

Clean Pittsburgh Litter & Illegal Dumping Roundtable Summary Report

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Clean Pittsburgh Commission





Clean Pittsburgh Litter and Illegal Dumping Roundtable Recommendations

The Clean Pittsburgh Commission and partnering organizations would like to make the following recommendations that come as a result from the discussion held during the Litter and Illegal Dumping Roundtable. We ask that you carefully review these recommendations as you prepare to read the wrap up report discussing the presentations that directed the conversation and the active discussion that ensued with the diverse group of audience members.

The commission believes that, by implementing and enforcing these recommendations, we will create a better quality of life for those residing in and around the City of Pittsburgh.

- **Stewardship Agreements**

- Allow for 501©3 non-profits organizations to enter into (3-5 year) “Stewardship Agreements” with City allowing them to perform work on City owned property with full support of the City.
 - Agreement would be a template the each nonprofit would complete detailing what they would be accomplishing during the time allotted by the agreement and also outlining what they would be asking for from City Services to allow them to successfully complete their mission
 - Agreements could run through City of Pittsburgh Department of Public Works, as current volunteer agreements do.

- **Enforcement and Education**

- Increased support for efforts to educate and enforce City Code relating to quality of life violations (i.e litter, illegal dumping, property maintenance, etc) through:
 - Implementing Service Officers who assist City’s Anti-Litter Coordinator and Bureau of Environmental Services with:
 - The education of residents and businesses on City Code
 - Enforcement of City Code through intensified and targeted street patrols
 - Enacting Quality of Life ticket ordinance that allows for Service Officers to fine violators of such issues without a hearing (similar to a parking ticket), in turn streamlining process of punishing violators by freeing up courts and code officials
 - Fines help pay for officers
 - Examples of similar programs: [*Philadelphia SWEEP Program*](#), [*Allentown SWEEP Program*](#), and [*The Housing Alliance of PA Toolkit*](#)
 - Increased funding for the purchase and installation of cameras for the purpose of catching illegal dumpers
 - Collaboration of data and resources between City Police, DPW, and communities where dumping is occurring to assist with catching violators
 - Adding youth voice and input to the Clean Pittsburgh Commission

- **Data**
 - Integration of current data on illegal dumping and litter in the City with the Open Data Project
 - Providing the data on what cases of illegal dumping are currently in process through the Open Data resources to allow for community members and nonprofit organization to be a part of the process
 - Standardization of data between all City departments
 - This allows for code enforcement officials to target their sometimes limited resources toward the most effective use
 - Clean Pittsburgh Commission to track results of litter, recycling, and illegal dumping projects piloted in their Neighborhood of Focus with goal of recommending expansion if successful

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1) Purpose

The purpose of the Department of Innovation & Performance and Clean Pittsburgh Commission's Clean Pittsburgh Litter and Illegal Dumping Roundtable was to bring together key players in the region on these topics to work towards a common strategy to combat these prevalent and longstanding issues.



2) Event Description

The Clean Pittsburgh Litter and Illegal Dumping Roundtable is the one in a series of innovation-based discussions allowing the City to hear from non-profit and civic leaders, academics and government officials on the topic of litter and illegal dumping in the City of Pittsburgh. The event was held on July 9, 2015 and was filmed for later broadcast on the City of Pittsburgh Cable Channel. The Roundtable was recorded and can currently be viewed on the [City's YouTube Channel](#).

a) Introduction

The hour and a half discussion started with introductions and welcomes. The City's Sustainability Manager, Grant Ervin, welcomed everyone and introduced Sarah Alessio Shea as the first speaker.

b) Speakers and Topics Discussed

- Sarah Alessio Shea, CPC Chair and Education Coordinator at [Pennsylvania Resources Council](#)
 - Overview, litter index, illegal dumping, data gathering
- Justin Stockdale, Western Regional Director of the [Pennsylvania Resources Council](#)
 - High cost of litter, many hands in the work,
- Melissa Rosenfeld, City of Pittsburgh Anti-Litter Coordinator and Myrna Newman, Executive Director of [Allegheny CleanWays](#)
 - Enforcement Procedures and Issues
- Dr. Erik Garrett, Duquesne University
 - Why do people litter, behavior changing campaigns
- Mayor Peduto
 - Remarks

