

DRAFT
City of Cambridge Recycling Advisory Committee
May 8, 2013 – Minutes Taken by Michael Arnott

Members Present: Michael Arnott, George Delegas, Debby Galef, Mike Cosgrove, Jan Dillon, Rob Gogan, Juliana Lyman, Adam Mitchell, Laura Nichols,
Members Absent: Liza Casella, Claire Davies, Luis Baigiorria, Jarrod Jones, Robert Winters
Staff Present: Meryl Brott, Randi Mail
Guests Present: Judy Nathans, Helen Snively

Committee approved April minutes unanimously.

Market Update

Adam shared that recyclable pricing is currently flat. [China's "Green Fence"](#) is affecting exports as it is trying to inspect loads more closely from February through November 2013. This increases the importance of domestic markets and brings up questions about composite product packaging with several materials in one, as well as specifications for finished bales in the US. Also, if China moves towards mechanized sorting shipping recyclables there becomes less economic. Some local compost facilities have different specs for "clean" versus "dirty" loads, establishing higher tip fees for "dirty" loads have compostable tableware in the mix as well as some "back of the house" programs that can't keep their material free of metal, glass and plastic.

Tonnage Update

For curbside recycling and trash statistics. **Tons recycled** in Apr 2013 was 734 tons versus 733 tons for 2012, nearly the same YTD was 2,939 compared to 2,940 in 2012. **Tons disposed*** disposed in Apr 2013 were 1,242 tons versus 1,143 tons for 2012, up 8% but down 2% YTD with 4,642 tons and 4,756 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

Massachusetts 2020 Solid Waste Master Plan: Pathway to Zero Waste

In early May, MassDEP released its updated [2020 Solid Waste Master plan](#), available online. The Plan's emphasis is on waste diversion with a goal to reduce solid waste disposal by 30% from 2008 to 2020, from 6,550,000 tons to 4,550,000 tons. Randi reported that the Plan is based on three objectives:

- 1) **Maximize recycling.** This focuses on greater diversion of papers, organics and C&D, ;EPR legislation for e-waste, expanded bottle bill and a broad regional framework; greater reuse; eliminate barriers to siting recycling and composting facilities; encouraging better technology to collect, process and remanufacture recyclables; ensure state agencies lead by example; develop statewide education campaigns; and keep toxics out of the waste stream (mercury, e-waste, safe alternatives for chemical products).
- 2) **Maximize the environmental performance of solid waste facilities.** This focuses on the modification of the moratorium of new municipal solid waste combustors (allowing the *possibility* for gasification or pyrolysis for up to 350,000 tons per year); improving waste ban compliance reduce emissions at municipal waste combustors, and landfill oversight for compliance with stringent environmental requirements.
- 3) **Develop integrated solid waste management systems.** This focuses on the first 2 objectives and supports zero waste approaches.

Furniture Donation Campaign

Cambridge DPW has a new campaign to promote how to donate unwanted furniture in good condition to local organizations that help people in need. Residents can arrange for a free pickup of good-condition

furniture including couches, mattresses, desks, tables, chairs, dressers, etc. See CambridgeMA.gov/Furniture for links to the partner organizations including Salvation Army, MA Coalition for the Homeless, Aid to Incarcerated Mothers, Boomerangs, and the MIT Furniture Exchange as well as more details on pickup and drop-off options. The website also links to a Google map of Cambridge with [locations of clothing donation boxes and thrift stores.](#)

Also, Rob mentioned three opportunities to reuse:

1. Harvard will set up a “public donation station” allowing free daily, temporary drop-off from Wed May 15 through Sat June 16 only. Look for the white “Harvard Recycles” tent at 1580 Mass Ave (“Little Mass Ave”) across from Harvard Eppworth Methodist Church. They will accept all reusable furniture, clothing, books, non-perishable food, office supplies, cosmetics and appliances. All will be donated to Harvard Habitat for Humanity, the Cambridge Family Shelter, the Phillips Brooks House, COSAS and other charities.
2. There will be a FreeCycle event at the Harvard Information Center, Holyoke Center Arcade, Friday, May 17, 11 am to 2 pm: Bring/get unwanted items including office supplies / equipment, kitchen items, clothing, books, CDs, toys, unopened cosmetics, non-perishable food, linens, tools and all other reusables!
3. The Harvard Surplus & Recycling Center is open every Thursday 11am-2pm at 175 N. Harvard Street in Allston offering surplus furniture, supplies and equipment.

Schools Update – Lunchroom Composting

Meryl reported that as part of the Cambridge Public Schools “Green Schools Initiative” the Amigos School is the latest addition to the Food to Flowers lunchroom composting program. The Haggerty School will be launching in the fall. 8 of the 14 schools now have composting programs. As leadership is important if the program is to be successful; only two schools will be added per school year, one in spring and one in fall and only when both the principal and the head custodian are on board.

Discussion Topics

Update on Curbside Organics Pilot

Randi said that as part of the 2 year MassDEP grant, the City will hire a part-time Organics Program Assistant, 15 hrs/wk for 96 weeks. The position will begin in September 2013 through June 2015. The assistant will work with Randi to help implement the curbside organics pilot slated to begin in April 2014. The job description is posted [online](#), review of resumes will begin May 28.

Product Stewardship: MA House Bills on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

Randi described current EPR bills before the MA legislature:

1. [House Bill 741](#), “An Act to create a framework to re-allocate responsibility for discarded products. Its language is very similar to [Senate Bill S346](#). If law, this would allow MassDEP to identify potential products appropriate for a product stewardship program, hold public meetings, work with advisory committees on technical information and development of product-specific rules. No more than two products could be added in a two-year period and producers must pay for all costs associated with the product stewardship programs. The programs shall include an education and outreach component and establish annual performance goals, enforceable beginning in the third year for each product program.
2. [House Bill H729](#), “An Act establishing the commission on extended producer responsibility.

RAC members discussed and voted to make their support clear for the establishment of an extended producer responsibility framework and commission in Massachusetts. The new RAC sub-committee on Materials/EPR will continue to review current legislation and work to develop positions and recommendations.

Upcoming Meetings (Minute Takers): Jun 12 (Adam)