

Environmental Sustainability

Why this issue? Description of Issue and Sub-issues

Municipal Interviews

Community Leader Interviews

Resident Survey

Environmental sustainability ensures that the Borough meets its current needs and accounts for the environmental impact of those needs without compromising its ability to meet those needs in the future. Investing in environmentally sustainable infrastructure and resources allow the Borough to set an example for the residents of Dormont and surrounding area. Additionally, stakeholders voiced in Municipal Interviews, Community Leader Interviews, and the Resident Survey the need for the Borough to lead initiatives regarding environmental sustainability.

Borough Commitment to Environmental Sustainability

There are several programs through which the Borough can demonstrate its commitment to environmental sustainability. Through Sustainable Pennsylvania, the Borough is currently certified Gold, the second-highest certification achievable. To meet the criteria for Platinum as-is, the Borough would need to score an additional sixty (60) on Sustainable Pennsylvania's current checklist. More specifically, the Borough could show its commitment through the establishment of additional municipal services that promote environmental sustainability, such as composting.

Borough Utilization and Promotion of Sustainable Energy

The Borough not only needs to lead by example when it comes to environmental sustainability, but also equip and promote residential participation in such initiatives. One such initiative is PAPowerSwitch, a program that encourages residents to switch their power supplier, including to a renewable energy source, and allows them to compare pricing between suppliers. These efforts will only lend substantial results if residents are on-board with the direction the Borough takes. While the Borough can hope that residents follow its lead, it can also look to incentivize residential practices that align with the environmental sustainability vision the Borough establishes.

Community Garden

In recent years, Community gardens have increased in popularity as a way for residents to promote healthy eating and living and communal stewardship of a shared resource. Community gardens have been used to address food insecurity, to revitalize a green

space, and to teach youth about healthy food habits and caring for a community resource. Municipal Interviews, Community Leader Interviews, and the Resident Survey all reiterated a desire to see Dormont come together in this way.

Other Green Practices and Incentives

Aside from green energy, the Borough can focus on environmental sustainability in a number of ways. Implementing and promoting practices like upcycling and using rain barrels could teach residents how to repurpose a resource that otherwise would go to waste or would not be captured for use. Ending pesticide usage and expressing the harms that pesticides can cause would allow the Borough to inspire residents to do the same on their own property. Incentivizing proper recycling through a program like RecycleBank would cut down on the solid waste generated in the Borough, and give the Borough a fresh opportunity to educate residents how to recycle properly. RecycleBank rewards residents for recycling, awarding them points for recycling by weight that can be used for retail gift cards and credit toward municipal services.

Recommendations/Resources and Potential Partners

Borough commitment to environmental sustainability

- Sustainable PA evaluation (to be retooled by the organization)
 - Involve residents in evaluation process to showcase how the Borough engages in sustainable practices, and document the inventory process for Borough communication outlets
- Borough composting program
 - Use Borough communication outlets to educate residents using a short video series and how-to guide with pictures and diagrams
 - Borough-run
 - Education for residents
- Potential Partners and Resources
 - SustainablePA Dormont benchmark spreadsheet (see flash drive)
 - Sustainable Pittsburgh
 - Sustainable PA
 - Frisco: Recycling, Composting, and Upcycling (see flash drive)

Borough utilization and promotion of sustainable energy

Solar panels on Borough properties to power Borough facilities

- Identify Borough-owned land or buildings with optimal sunlight
- Assess startup costs for infrastructure and maintenance

Resources for residential improvements to incorporate renewable energy

- Collaborate with groups promoting PAMPowerSwitch and the ability to switch to renewable power sources

- Provide resources for residents looking to incorporate renewable energy on their property, along with relevant zoning and ordinance procedures and permits

Community Garden

Urban Agriculture Zoning update

- Update code to include zoning for community gardens, and provide resource that explains procedure necessary to establish a community garden

Establishing as community resource and developing/implementing use and maintenance plan

- Work with Dormont Community Development Corporation to create plan for development and maintenance of community garden
- Draft residential outreach plan to ensure residential participation in community garden initiative
- Research best plants for soil, community needs
- Identify best location in Borough, based on need for food, need for additional green space, and residential interest
- Can adapt to fit a community rain garden or sustainable landscaped area model
- Potential partners and resources
 - Urban Agriculture - A Guide for Municipalities (see flash drive)
 - Pittsburgh City Planning - Urban Agriculture Zoning (see flash drive)

Other Green Practices and Incentives

Upcycling

- Hold Borough-run contests for upcycling art and products
- Feature residential upcycled products on Borough communication outlets

Ending pesticide usage

- Commit to ending the use of pesticides on Borough-owned property
- Promote recommendations for pesticide alternatives to residents

Rain barrels

- Work with Stormwater Authority to promote rain barrels as a potential way to mitigate stormwater runoff
- Promote rain barrels for residential gardening
- Use rain barrels in community garden for communal plants

RecycleBank

- Initiate communication with RecycleBank about the feasibility of program implementation in the Borough
- Gauge resident interest in program
- Create Dormont-specific resource for program, and for recycling, in general
- Potential Partners and Resources
 - Soak up the Rain: Rain Barrels (see flash drive)
 - Frisco: Recycling, Composting, and Upcycling (see flash drive)
 - RecycleBank

