

City of Portland
Bureau of Development Services
Alternative Technology Advisory Committee
Meeting Notes
October 16, 2018

Attendees: Joshua Klyber, Bob Sweeney, Terry Whitehill, Nancy Thorington, Angel York, Darin Wick, Donna Ruark (notes)

1. Welcome/Introductions

Joshua welcomed everyone to the meeting. There was some discussion regarding whether there was a quorum, and if the group could vote on the application. Terry and Nancy checked the by-laws, and since only 2 members and 1 city staff are required for a quorum, the meeting could continue and the application could be discussed and voted on.

2. Discussion and Approval of Final Recommendation for Application 11-01, Residential Bucket Composting Toilet System

Joshua asked if everyone had looked over the recommendation and if there were any changes/points for discussion. Darin said he had a couple of points that he would like to discuss.

The first discussion point was item #3 on the committee findings: "Compost can be spread anywhere but on edible plants". Darin stated that the WeStand code states that compost can be spread under fruit trees. Bob said that his understanding was that edible plants meant tubers and other plants that have edible portions in contact with the soil. The intent is to protect people from contamination of the edible portion of food plants that come in contact with the soil, as opposed to trees or shrubs where the edible portion is not in direct contact. Also, given that the human waste will be composted for over a year before land application, the risk is minimal if the protocol is followed. Terry added that he checked with DEQ; the DEQ person he spoke with was ok with it, if there was 12 inches of dirt on top of the compost. Bob stated that this is pre-treated compost, not fresh compost, so the 12-inch requirement wouldn't necessarily apply.

It was agreed to change the language of item #3 on the committee findings. Terry said that there should be an addendum to the bottom of the requirements that this doesn't waive any other federal or state requirements.

The next item discussed was #11: "The house must remain owner-occupied and may not be used as a short-term rental (short-term guests are fine)". Darin would like to discuss that wording to include long-term renters. Joshua said he would lean towards allowing long-term rentals if testing takes place. The testing would be tied to the occupant rather than the process. Bob agreed, except that there is no

triggering mechanism for the testing. There was discussion regarding the length of time that designates a long-term renter. Bob asked how long it takes to fill a bin (2 months) and suggested that might be a criteria for a long-term rental. Nancy stated that generally long-term rental is 6 months or longer.

The group discussed whether a log would be required for short-term rentals. The log would have a training manual for new users and testing requirements. It would also contain information regarding major spills and how they were dealt with, bin dates (when they were filled and distributed) and when and where compost was distributed. It was recommended that a new bin be started for each new renter; that would aid in separating the compost for testing. The group decided to add another item, #16, to require a log.

It was decided that the property may be rented out for long-term rentals of not less than 6 months, if the renters are trained by the owner and act in accordance with the compliance manual.

Joshua made a motion to approve the recommendation with amendments to Items 3 and 11, the addition of an item 16 to require a log, and the notation that this recommendation does not waive any other federal or state requirements.

Nancy and Terry will revise the recommendation and Donna will distribute it to group for approval.

Terry said the next step (after the recommendation is revised and approved) is to submit, preferably electronically, for an appeal. Donna will help with appeal procedures if necessary.

The committee encouraged Darin and Angel to spread the word that this avenue is available to those who currently have composting toilets. Hopefully it will help legalize the illegal compost toilets that are currently existing.

The committee will meet again when there is another application to discuss. Another applicant, Ole Ersson, has had a preliminary discussion on his application, and when he is ready he will bring that before the group to be discussed in person.