Solid Waste Management Master Plan Review
Multi-Residential Focus Group Workshop #2

Date: Thursday, February 13, 2014
Time: 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Location: Waste Resource Innovation Centre
110 Dunlop Drive, Guelph, Ontario, N1H 6H8
Administration Building, Lower Boardroom

Attendees:
Ted Pritchard
Catharine Murray
Maria Finoro
Peter Neil
Kim McEllistrum
Phil Jensen – WSP Consulting Team
Vivian De Giovanni – City of Guelph
Dean Wyman – City of Guelph

Attendees include representation from Fair Taxes Guelph, property managers for condominiums, management from rental housing and condominium owners.

**Background**

Attendees from the multi-residential community in Guelph met originally during one of three evening Focus Group sessions held in October 2013. The workshops were designed to obtain input and feedback from participants on their perceptions, needs and issues, leading to discussions about potential strategies that they would like to see and would consider effective. It was decided, based on the discussion at the time that an additional session with the multi-residential representatives would be helpful.

As was the case during the first workshop the meeting was conducted as a roundtable, facilitated by WSP (formerly GENIVAR).

The second session was less structured than the first in the sense that it revolved around two basic discussion points:

- Specific challenges related to building types and how they might be overcome, and
- How can the multi-residential sector work together with the City to overcome these challenges?
Purpose of Workshops

- To obtain thoughts, feedback and experience on key issues relating to the multi-residential sector. As noted for the initial workshop series:
  
  o The discussions were intended to be an information gathering exercise.
  
  o Input will be considered by the Steering Committee, City staff and consulting team in the development of recommendations for the update of the Solid Waste Management Master Plan.

Meeting Notes

Notes are recorded in the order that the conversation occurred based on the input received from the attendees from the multi-residential sector:

- The electronic and phone survey response to the multi-family question, and specifically the response indicating that many respondents disagreed with paying additional taxes to provide additional multi-residential service, was a concern. In particular the project team was asked “what response would you expect” to a question about additional cost. It was noted by the project team that there was still a need to know the degree to which people might respond, one way or the other, in order to understand the context in which recommendations for multi-residential services might be received.

- A question arose about the $16 figure used in the question. It was explained by City staff that the cost of the two trucks required to expand the service, and the associated labour, is spread over all tax paying properties and not households alone.

- It was noted that the growth area will be “vertical” multi-family, such as high-rise developments.

- Input was provided on the possible use of Moloks (in ground receptacles for waste).

- The connection to the City’s plan approval process was mentioned, at which time it was suggested by attendees that the City not approve plans when those plans eliminate the ability of the City to provide waste service.

- Both front-end and bin (cart systems) were discussed, the understanding being that where front-end systems cannot be implemented the option is bins. The feedback received was that while residents have an interest in waste diversion they also don’t like to be located right next to the roll-offs or the bins. In general, it was felt that City systems could be accommodated but there will be occasions when the City may have to show some flexibility.

- Input was received that there may be occasions, in order to adapt to certain situations, the City consider contracting out the collection service. Contracting may provide a bridge until volumes permit efficient collection by City resources. A participant felt contracting may prove
to be a more responsive way to add service and the City consider contracting as a permanent approach to the multi-residential segment.

- Some locations not on City collection are source separating recyclables (not organics) and the materials are going elsewhere.

- There was some question about the level of communication between planning and developers. It was felt that there may be more rigour required with respect to waste in the process, and that without planning support the existing by-law is not enough. It was mentioned that some developers are opting out at the planning stage, and a participant felt they will do so if the collection system offered by the City does not accommodate their needs. The City needs to deliver service in an effective way.

- The group discussed what was meant by “an effective way to deliver service”. The group also said that the current $16 value used by the City to project a per household cost is similar to the monthly per unit private collection services they currently receive. Those services:
  - Do not include organics but are two-stream services for garbage and recycling
  - They also include provision for special services such as yard waste and Christmas trees
  - Some have central-area systems for separation of paper and cardboard

- It was noted that the City’s website needs to be current, since the City does make an effort to let residents know what their collection service offers even if the City does not provide the service.

- The panel discussed what was meant by effective delivery of service, which multi-residential participants defined more specifically to mean cost effective service. Representatives were asked about impacts when service is not delivered effectively, and where they incur cost when this happens, and a number of points were shared:
  - If there is low satisfaction at a residence this can lead to vacancies
  - Variables that might reflect poorly on the residence and that may result from ineffective management of waste including over-full bins and possible spillover
  - Additional costs are incurred if superintendents or intermediaries have to move waste or material by hand. Staging, cleaning and maintaining carts add time and cost
  - There is a lack of space as well
  - For residents where there is no intermediary or superintendent, bins (carts) are a storage issue and also require staging if a central pick-up is required. It was mentioned there are possibly 1000 to 1500 units in Guelph where the logistics are particularly difficult, there are very few end units and almost no paths for people to store carts behind their units, and central areas (i.e. visitor parking lots) are not very central or convenient. For this reason it was felt the City may not wish to totally eliminate the use of plastic bags.

- The City should recognize that there is a cost for maintaining bins.

- The City should consider continuing with bags for organics too. There was discussion about acceptable bags that could be used in the kitchen and moved to the bin.
• The group was informed that the SWMMP Review is an open process and anyone can comment, from the multi-residential sector or otherwise. Those interested in providing comment could do so by emailing guelph.ca/waste.

• Representatives felt that people may agree with the goals of waste diversion but aesthetics will win out and people will move because of aesthetics.

• Communication is an issue, and there is a need now to communicate in numerous languages. It was noted by the project team that one option is for a multi-residential outreach program including direct contact with residents, superintendents and property managers, using a variety of outreach and communication tools.

• The City was asked whether City Councillors would be willing to take a tour of sites.

• It was suggested that the City strive to understand the market and the related companies, and their scale, and what the impact is on them. It was noted that the CHMC is a good source of data to use to understand the “universe” of those impacted.

• The group was interested in continuing dialogue with the City and members were willing to consider future participation.