



# Meeting Minutes: Dakota County Planning Commission Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes-Final

Date: 3/28/2024

Minutes prepared by Liz Hansen

Location: Western Service Center

## Attendance

### Members Present

- Jerry Rich
- Amy Hunting
- James Guttman
- Tony Nelson
- Kelly Kausel
- Dennis Peine
- Brady Folkestad
- Lori Hansen
- Jill Smith
- Barry Graham

### Member(s) Absent:

- Mike Cahn

### Dakota County staff members attending:

- Kurt Chatfield, Planning Manager
- Liz Hansen, Administrative Coordinator
- Georg Fischer, Physical Development Division Director
- Mary Jackson, Senior Planner
- Renee Burman, Environmental Initiatives Supervisor
- Gena Gerard, Sr Environmental Specialist
- Dave Magnuson, Waste Regulation Supervisor

## Meeting Called to Order

- Time: 7:02 p.m.
- By Chair, Commissioner Amy Hunting
- Commissioner Hansen arrived at 7:03 p.m.

## Pledge of Allegiance

- The Planning Commission opened the meeting by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

## Public Comments

- Comments/Notes: No audience member wished to address an item not on the agenda.

## Approval of Agenda

Chair Hunting asked if there were any changes to the agenda.

The Planning Commission advised no changes, additions, or deletions.

**MOTION: Commissioner Graham moved, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, approving the agenda. Voice vote: Ayes – 9 – Nays – 0 – Unanimously Approved**

## Approval of Minutes (from January 25, 2024)

Chair Hunting asked if there were any changes to the previous meeting’s minutes.

The Planning Commission advised no changes, additions, or deletions.

**MOTION: Commissioner Smith moved, seconded by Commissioner Kausel, approving the previous meeting’s minutes. Voice vote: Ayes – 10 – Nays – 0 Abstain – 0 – Unanimously Approved**

## Dakota County Solid Waste Management Plan - Information (Renee Burman – Environmental Resources)

The Planning Commission received an update on the Dakota County Solid Waste Management Plan, including findings from the Fall 2023 of public engagement, adopted State Policy Plan strategies, schedule for an update of the County’s plan, and review of the potential new strategies in the County plan.

Dave Magnuson, Waste Regulation Supervisor, provided an overview and comparison of the waste ordinances in place for counties in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Questions and comments by the Commissioners, along with responses from staff (*italics*):

Do the waste haulers inspect waste containers to check if any items violate the regulations? *Staff responded that they generally do not. However, there are periodic waste inspections at landfills, and waste that is not permitted is turned away. Waste haulers will often notify customers of waste that has been improperly placed in the wrong containers and, in some instances, will charge an additional fee for the added expense of managing waste that has contaminated recyclables.*

Do haulers transport recyclable materials overseas? *Staff responded that some coastal states have done this in the past, but Minnesota has not shipped recyclables overseas because the overland transportation costs are too high.*

Does the United States accept regulated industrial debris from Canada? *Staff responded that they were not aware of this practice and did not believe Minnesota had received waste.*

What are recycling requirements for parades and festivals? *Staff responded that large events with more than 300 people are required to provide recycling containers.*

The Planning Commission discussed recycling at schools and commented that the lunch rush is so short in some schools that students do not have time to recycle properly. *Staff responded that a recycling coordinator at Dakota County works with schools, and they will let the recycling coordinator know of the issue.*

A comment was made that food rescue organizations do not seem to have an efficient way of collecting and disposing of organic waste. *Staff responded that they are aware of that particular challenge, and staff are exploring opportunities to make that system more efficient.*

The Planning Commission discussed the MPCA's new requirements for collecting organics. It was noted that there will be challenges with collecting organics from different types of residential properties and that, in some circumstances, more bins may be difficult to manage for people living in apartments, townhouses, or places that do not have the space. A comment was made that providing some flexibility in the County's new ordinance may be necessary to collect organic waste differently in those circumstances.

