experience more than a reported one percent increase in contamination when they went to single stream at multifamily.

Sassaman asks if it's helpful to have recycling next to the waste container?

Pollock answers that if we collapse the number of carts we could put more sites near more dumpsters, right now the ratio is at a minimum of one site per 50 units, you couldn't go lower like waste which has a ratio of one dumpster per 25 units.

I want to talk about dumpsters because if we went to full-blown commercial recycling program dumpsters will be the ideal collection container. Putting a recycling dumpster right next to a garbage dumpster could be disastrous. It would be harder to spot contamination, harder to get it out, and harder to site. Because of their size and paving needs. Using dumpsters could create a lot more synergy with the commercial sites nearby if they were on the same route.

Most apartment complexes have some type of cardboard collection due to our ban on landfilling corrugated. The current system works, if we give single family the option

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to put it in the bin or next to it. If we allow them to do the same at apartments, they might fill up the carts with just a few boxes jammed in there or the boxes are under the cart and it's not necessarily collected. We can accommodate you, we'll leave you on your own which creates an equity issue if we pick up cardboard from others, or we'll take over the corrugated service and provide another level of service. This is why we wanted to put it in front of the board, there are several other issues like does it have to be same as all the others, could we have three stream with separate glass. What to do with corrugated is also an issue.

Wilson states that there are some similar issues with commercial and multi-family. In some situations a similar service may work for a commercial establishment and a multi-family unit. The multi-family also has some unique features that may require a separate kind of system of service, for example a business site may differ in that it has a more limited number of people using it where the multi-family site has many users with many more opportunities for messing it up. Different commercial establishments may have a limited number of items, but multi-family will be broad.

Vickers asked how we treat town homes?

Wilson replies that we determine the type of service they get by how we can collect them -- can they set bins out at the street or do they have parking lots with dumpsters for garbage and the bins are not brought to the street.

Draney states that we have a fairly successful program started. The question is how to get additional, increased participation and additional materials as well as improve and streamline the collection procedures.

Tipton states that the University is commercial but housing runs the gamut from dorm rooms to families in apartments with cooking facilities. We've answered a lot of those questions. From the multi-family perspective we went from a complete sort to a three-stream sort – cardboard, trash, and even added mixed paper in high demand areas. We have found that the number of carts needed has reduced. Every dumpster has a cardboard bin, every residence hall has an outdoor site

Wilson states that you have complete control of all the properties while we have to negotiate and cajole. But it doesn't have to be the same for each sector –it doesn't have to be all single stream or dual stream. We just need to come up with what we think will work the best and be most user friendly and divert as many materials as possible.

Vickers describes a split stream cart recycling system in Millbrae California.

Pollock says while the south bay area communities seem to like it, others are more skeptical about proper sorting and there has to be special accommodation for cardboard. Once you select this system, you're married to it and have little flexibility.

Sassaman asks Gayle if this is only for information? On the last page you indicate that we may wish to make a recommendation on it. I don't know that we can do that tonight.

Wilson states that at some point we would like for you to give us some guidance on what direction you want us to go in. It can be tonight or April.

Sassaman states that if you could make a running tally of the open questions, we have now four: principles and values for selection of a MRF and a landfill plus two now with multifamily and there will be more with rural garbage and convenience centers so that we will be dealing with a lot of a questions a list would help us be reminded and begin to reduce the list.

Wilson notes there are others with commercial recycling and regulatory issues.

There followed an ad hoc discussion about pre-qualifying contractors for various tasks using checklists and other means or using separate technical and cost proposals

7. Rural Garbage Collection Deferred to the next meeting.

8. Convenience Center/Drop-Off Center Operations Deferred to the next meeting.

9. Programs/Services Update

Highway 57 Convenience Center Wilson states that the lease expires April 2006. There is no practical way we can have a new permanent site identified and developed by that time. We are moving to develop a temporary site adjacent to the Orange County Public Works Department. There will not be a disruption of service. We are doing all we can to have the temporary site open. Some of the Commissioners have suggested a preference for co-locating if possible the convenient center with one or more other County functions such as a park or land clearing debris-receiving area.

Clayton asks if there are plans to widen the entrance at Public Works?

Wilson states that there are no plans to spend money to improve that intersection. We acknowledge that there are times of the day that it may be tricky and hope some of the users will adjust the normal times they go to the center. Another issues is some concern that the adjacent Fairview neighborhood might have regarding having an undesirable government activity to their neighborhood. The signal timing may be

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modified by NC DOT to help with the cycle. Some will use the new Hampton Pointe site at least for recycling and some will use the Walnut Grove site.

Transfer Station Planning Wilson states that we have a preliminary site plan of how a transfer station might work at our existing landfill site. I am in the process of contacting the Chapel Hill Planning Department to share with them the conceptual plan.

Trespassing on Landfill Property Wilson states that the landfill owns a property that was 160 acres and when the landfill was deeded to the County 60 acres was deed off to the County and the other 100 acres is jointly owned. It appears to be one parcel and there is a lot of entry by kids, hunters, campers, and dirt bikes, camping out, fires, etc. We have notified the Commissioner of that and I have a request into the County attorney asking what should we do to try to limit that. We do need to limit the amount of unauthorized folks using it. We are in the process of posting the property and keeping a closer eye on it.

Solid Waste Plan Work Group Wilson states that in talking with the Commissioners at their work session on November 9, we reviewed the timeline of you all developing the solid waste management plan. The timeline has in May and June the various governments making decisions and voting on a final plan. One Commissioner raised the issue that budget will be the main focus at that time and they might not be able to deal with that. With that in mind, maybe at some point we may want to prepare a preliminary report that summarizes the research and analysis that have taken place so that we don't go a whole year without any feedback to the elected officials.

Kabrick asks what have been the consequences of the Town of Chapel Hill not adopting the report [solid waste plan] and having the requirements to write their own report? They did not accept our 10-year plan. Doesn't the requirement of the interlocal agreement state that they have to come up with their own plan?

Wilson replies that theoretically the State Administrative Code states that. Since we are leading the State in waste reduction and have a highly developed waste management structure, I guess they felt no need to push it.

FY 2006-07 Solid Waste Department Budget Planning Wilson states that at some point staff will be bringing some budgetary issues or a draft summary of a proposed budget for your feedback. Some budget issues might be funding for the design/permitting of the transfer station, construction of the Operations Center and the acquisitions of furnishings, the Solid Waste share of the cost to relocate the Hwy 57 site, the possible acquisition of storm debris and processing facility, one perhaps two, staff will look at and analyze the possibility of adding mixed paper to at least to the urban and rural curbside program; multifamily is iffy right now, we're looking at costs right now.

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10. **Other Business** Sassaman states that in Item 7 there is a request that each SWAB representative contact the jurisdictions to suggest the Towns prepare formal communications to the State Representative and the League of Municipalities opposing Senate Bill 951. This is the franchise bill.

Clayton asks when the Bill will go into effect?

Wilson states that as it is currently written it would go into effect July 1, 2006.

Kabrick asks where the bill is in process?

Wilson states that the Senate has already adopted the bill. It is in the House Commerce Committee. It will come up again. The lobby is very strong from a small number of large companies.

Adjourn 9:20pm

Next meeting February 2, 2006
Southern Human Services