

Summit Hill Association

District 16 Planning Council

860 Saint Clair Avenue

Saint Paul, Minnesota 55105

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July 17, 2017

Dan Niziolek
Deputy Director
City of St. Paul Department of Safety & Inspections
375 Jackson Street, Suite 220
Saint Paul, MN 55101

Sent Via Email

RE: Sustainable To-Go Packaging Ordinance

Dear Dan;

The Summit Hill Association District 16 Planning Council board, at its July 13 meeting, heard a presentation from Susan Hubbard of Eureka Recycling regarding the proposed ordinance regarding Sustainable To-Go Packaging. The board subsequently voted 14-2 to pass the following resolution in support of the ordinance:

WHEREAS, we support the City of Saint Paul Sustainable To-Go Packaging Ordinance because it brings Saint Paul one step closer to zero waste. With this approach, jobs are created, our environment, our community and our families are protected, and;

WHEREAS, "to go" packaging is a real barrier for us to be able to reach zero waste in our home, workplaces and businesses and we know that there are options out there that will get us to zero waste or darn near. We want the city to help us get to zero waste by helping restaurants and other food establishments to change to reusables when possible and otherwise require composting or recycling of all "to-go" packaging items, and;

WHEREAS, we believe that "to go" packaging must be compostable or recyclable to protect our health and our community. Compostable means that it should be certified to be able to be composted in a local industrial composting facility and by recyclable, we mean it must be able to be recycled in our local recycling program, and;

WHEREAS, compostable products help us to get food waste to composting and (when those products are bio-based) reduce our need for fossil fuel based production, furthering the upstream and downstream environmental benefits. All compostable products need to meet ASTM standards (ASTM 6868 or 6400), not use language like "biodegradable" or "compostable" which can be misleading for us because these terms are not regulated, and;

WHEREAS, recyclable items must be able to be practically recycled in our local recycling program because that is both economically and environmentally recyclable. We do not hold that it is better for the environment (and so neither is it better for people or the economy) to bury trash in the real recyclables just because it could be hidden there or that our recycling program should accept items that

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are being tested in pilots or have limited markets for their eventual re-manufacturing because there is no long term assurance that they will actually get recycled, and;

WHEREAS, exempting (allowing restaurants and other food establishments to continue to use) items that do not meet the compostable or recyclable requirement weakens the City of Saint Paul Sustainable To-Go Packaging Ordinance and dramatically reduces the positive environmental outcomes. There are viable options in the marketplace to replace these non-recyclable and non-compostable items. Specifically please do not exempt: Polystyrene, black plastic, plastic or poly coated cups , because there are alternatives and those items consistently end up as litter in our city or as trash affecting our local recycling program, adding transportation, collection and processing costs to the City, which we have to pay for and are not sustainable, and;

WHEREAS, we will strongly support all education efforts to increase the success of the City of Saint Paul Sustainable To-Go Packaging Ordinance goals, and;

WHEREAS, the current ordinance, although not enforced, did specifically encourage reuse, we strongly support and encourage that this version do so also and that this version is enforceable and will even put to work additional opportunities to prioritize reuse and reduction, finding creative ways to help businesses by financially supporting investments such as dishwashers, reusable plates, etc.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Summit Hill Association District 16 Planning Council supports the proposed Saint Paul Sustainable To-Go Packaging Ordinance.

Please let me know if you have any questions for us ahead of the upcoming City Council vote on this ordinance.

Yours truly,



Lori Brostrom
Chair, Zoning and Land Use Committee
Summit Hill Association District 16 Planning Council

cc: Monica Haas, Executive Director
Rebecca Noecker, Councilmember, Ward 2
Taina Maki, Legislative Aide, Ward 2
Susan Hubbard, Eureka Recycling
Megan Kuhl-Stennes, Eureka Recycling