3) Roundtable Attendees

- a) A wide variety of attendees were invited to participate in the Roundtable to discuss litter and illegal dumping around the site of Pittsburgh.
- b) The input from attendees will:
 - Serve as a platform for fostering collaboration between the City and local partners.
 - Begin a dialogue about improving programming and enforcement regarding issues of litter and illegal dumping.
 - Develop ways the City and local partners can collaborate to combat the issues of illegal dumping and litter throughout the City of Pittsburgh.
- c) List of attendees by name and organization:
 - Mayor William Peduto
 - Sarah Alessio Shea, Pennsylvania Resources Council, Chair CPC
 - Myrna Newman, Allegheny CleanWays
 - Joe Divack, Allegheny CleanWays
 - Melissa Rosenfeld, City of Pittsburgh Anti-Litter Coordinator
 - Justin Stockdale, Pennsylvania Resources Council
 - Aftyn Giles, City of Pittsburgh Office of Sustainability
 - Grant Ervin, City of Pittsburgh Office of Sustainability
 - Dr. Erik Garrett, Duquesne University
 - Luci-Jo DiMaggio, Duquesne University
 - Alicia Carberry, Oakland Planning and Development Corporation
 - Kyle Winkler, City of Pittsburgh Department of Environmental Services
 - Erika Deyarmin-Young, Waste Management
 - Misti McKeen, University of Pittsburgh
 - Angelo Pampena, PennDot
 - Councilwoman Teresa Kail- Smith
 - Councilman Daniel Gilman
 - Neil Manganaro, Council District 3
 - Patty Chavez, City of Pittsburgh Traffic Division
 - Paul Fireman, Fireman Creative
 - Candice Gonzalez, South Side Chamber of Commerce
 - Tony Martinelli, PA Department of Environmental Protection
 - Scott Kovach, PennDot
 - Kathryn Hunninan, Mount Washington CDC
 - Detective Labbeda, City of Pittsburgh Bureau of Police
 - Boris Weinstein, Citizens Against Litter

4) Conversation

I. How do we change the behavior of litter?

- Sarah Alessio Shea from the PRC and CPC suggests education and reference the “Crying Steeler Fan” Campaign created in 2014 by the PRC. She believes by **encouraging community pride, pride of place** and creating the mind set of “this is my city and I want to take care of it” would be a benefit in getting residents on board to help change behavior. Sarah also suggests looking at a community specific campaign, as different issues and call to actions could be responded to differently by each community.
- Councilwoman Teresa Kail-Smith suggested that we need to look at who the main offenders are if we want this to be successful. Additionally, we need to look at ways to involve them. **For example, should we consider adding youth to the CPC?**
- Missy Rosenfeld, the City’s Anti-Litter Coordinator, in response to the question of where dumping is happening, cites that it is mostly happening in hidden, off beaten path locations. She mentions that litter is a citywide problem and is visible everywhere, however, the volume may differ from location to location.
- Myrna Newman, from Allegheny CleanWays, mentions that topography has a lot to do with dumping, and that it is often seen where there are a lot of trees and hills. She mentions, however, that most of the illegal dumping we are seeing is considered “legacy dumping”, and that there is not much new illegal dumping taking place.
- Joe Divack, from Allegheny County Clean Ways, said that he and his team pick up about **2,000-3,000 pounds of illegal dumped debris each day**, and about 2/3 of the material they remove is remodeling debris. We code it as construction/demolition, but it is neither of those things. The people that are dumping are those that are doing remodeling projects themselves, which in itself is good, but they are cutting costs by not getting a permit, doing the work themselves, and then dumping the debris illegally. This shows this is an economically driven behavior. The cleanup of this debris costs much more than what the people would save. It costs us so much more than that to remediate it.



II. How can we be better stewards of our roadways?

- Angelo Pampana from PennDOT, states that they spent 1.4 million on litter pick up in Allegheny County in 2014. When they talk with police, no one is witnessing litter being thrown from cars. Much of the debris is from accidents, as well as “accidental debris” that happens to blow off trucks. He says that

PennDOT spent \$1.4 million in 2014 along to pick up litter along roadways in Allegheny County.
-Angelo Pampana

cleaning up litter is a daily effort, and what they hear from costumers is that they want clean roads. To provide that, it will need to be a coordinated effort with the city. **The general public doesn't know what part of which road is county, city, state, etc. They see that only part of a road has been cleaned, and so they do not think anything has been done.**

- Scott Kovach with PennDOT says that a lot of volunteers help with the Adopt a Highway program, and there are many businesses that chose to Sponsor a Highway. He cites that Allegheny County has more participants in these programs than any other county in the state.
- Bruce Gearhart from PA DEP adds that the use of cameras is a great tool.

