

## DRAFT

### City of Cambridge Recycling Advisory Committee

June 12, 2013 – Minutes Taken by Adam Mitchell

**Members Present:** Michael Arnott, Debby Galef, Mike Cosgrove, Jan Dillon, Rob Gogan, Juliana Lyman, Adam Mitchell, Laura Nichols, Robert Winters

**Members Absent:** Luis Baigiorria, Liza Casella, Claire Davies, George Delegas, Jarrod Jones,

**Staff Present:** Meryl Brott, John Fitzgerald, Randi Mail

**Guests Present:** Adam Janhauskas, Tracy Kukkonen, Judy Nathans, Helen Snively

Committee approved May minutes unanimously with one correction.

#### Market Update

Adam said that the paper market is flat. China's "Green Fence" has slowed some movement. Randi said that beginning in July, City trash crews will dump loads at Republic Services' transfer station in Roxbury given plans for the Waste Management's transfer station in Somerville will be closing. About 60% of the trash will now be sent to landfill and about 40% incinerated.

There are spots open on a tour of the Casella Recycling facility in Charlestown on 6/19, email [recycle@cambridgema.gov](mailto:recycle@cambridgema.gov) for more info or to RSVP. Randi has begun to also offer virtual tours to the public and City staff showing pictures and videos of what happens to our recycling, trash and sharing information on the City's composting initiative and zero waste.

#### Tonnage Update

**Tons recycled** in May 2013 was 827 tons versus 805 tons for 2012, YTD was 3,766 compared to 3,745 in 2012. **Tons disposed\*** disposed in May 2013 were 1,353 tons versus 1,336 tons for 2012, up 1.3% but down 1.6% YTD with 5,995 tons and 6,093 tons in 2012. (\*Tons disposed includes city collected trash from about 31,500 households, public schools and city buildings. It does not include multi-family buildings served by private haulers, businesses, or universities.) The city is on target for its goal of 16 lbs of trash per household (HH) by 2020, given 18.7 lbs/HH of trash in 2012. In 2008, it was 22 lbs/HH of trash.

#### City Updates

##### CHA Pilot

Meryl worked with 4 CHA properties to double their recycling rate, 3 of four did it! Avg of a 300% increase! She worked with property managers to distribute a recycling bin or bag to each unit and worked with managers to provide clear instructions to residents and increasing custodial attention to the program.

The four "puzzle pieces" for success were: Recycling is Accessible and Clear; Staff Make it Happen; Make it Easy (bin/bag in unit); and We Recycle! People Know and People Do. Bags were given to senior and disabled housing. 28-quart bins to the family units. Posters promoting the program encouraged residents to increase their recycling and if the goal was met, buildings would receive prizes (incentive), including a flat screen TV for the common room, digital projector, and a pool table. A final report about the pilot will be released soon and DPW staff is working with CHA on next steps to expand the program and address other areas of improvement.

##### Public Area Recycling

7 more bins were approved for purchase in FY13 - five to the Cambridge Common and more more each in Harvard and Kendall Square. 9 more approved for purchase in FY14. Staff identified 100 priority locations around City and will work from this list. Additional bins will be placed in conjunction with street renovations/street renovations on Main St, Broadway and Concord/Huron. Staff also identifying proposed areas to remove trash containers where there may be too many.

##### DPW Changes

6/14/13 is Lisa Peterson's last day as DPW Commissioner; her new role is the Deputy City Manager with Rich Rossi as City Manager. Owen O'Riordan is Acting DPW Commissioner (formerly the Assistant Commissioner for Engineering). Over the summer/fall DPW plans to consolidate/move Solid Waste Division staff into the Ryan building, and Engineering staff into the main DPW building.

#### Discussion Topics

##### FY13 RAC Accomplishments

Zero Waste, Outreach and Business Recycling were the three focus areas for the RAC and specifically:

1. Elected new Chair, Claire Davies and Co-Chair, Debby Galef. Committee expressed support for them.

2. Developed specific interest areas for zero waste (packaging, reuse of bulky waste, Expanded Polystyrene and public area recycling), outreach (compost education, more drop-off, CHA recycling improvements, publicize lbs per household, major event), and businesses (subcommittee recommendations – note to present to new commissioner, plastic wrap recycling).
3. Provided feedback to DPW Commissioner about Council order related to congestion on Cambridge St and recycling/trash pickup from small businesses, including 4 specific suggestions:
  - Haulers should require that customers bring trash/recycling to the curb. Many collection vehicles idle longer because haulers have to walk to get the barrels and dumpsters and then replace them.
  - Require delivery trucks to take back packaging (pallets, shipping crates, cardboard, plastic wrap) from customers for recycling by the vendor.
  - Help businesses be more self contained. Offer subsidies or group purchasing for balers for cardboard or even on-site digesters for food scraps. Advocate for landfill surcharges to generate revenue to pay for this assistance.
  - Ensure that building code requires storage space for recycling, trash and compost since insufficient storage fuels the need for frequent collection. Looks into requirements for private property areas that the public access to have recycling bins.
4. Members helped volunteer with community outreach at events (Debby, Michael, Laura, Claire), waste audit in September of CHA trash (Rob G), and public tours of the Casella recycling facility (Liza).
5. Reviewed the City's feasibility report completed in December 2012 regarding a possible pilot program for curbside food scraps collection from residents for composting.
6. Learned more about product stewardship, PaintCare, the Product Stewardship's initiatives on packaging and printed materials, overview of laws in US, proposed legislation in MA to establish a framework on extended producer responsibility (EPR), a commission on EPR, and ; electronics EPR.
7. Participated in joint discussion with the Climate Protection Action Committee (CPAC) regarding business recycling, product stewardship, and zero waste.
8. Extensive discussions on a possible ban on expanded polystyrene (EPS) disposable food containers and on plastic bags. RAC offered recommendation that the City adopt policies that favor or incentivize reusable and/or compostable containers (with a compost infrastructure) and reduce or discourage single-use service ware.
9. Helped publicize furniture donation campaign that highlights local organizations that provide free pickup of unwanted furniture in good condition, including help with the MIT Furniture Exchange Pop-Up truck (Jarrod).
10. Created new subcommittee on materials and EPR and invited CPAC members to participate.
11. Learned about the City's Climate Change Preparedness Project and completed surveys which the Community Development Department will use in the first phase of the project.
12. Decided to make support clear for the establishment of an extended producer responsibility framework & commission in MA.

Rob Winters asked what FY14 project areas are for Recycling Division. Randi talked about:

- Compost curbside pilot beginning in April
- Furniture campaign and furniture repair job training brainstorm with city departments, non-profits and local businesses
- CHA recycling pilot expanded to more buildings
- Launch Food to Flowers lunchroom composting in more public schools
- Promote ways to reduce food waste – EPA Food Too Good to Waste campaign
- Expanding public area recycling
- Revamping the Go Green program
- Involvement in creating a MA chapter of the Reuse Alliance
- EPR (possible MassDEP grant with Barnstable County, Google maps: promoting existing business take back programs)
- Ordinances: possible new ones that ban expanded polystyrene and plastic bags, and update recycling ordinance
- Continued outreach to maximize curbside recycling tonnage
- Expand volunteer efforts to have an active presence at events around the City

Upcoming Meetings: Sept 11, Oct 9, Nov 13, Dec 11, Jan 8, Feb 12, Mar 12, Apr 9, May 14, June 11. All at 8am at Sullivan Chambers at City Hall, 795 Mass Ave.