

HARFORD COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY – March 18th, 2025

Members Present

Jackie Koehn
Sally LaBarre
Roland Beckman
Michael Charlton
Reese Jones
Dan Spiker

Ex-officio Members Present

Terry Hanley
Matt Kropp
Jeff Schoenberger

Guests

Wendy Doring, Maryland Environmental Service, Senior Lead Recycling Programs

Welcome / Introductions

Jackie Koehn welcomed the EAB. Everyone introduced themselves.

Ms. Wendy Doring, Maryland Environmental Service, Senior Lead Recycling Programs

Harford County has 264,081 residents, 98,410 households, and 1 landfill. The landfill is generally crowded, particularly on Saturdays.

- The following activities occur at the Harford Waste Disposal Center:
 - County's only active municipal solid waste landfill.
 - Mulch and compost facility.
 - Recycling transfer station.
 - Homeowner convenience center for residents to drop off household waste and recyclables.
- Curbside Collection of Waste and Recycling
 - The curbside collection of waste and single-stream recyclables is accomplished through the free enterprise system.
 - Residents subscribe to the collection service provided by private trash collection company.
 - The County code requires all licensed trash collectors to pick up single-stream recyclables for a minimum of once per week.
- Benefits of Recycling
 - Conserve natural resources

- Waste and pollution reduction
- Energy savings
- Preserve landfill space
- Job creation
- Reduce carbon emissions
- Maryland Recycling Act
 - Mandates that Maryland reduce the overall amount of solid waste disposal in the State through improved management, education, and regulation.
 - Requires counties with populations less than 150,000 to achieve a minimum recycling rate of 20 percent and counties with populations above 150,000 to achieve a minimum recycling rate of 35 percent.
 - Establishes a voluntary state-wide waste diversion goal of 60 percent.
 - Requires each County to document its recycling rate and submit the results to MDE.
 - MDE tracks the following materials, in each county, for the MRA recycling statistics
 - Glass
 - Metal
 - Paper
 - Plastics
 - Compostables
- Harford MRA Statistics (2022)
 - All County Trash → 180,800 tons
 - All County Recycling → 169,110 tons
 - Recycling Rate → 48.33%
 - Source Reduction Credit → 5%
 - Total Waste Diversion Rate → 53.33%
 - 2022 Ranked #3 for waste diversion in Maryland
- What Happens to Your Recycling?
 - After being collected curbside, recyclables are delivered to ESL, loaded into a tractor-trailer and taken to the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) in Cockeysville to be processed.
- Material Recovery Facility
 - The recyclables ride a series of conveyor belts and are sorted by type of material.
 - The sorted recyclables are baled and sent to market to be recycled.
- Things That Can't Be Recycled
 - Plastic bags, hoses, cords, ropes, clothes and other tangles shut down the recycling process
- Buy Recycled products such as toothbrushes, clothes, pens, recycled copy paper., backpacks, toilet paper
- In addition to single stream recycling, the following items are also accepted at HWDC for recycling:
 - Agriculture Plastic
 - Electronics
 - Gas Cylinders
 - Scrap Metal

- Oyster Shells
- Used Oil & Antifreeze
- Old Gasoline
- Bulky Recycle Donation
- Clothing/Textiles
- Durable Medical Equipment
- Lead Acid Batteries
- Lithium-Ion Batteries
- Food Scraps
- Yard Trim
- Yard trim is processed into compost and mulch.
 - Harford County offers two-yard trim drop-off locations:
 - Harford Mulch and Compost: 3139 Scarboro Road
 - Tollgate Residential Yard Trim: 703 North Tollgate Road
- Used oil, antifreeze, gasoline
 - Motor oil & antifreeze accepted at 9 locations throughout the county.
 - Sites have a separate bin for oil filters to be recycled.
 - Oil can be re-refined into a base stock for lubricating oil or used as fuel oil in industrial boilers.
 - Antifreeze is recycled into new antifreeze.
 - Gasoline can be used as fuel.
 - Residents can recycle up to 10 gallons for free.
- Bulky Recycle / Donation
 - High-quality, re-usable items (furniture, bicycles, tools, sturdy toys, etc.) are diverted from the landfill to local non-profit organizations for reuse in the community.
- Durable Medical Equipment
 - Examples: Wheelchairs, power chairs, rollators, scooters, walkers, shower chairs, canes, crutches, hospital beds, “Hoyer” lifts, tub transfer benches
- Oyster Shell Recycling
 - Last year, Harford County recycled over 2 tons of oyster shells that were used to replenish oyster reefs in the Chesapeake Bay.
 - In 2023 1.07 billion oysters planted on 274 acres of sanctuary reefs in eight Maryland waterways
 - 450 million spat-on-shell, 4,000 bushels of oyster seed and over 114,000 bushels of shell were planted in public oyster grounds in the interest of a healthy fishery and bountiful oyster harvest.
 - Oyster restoration is officially recognized by the EPA as a “Best Management Practice” because of their ability to remove harmful nutrients from water.
- Household Hazardous Waste
 - HWDC holds quarterly events each year for residents to safely dispose of household hazardous items such as aerosol cans, bleach, insecticides, pool chemicals, etc.

Mr. Jones asked about the Cockeysville plant and Ms. Doring said they work with brokers to get everything sorted and sold. The brokers audit it. The materials are given to Baltimore County

who pays to sort it and collects all the profit when sold. The price is lower now than it used to be. Ms. LaBarre thinks the trash/recycling collection should be made public instead of private and she would be okay with raising taxes to do so.

Ms. Doring noted that some plastics, like clam shell containers (such as clear and thin plastics like take-out containers), are marked as number 1 plastics but are not actually number 1. Plastics are hard to deal with. Some grocery stores have plastic bag collections, but they often get contaminated with trash.

Ms. Doring said she works with a lot of Harford County's schools to get their Green School award. There is also a Green Parents initiative that some schools are starting.

Mr. Jones noted that local farmers' markets often sell food in compostable products. He also noted that the agricultural community would be able to use 1/1000th millimeter thick plastic as synthetic mulch.

Review / Approval of January 2025 Meeting Summary

A motion to approve the January 2025 meeting summary was made. The motion was seconded; the Board unanimously approved the meeting summary.

Departmental Updates

Mr. Schoenberger from the Department of Public Works reported that their compost bin/rain barrel sale runs through 3/30/2025. There was a household hazardous waste collection in February. There were 95 customers with 9,300 pounds of waste collected. The next HHW collection event is Saturday, May 10th. There is free mulch at Harford Mulch & Compost Facility from 8am-2pm every Wednesday in March for Mulch Madness. There was a pre-construction meeting held for tree and meadow planting at Fallston Middle and High School campus. There were 11 Certified Watershed Stewards who graduated this month.

Mr. Hanley from Parks and Recreation reported that Arbor Day is at Chapel Park. The southern yard trim drop-off on Route 1 is under design. They are providing Black-Eyed Susan seeds to the public. The lower Susquehanna Greenways trail has had a kick-off meeting and there is a feasibility study underway. The Oakington Peninsula Master Plan has been drafted and there is another meeting on March 27th for public comments. The low-mow program has added 41 acres this year. It was noted that they treat Johnson Grass if found. The eel ladder is out for bid and there is an onsite meeting this month. The Ma+Pa trail is in Phase 3 and is going well.

Mr. Kropp from Planning & Zoning reported that Comprehensive Rezoning will be brought before the County Council in April. There will be public input comments on April 1st and April 8th. The Director's report is available online. There were 18 of the 65 applications where Planning & Zoning recommended a different zoning.

Adjourn: Meeting was adjourned at 6:50pm.