

DRAFT
City of Cambridge Recycling Advisory Committee
October 9, 2013 – Minutes Taken by Debby Galef

Members Present: Michael Arnott, Claire Davies, Jan Dillon, Jarrod Jones, Debby Galef, Adam Mitchell, Robert Winters
Members Absent: Luis Baigiorria, Liza Casella, George Delegas, Rob Gogan, Laura Nichols
Staff Present: Meryl Brott, Randi Mail

Minutes were approved from the September meeting. No public comment.

Market & Tonnage Update

Markets have generally been unfavorable recently. Demand has slowed; materials are moving slowly and Casella more material on hand. China's "green fence", based upon newly issued rules, means that they will become stricter about contamination in imports of recyclable materials. This affects mostly plastics, as "#3-7 plastics" no longer exists as a material stream accepted. Cambridge has had a net payment for recyclables processing since July 2012, averaging a charge of ~\$6/ton. The previous 15 months before July 2012 averaged a rebate of ~\$14/ton. For the average 780 tons of recyclables/month, the City has paid an average of \$5,800/month in FY14. This is still less than what trash disposal costs, at \$75/ton.

Update on curbside recycling and trash stats. **Tons recycled** in September 2013 811 tons, up 6% from 762 tons year to date in 2012. **Tons disposed*** in 2013 is 1,379 tons up 7 % from 1,285 tons in September 2012. *Tons disposed includes city served trash from ~31,500 households, public schools and city buildings. It does not include multi-family buildings served by private haulers, businesses, or universities. DPW will publicize lbs/household/week in January and June, at the end of the calendar year and fiscal year respectively. Now at 18 lbs/HH/wk and goal is 16 for 2020. Baseline year 2008, was 22 lbs/HH/wk.

City Updates

Planning Curbside Compost Pilot

The website is up CambridgeMA.Gov/CompostPickup and a robust outreach and recruitment plan for 500-800 households by December 20th has begun. DPW staff and volunteers will staff info tables in the neighborhood, including the O'Neill and Boudreau libraries, local parks and polling places. The School Dept is helping with targeted outreach to families living in the pilot area. The eligible neighborhood is a specific section of North Cambridge in the Monday collection route. Eligible residences must be in the target neighborhood (see map on website), must get City trash service, and the home can be a single family or a multi-family building with up to 12 units. The goal is to recruit 50-100% of households in multi-family buildings.

Residents in eligible residences can complete the "I'm Interested" form on the website and DPW will confirm eligibility and be in touch with more details, including a few more online questions related to demographics. Participating households will get a 2.5 gallon kitchen container to collect food scraps and soiled paper, a year's supply of BioBags, a green curbside bin (to share at multi-family buildings), free collection on the normal pickup day by City crews, a few requests during the pilot (April 7, 2013-March 30, 2015) to answer online surveys, and finished compost great for gardens available at the Recycling Center April-October. The main composting facility will be Rocky Hill Farm in Saugus, with other options being considered for the latter half of the pilot. Three main factors are: tip fees, materials accepted, and proximity to Cambridge. The pilot program is building on the successful school composting brand with the worm/apple logo.

Recycling & Trash Guide to be Revised

The fall 2010 recycling and trash guide will be updated. Several members offered to review the guide and will send suggested edits by email.

Reuse Alliance – MA Chapter

MA has started a chapter for the [Reuse Alliance](#) and will hold its first summit on October 22 in Springfield MA at EcoBuilding Bargains, the largest recycled building materials store in New England carrying plumbing, lighting fixtures, lumber, vanities and cabinets. The goal of the summit is to stimulate discussion around ways

to increase the efficacy and public awareness of reuse opportunities in the MA through networking, outreach and future events. Steering committee members include representatives from MassRecycle, BayState Textiles, Boston Building Resources, City of Cambridge, City of Salem, Devens Eco-Efficiency Center, CET EcoBuilding Bargains, Harvard University, IRN – The Recycling Network, MassDEP, Morgan Memorial Goodwill, Northeast Recycling Council, Re-Stream, and The Furniture Trust. Randi is on the steering committee and will attend the summit.

Discussion Topics

Extended Producer Responsibility

Subsequent to the May meeting RAC discussed three bills before the MA legislature and voted to approve the establishment of EPR, Randi drafted a letter from the City Manager to the chairs of the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources & Agriculture, as well as the Cambridge leadership. Once this is finalized and sent, RAC members plan to send personal e-mails to state senators and reps. To move EPR forward at the local level, Randi suggested identifying problem products or packaging and contacting the companies or manufacturers. Adam suggested a focus on toxics. Costs, toxicity, litter and emissions are all issues. Jan and Adam volunteered to research ways that local governments are moving forward on EPR.

One good suggestion was to support efforts in MA to pass [PaintCare](#) legislation, previously discussed by the RAC. Cambridge supported a grant proposal that Barnstable County submitted to MassDEP to build support for, and advance, paint stewardship in MA. The City spends around \$50,000 on paint recycling/proper disposal and collects it at three annual household hazardous waste collections. PaintCare currently operates paint stewardship programs on behalf of paint manufacturers in states with paint stewardship laws including California, Connecticut, and Oregon. Programs are being planned for Rhode Island, Minnesota, Vermont and Maine. These programs make paint recycling more convenient by setting up more places for people to take unwanted, leftover paint - usually at retail stores that also sell paint, because they have regular business hours and convenient locations. The program is funded through fees on each container of architectural paint in states with paint stewardship programs. Budgets and fees are set on a state-by-state basis; so far these fees have been the same in each state with a program: 35 cents, 75 cents or \$1.60 per container, depending on the container size.

[MY ECO](#) was brought up as a means to encourage use of reusable bags when shopping. They have a local partnership with [Shaw's Supermarkets](#) to reduce use of disposable bags and encourage use of ANY reusable bags. Shoppers simply need to register, use a mobile app to track when they use reusable bags at Shaw's and in turn it raises money for schools and other nonprofits that register to benefit. This free program is educational and teaches children about reuse; has the potential to raise funds for educators; and it decreases waste. See <http://getmyeco.com/displayHome.action>.

Demographic Factors of Effective Recycling Rates

Jan presented a brief summary of her master's thesis on residential recycling under the direction and guidance of Rob Gogan. This research project was designed to uncover demographic factors that correlated to higher recycling rates across more than 30 towns in Massachusetts. Statistical models of demographic factors (gender, education level, income, owner occupied housing, political affiliation, etc) as well as recycling and waste infrastructure (curb side recycling/trash vs. drop off, pay as you throw, etc) were created using multiple regression techniques. Community Based Social Marketing strategies were then applied based on demographic findings to suggest actions communities might consider to drive higher rates of residential recycling.

Meeting adjourned 9:45.