III. How can we enforce the issues of litter and illegal dumping?

- Detective Labedda from the City of Pittsburgh Bureau of Police partners with Missy Rosenfeld often in her pursuit of those found illegally dumping. **He suggests that, just like with any crime, the only way to enforce the issue of illegal dumping and litter is to make it a community effort.** He adds that there is almost always a witness, and it really takes the entire community pitching in to help.



IV. How can our organizations and the City better coordinate efforts?

- Boris Weinstein of Citizens Against Litter, says that focus has been on one aspect of the problem - just cleaning up and not preventing it from happening or enforcement. He says that most of the city neighborhoods have been great about cleaning up. The network of Clean Pittsburgh Stewards includes the volunteers and community members that do most of the heavy lifting and coordinating with other organizations. We know that the city doesn't have a large enough budget to pick up all the litter in all 90 neighborhoods. Because of this the volunteers are very important, particularly within the stewards network. Many communities are participating in more than just the fall and spring Redd Up events, and are making it a year round effort. However, picking up the litter is the easiest part. Illegal dumping is tough, getting merchants to clean their sidewalks is tough, prevention and enforcement is the much tougher problem. Enforcement is the key piece.
- Sarah Alessio Shea adds that the CPC is a great representative of the network of city services and community stewards

V. What are some ways that we can use the data that currently exists to be more targeted and coordinated?

- Sarah Alessio Shea said that even with the communities of focus, we've used the liter index to choose where to work. Beyond that, using the data to try to figure out what areas are heavy littered. She asked how others at the table how they use the data they have?
- Angelo Pampena from Penn Dot shared that, from a data standpoint, PennDOT doesn't have data. Their information is mostly feedback from costumers as well as their own surveys. It is easy to find places to send their crews because litter is easily spotted on some of the major roadways that come into the city. We want people to see a clean city at those gateways into the area. There are a lot great workers making this happen, but we really need to key in on prevention. He added that PennDOT is working on prevention with their own trucks by making sure their loads are secured and covered.

VI. Data Collection for Illegal Dumping and Litter

- Mayor Peduto asked if and how we tracking and mapping illegal dumping and litter? He mentioned that the City is working with CMU to provide something called Open Data, but as of right now, it will not include litter.
- Myrna from Allegheny Cleanways shared that they have a lot of data on where illegal dumping is happening, and mentioned that GTECH is also mapping illegal dumping, as well as the Design Center.
- Mayor Peduto asked if we are using the tools out there with data on litter and dumping to resource the DPW crews. He suggested it would be great if we could integrate it into the Open Data project
- Roberta Jaminson from the Department of Public Works Bureau of Environmental Services asked where Missy got information for citation:
- Missy Rosenfeld said that her information comes from many places and informants, including nonprofits, citizens, a council member's office, etc. In response, Roberta offered to share her list of citations as well.
- Myrna revisited how Allegheny CleanWays completes their illegal dumping surveys. She added that they typically go into a neighborhood and walk every part of the neighborhood to find trouble spots. In addition, she mentions, they also receive calls and information from residents.
- Sarah added that once someone is caught and goes in front of the magistrate. She asked if that is public knowledge we can access?
- Mayor Peduto responded that we couldn't yet access that data. But added that with Open Data being released by the end of this year, we will be able to combine all of that data in one central location.

VII. Creating a more streamlined process for non-profit and private organizations to access formal agreements from the City:

- Joe Divack of Allegheny CleanWays, stated that his organization is a private, non-profit organization, but yet they need to clean up city owned lots, city owned green

ways and city owned abandoned properties. He added that they do it effectively, however he added that they are operating on what he calls the edge of legality because it is city owned property. Joe mentioned that they look forward to doing it in a way that is all backed up by paper, but now that takes up a lot of time.

- *Mayor Peduto asked what is the obstacle do doing it more formally?*
- Myrna answered that many members of the Green Space Alliance have come to the city and asked for a formal agreement to work on those properties. However, the obstacle seems to be the legal hoops they need to jump through.
- Mayor Peduto announced that, by Labor Day, the CPC presents a suggestion on what an ideal plan would look like. He reiterated that he is committed to help clear the legal obstacles, and is also looking at increasing funding for the City's Anti-Litter Coordinator's work.

“If its money, we will get around it, and if it’s legal I will find a way to cut through that”
– Mayor Peduto