The Planning Commission discussed providing educational materials to help residents learn what can and cannot be recycled. Several Planning Commissioners mentioned using the County's recycling guide booklet or going to the County's website online to learn about what can and cannot be recycled. A comment was made that there are occasional discrepancies between what the County says can be recycled and what waste haulers say can be recycled. *Staff responded that residents should follow the County's guidelines when a discrepancy exists because the County works directly with local waste processors to prepare annually updated educational materials. Waste hauling companies are often national companies that use nationally prepared educational materials, and unfortunately, these messages don't always align with local waste processing requirements.*

The Planning Commission discussed public engagement to date and made the following comments:

- The County did a good job gathering surveys from over 900 respondents as part of the public outreach effort for the plan update.
- Based on some of the comments received, it appears that residents are looking for convenience but that haulers are more focused on efficiency.
- The County should explore ways to get more responses from schools and businesses in future engagement rounds. Perhaps a meeting with students would be a good approach.
- Consider meeting with school staff, such as the nutrition director, as opposed to the principal, as staff at this level may be able to spend more time working toward solutions.
- Make sure to engage businesses and to address potential costs of recycling
- Engage seniors and provide recycling refresher courses in senior living facilities

The Planning Commission discussed the MPCA waste management targets in the State plan. There were several comments from planning commissioners that the MPCA’s landfilling target of 5% appears to be unrealistic. Planning commissioners asked about the future of waste management and whether any new waste-to-energy facilities are being planned. Does Dakota County need to meet the landfilling target in the state plan to approve our plan? *Staff responded that the MPCA’s landfilling target appears to be aspirational and would be very difficult, if not impossible, to reach in the current waste management environment. There are no plans for a new waste-to-energy facility in the region, although there have been private proposals for anaerobic digestors and energy recovery facilities that have not been implemented due to economic feasibility. Dakota County does not need to meet the 5% landfilling target for plan approval but does need to include enough optional strategies to fulfill the point thresholds that have been established by the MPCA. The Planning Commission will be reviewing these at a future meeting.*

The Planning Commission discussed Dakota County’s current Solid Waste Plan and waste regulation requirements compared to other metro area counties. It was noted that Dakota County and Hennepin County appear to have more regulation than some of the other counties. *Staff responded that Dakota County has more requirements than some neighboring counties due to how waste is collected and processed across the metro area. Dakota County does not own or operate waste collection or processing facilities like some other counties. There are two large private landfills and several other landfills located in Dakota County. In this privatized system, waste is regulated through County ordinances. County inspectors periodically inspect waste that arrives at landfills.*

The topic concluded with staff providing an overview of the next steps, including when a draft of the plan with recommended strategies will be presented to the Planning Commission.

## Planning Manager Update and County Board Actions

Comments/Notes: Kurt Chatfield, Planning Manager, provided the Planning Commission with an update on the following County Board Actions:

- Provided direction on County Park System Plan scope, schedule, and major topic areas
- Provided direction on County Solid Waste Management Plan within framework of State Solid Waste Management Plan
- Authorized contract for design of Veterans Memorial Greenway memorials
- Authorized natural resource restoration contracts for Lebanon Hills and Lake Byllesby regional parks

## Upcoming Public Meetings – Community Outreach

Solid Waste Management Plan Public Intercepts	April, TBD
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## Topics for next meeting (Thursday, April 25, 2024)

Kurt Chatfield, Planning Manager, provided an overview of next month’s meeting topics:

- None at this time

## **Planning Commissioner Announcements/Updates:**

No updates or announcements were given.

## **Adjournment**

Chair Hunting asked for a motion to adjourn.

**MOTION: Commissioner Smith moved, seconded by Commissioner Folkestad, to adjourn the meeting at 8:49 p.m. Voice Vote: Ayes – 10 – Nays – 0 – Unanimously Approved.**

**Next Meeting: Thursday, April 25, 2024, at 7:00 p.m., Dakota County  
Western Service Center, Apple Valley**

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Hansen, Administrative Coordinator