

**City of Cambridge Recycling Advisory Committee
December 10, 2009 – Meeting Minutes Taken by Ryan Gray**

Members Present: Rob Gogan, Harvard; Ryan Gray, MIT; Cornelia Herzfeld, Cambridge resident; Lisa McMenemy, Casella; Adam Mitchell, Judy Nathans, Cambridge resident; Save That Stuff; Andrea Yonge, Casella;

Guests Present: Cara Barnes, CCTV; Randi Mail, Recycling Director; Ted Live, Cambridge resident; Doanne Perry, Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Association; Corey Pilz, Cambridge Consumer's Council; Junjay Tan, Cambridge resident

CCTV video-taped this month's meeting.

Market Report

Andrea Yonge from Casella, announced that she is relocating to Chicago. Lisa McMenemy is her replacement and will attend these meetings.

#8 News rose to \$5 to \$80-85/ton, showing a strong domestic market and newspaper exports are still selling strong \$15-\$20 above the yellow sheet pricing. Cardboard is not as strong as newspaper. India and China are big importers.

Hopefully, with generation up from the holidays there will still be the demand from both an export and domestic. Typically, prices soften this time of year because of high generation.

No change in plastics from December. HDPE (milk jugs) stabilized and selling at \$400/ton levels and both HDPE Color and PET selling at \$250/ton. Good pricing but much lower than last summer. Glass - no change from September, always a problematic commodity but Casella glad to have a contract with a glass processor. Bi-metals (tin) jumped to a \$90/ton, probably related to supply and demand. No change on aluminum, stabilized at \$900 to \$1000/ton. Organics is the hot topic within the state, will develop further in the commercial market.

Conflict of Interest Law & RAC Member Appointments

Randi reminded members that as part of new statewide requirements, every City employee and volunteer have been given a copy of the Conflict of Interest Law from the State Ethics Commission. All employees and volunteers-- including members of the Recycling Advisory Committee, Committee on Public Planting, and Rodent Task Force-- are required to sign a confirmation of receipt to be placed on file with the City Clerk's Office.

Randi informed members that RAC appointments would likely be reviewed in 2010. Section 8.24.070 of the Cambridge Municipal Code establishes and describes the Committee as follows:

There is established a Recycling Advisory Committee. The Committee, as requested, shall provide advice, assistance and recommendations to the Commissioner regarding the recycling program. The Committee shall be appointed by the City Manager, and shall consist of at least nine persons with a demonstrated interest in recycling, at least six of whom are residents of Cambridge. At least one member chosen shall be a user of or familiar with the City's Recycling Drop-off Center, one member shall represent the private real estate industry (apartment management), and one member shall be a designee of the Cambridge Housing Authority. One member shall represent the business community, and one member shall represent nonprofit institutions. The term shall be three years. The Commissioner, or his or her designee, shall be an ex officio member of the Committee.

Curbside Updates

- Curbside recycling and trash tonnage down, influenced by slowed economy. Randi will provide figures for Jul-Dec in January. Other communities and processors report similar decreases. Some estimates show roughly 25% less consumption. November yard waste was very high at 540+, possibly due to public notice that pumpkins are accepted, for Halloween.
- Distribution of toters to 6-12 unit residential buildings 72% complete.
- New curbside contract will be in mid-July and DPW is considering several price proposals for single stream collection. The City will purchase

and provide recycling totes (with wheels and a lid) to all residences, focusing on distribution to single through 5 unit buildings. Residences that demonstrate no room for totes, will be encouraged to convert a 32 gallon trash can for recycling, or can continue using recycling bins.

- Roughly 10,000 residential buildings with 1 to 5 units need approximately 13,000 totes for single stream. DPW estimates 3 totes needed for 4 and 5 unit buildings, 2 totes for 2 and 3 unit buildings and 1 for single-family homes. On average, 40% of totes will be 64 gallons, mostly for single- and two-family homes. Totes will feature a permanent full-color label on the lid and may have an RFID tag to allow for the possibility of Recyclebank in the future.
- Curbside collection in Cambridge is considered semi-automated, since the recycling workers must attach the toter to the truck to lift and empty it. In fully automated collection, the truck grabs the toter without the worker touching the container.
- New collection trucks required will compact recyclables, thereby increasing weight collected and reducing trips to the processor. Any size cardboard will be accepted, flatten when possible.
- DPW estimates that recycling will increase by 10-20% with single stream. Residents will no longer have to sort papers from containers and large totes will give households much more capacity to store recyclables. The big container makes recycling easier, thereby shifting behavior, and making it automatic.
- If processing capacity for organics (yard + food waste) further develops in the region, the City will be able to renegotiate this part of the curbside contract. Rob suggested that DPW dedicate one of its rubbish trucks for compost.
- Adam said that he recently attended a presentation by Tom Daley, DPW Commissioner for the [City of Newton](#). Mr. Daley discussed the City's new program in which they delivered two 64-gallon carts to each household, a green cart for single stream recycling and blue cart for

modified pay-as-you-throw trash. Results in the first two months of recycling increases and trash decreases were impressive. Residents like the new carts and the streets are cleaner.

Discussion of Trash Limits

Adam, Judy and others made a strong case that [single stream] recycling increases more when limits on trash are introduced simultaneously. Members discussed writing a letter to the Commissioner on this. Enforcement would require a strategy regarding excess trash at multi-family buildings along with substantial education and fines. Current trash violations in Cambridge are sent to the property owner. Interestingly, Worcester's PAYT program fines renters as well.

Randi reported that DPW is observing considerable compliance with current trash preparation requirements and DPW has discussed trash limits.

The [3-cart collection model in San Francisco](#) is ideal: 3 standard curbside containers. Blue for recycling, green for organics (yard + food waste), and black for trash.

Random Tidbit

Judy spoke briefly about waste reduction by businesses in relation to a recent [Boston Globe piece](#) about "freegans", who salvage discarded food, clothing, and furniture from dumpsters at retail stores.