

## COE agenda 11-4-15

### Non-recyclable plastics

-Are there any updates to the Trex competitions for schools or communities in the area?

### Maryland Food Charter

-I attended the statewide summit on October 15<sup>th</sup> that was organized by the Institute for Public Health Innovation. Experts and representatives from all over the state convened to discuss the important components of the first Food Charter in the state's history. Topics of most importance were access to healthy and local food, organizing a local food distribution center, and recovering food waste. I broke off into the small group that discussed the latter. We came up with statements describing the most pressing issues regarding food waste, and ours concluded that we should try to recover edible food from farms (ugly produce), grocery stores, restaurants/catering companies, etc. and make it available to those that are food insecure, and establish composting facilities to properly process the inedible food waste. This charter will have strong influence on DC/MD/VA legislation and agendas, and I felt that they are moving in the right direction. More information can be found at the IPHI website: (<http://www.institutephi.org/our-work-in-action/policy-health-systems-improvement/mobilizing-food-policy-councils-maryland/>)

### Volunteer Training Night

-I plan to attend the Volunteer Training Night tomorrow in the Chesapeake Building at 5:30pm, just before our meeting. It should provide some clarity on what is expected of us as a commission, as well as the appropriate way to make effective change.

### Creative Financing for Sustainability Projects

-I plan to attend this leadership training event on Wednesday, November 18<sup>th</sup> in College Park. This is put on by Sustainable Maryland, and should provide some great information on developing and implementing sustainable initiatives. Sue had mentioned that there may be funding to cover the registration.

### STS buses

-I noticed the other day that the STS buses have diesel engines. Would there be any interest in proposing a pilot program to collect waste vegetable oil and process it using a BioPro, utilizing the biodiesel for STS buses in the county. If successful, this pilot program could evolve into providing biodiesel for county school buses.

### Composting facility

-Bill has arranged a van for transportation to the Alpha Ridge Landfill this Saturday, November 7<sup>th</sup> to visit Howard County's composting pilot program. I confirmed with the project manager, and he will be expecting us at 10am. That would mean we would have to leave here around 8am for those that are interested in joining. At the meeting, those interested can discuss our plan of action further.

I spoke with Priscilla Wentworth, a SMADC employee and friend of mine. She knows about my interest in composting and at the Maryland Food Charter Summit, she informed me that she was going to visit the LeafGro facility at Western Branch in Prince George's County. After the visit, she told me about the operation that they have going, which now includes food scraps. This 2013 pilot program uses a Goretex composting system that completes the process in 8 weeks (then 10-12 weeks of curing before complete). LeafGro is a widely distributed soil amendment sold all over the state that comes from yard clippings in Prince George's. Their new product, LeafGro Gold, is being sold to the University of MD and used on their vegetable farm, which feeds the students. So, the University gives Western Branch their food scraps, and then purchases LeafGro Gold to produce more vegetables for the students. Their model seems to be working very well, and I intend to contact the MES employee in charge of the operation, Steven Birchfield, in the near future. For more information, I found the following article very informative: <http://www.biocycle.net/2015/05/13/food-scraps-composting-at-county-yard-trimmings-site/>