

City of Cambridge - Recycling Advisory Committee

October 16, 2010, Minutes Taken by George Delegas

Members Attending: Rob Gogan, Harvard University, Cornelia Herzfeld, Cambridge resident; Lisa McMenemy, Casella Recycling; Judy Nathans, Cambridge resident

Guest Attending: Michael Arnott, Cornerstone Village Cohousing, Meryl Brott, Recycling Program Manager; George Delegas, Cambridge resident; Ted Live, Cambridge resident, Randi Mail, Recycling Director; Corey Pilz, Cambridge Consumers Council; Helen Snively, Cambridge resident; Craig Watkins, Cambridge resident

Market Update

Lisa reported on the market pricing for recycling materials including paper/cardboard from \$140 to \$155 per ton, plastic increase to \$300 per ton, glass/metal to \$200 per ton, and aluminum to \$1,600 per ton.

Waste Audits

DPW decided to see how much recycling was still in the trash before and after the start of the single stream recycling program, which starts October 25. Additional waste sorts will be scheduled for fall 2011.

Randi reported on the recent waste sorts completed. Curbside trash was collected from over 200 randomly selected households on Thursday Sept 30 and Tuesday October 5, from 1-5 family units. Sorting and weighing took place at Casella Recycling in Charlestown. It was determined that about 25% of the trash was recyclable material including paper, cardboard and plastic, glass and metal containers. On average, there was at least 5 pounds per household of recycling still in the trash. Between 20-30% of the trash was organics including food scraps and dirty paper.

In 2004, 35% of the trash sorted was recyclable material and 61% of all recyclable material was set out for recycling by residents. Of all the trash and recycling collected and 48% of all waste was recyclable. Common materials noted in the trash included kitty litter, diapers, wood. For more waste prevention information on diapers, [click here](#).

Recycling Advisory Committee Appointments

The City received 20+ letters of interest from candidates interested in serving on the RAC. Randi and Meryl interviewed candidates in September and will make their recommendations to the Commissioner and City Manager. Appointments are expected to be complete by the November meeting. DPW would like to see members be more involved at the meetings and in between on projects, with specific regard to public outreach, special events and businesses. The Committee will need to elect a Chair and co-Chair.

Random Tidbits

- The new [Recycling & Trash Guide](#) was mailed in early October to all city residents. It is a full color 16-page publication that includes details on recycling, yard waste, trash and hazardous waste.
- Randi announced that [Metro Pedal Power](#) will empty public area recycling bins starting November 1. This is an exciting development, which will reduce traffic congestion and emissions when servicing these bins. Members suggested that public area recycling bins be next to each public litter basket. Randi said that the City has strategically placed recycling next to trash in all of the major squares in high traffic pedestrian areas and that plans she hopes to be able to expand recycling in the parks, pending available funding for new bins and additional collection costs.
- [MassDEP Commissioner Laurie Burt issued a great response](#) to two recent Globe editorials that gave inaccurate information about the economic and environmental benefits of recycling.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 AM.