

City of Cambridge
Climate Protection Action Committee

Minutes

Thursday, December 13, 2012
City Hall Annex

Attendees: Quinton Zondervan, (chair), Jackie Cefola (vice chair), Peter Crawley, Heather Henriksen, Sarah Hill, Johanna Jobin, Ted Live, Lauren Miller, Tom Page, David Rabkin, Marguerite Reynolds, Keren Schlomy, Terrence Smith;
staff: Susanne Rasmussen, John Bolduc

Guests: Randi Mail (DPW), Malcolm Bliss, John MacDougall

1. Waste Reduction in Cambridge

Speaker: Randi Mail, Recycling Director, Cambridge DPW.

A. Review of Draft Solid Waste Goals

- * Waste Reduction - Cambridge has adopted the MA goal of reducing residential solid waste 30% by 2020 and 80% by 2050 from 2008 levels. 46,000 households in the City - only 32,000 served by Cambridge DPW (the rest are apartment dwellers with private pick-up). The DPW goals have shifted from a recycling percentage (which was 38% in 2012) to a pounds per week number.
- * Composting - City found 10 potential compost facilities that can take food and/or yard waste. The MA DEP recently streamlined the regulatory process for permitting food/organic waste facilities (composting & anaerobic digestion). The City plans to implement a pilot program of about 800 households to begin between 9/13 & 4/14 (Monday pickups). See Curbside Organics handout for more information [should be attached to the minutes].
- * Audits - City is auditing single family up to five units, and 6+ unit buildings that got "Cs" in past audits, to identify recyclable being thrown in the trash. Housing Authority properties too?
- * Extended Producer Responsibility - Follow model from Europe & parts of Canada. City is working with the Product Stewardship Institute in Boston on take-backs of batteries, carpets, sharps, paints, tires & more. Two bills in the MA legislature would help: H 2003 (An Act Establishing a Commission on EPR) and H 2017 (to Create a Framework for EPR). What can we do to support them?
- * Commercial Solid Waste - City has requirements for recycling but no manpower to enforce them.

B. Q & A

- 25% of trash is food and dirty paper (napkins, etc.).
- The Somerville Transfer Station is closing in June 2013 and City will have to find another location to bring its waste.
- In May, 2011, 31% of waste from CRLS was paper, bottles, cardboard. Total trash = 160 tons per year. City's goal is to reduce that by 50 tons.
- City Council is holding a hearing on plastic bag bans next week.
- Pay as you throw does not have political support.
- In MA, Cambridge has one of the lowest pounds per household of waste (19 lbs/week in 2012). How does that compare to other progressive cities? Randi did not know, but noted that San Francisco has a recycling staff of 70 (Cambridge has 2).
- Pig farms are not off the table for the pilot composting program, but the closest one is 20 miles away. Other (non-pig) composting facilities are closer.
- Waste audits show almost no hazardous waste in the trash. Much of the City's hazardous waste budget is due to paint.
- Cambridge does outreach to schools and 13+ unit buildings, and got good feedback on that outreach.
- MA bans certain products from landfills: the newest will be institutional and business food scraps from entities that generate > 1 ton per week. Harvard, MIT and Whole Foods already divert their food waste.
- 35% of businesses don't have recycling collection programs.

2. Waste Reduction and CPAC Goals and Objectives.

City's Business recycling requirement: a business must recycle if >15% of their waste is recyclable.

- Peter C. Noted that the Sustainable Business Network found that many restaurants and bars don't recycling.
- Terry S. noted that the City licenses every dumpster for Rodent Control.
- Jackie C. asked why the City does not pick up commercial waste. Quinton Z. responded that it was a complicated issue - the cost, logistics and waste types are different than residential.
- Terry noted that the State's enforcement over commercial waste haulers is much greater than the City's.

Other than supporting the City's solid waste goals, what else can we do?

- Joanna J noted that the business community is tracking hazardous waste, solid waste and recycling, and that should be included in what the City tracks.
- Sarah H. suggested that the City should track recycling waste. Visitor John Pitkin added that City should track yard waste as well. Terry noted that tracking recyclables is important if there is a goal that gives "reduce" and "reuse" greater weight than "recycle".
- John B. noted that there already is a recycling committee that covers these issues, so if we want to have a subcommittee it should work with the recycling committee.
- Keren S. suggested CPAC start by focusing on reducing high carbon-impact products.
- Susanne R. noted that it was harder to get resources for programs to "reduce" and "reuse" (compared to recycling programs). She suggested that reducing

styrofoam should be a priority. Quinton said that he would bring it up at the City Council's meeting on the plastic bag ban proposal.

3. CPAC Meeting followup

Subcommittee meetings on building energy performance and school curriculum: Report from Buildings meeting. LEED is good, but there are issues with actual energy performance. The subcommittee made three non-prescriptive recommendations for process to resolve the issues.

- Terry voiced concern that the document does not address cost-effectiveness and suggested some guidance be included.

- Tom asked whether LEED was the same as "stretch code". John responded that it was a different approach.

There followed a discussion of the Life Cycle Analysis for the King School renovation/rebuild, which covered only greenhouse gases.

- Jackie suggested adding a need to communicate the process broadly.

- Susanne added that such communication occurs from the process of such decision-making.

- Peter suggested there be a 4th recommendation addressing existing municipal buildings - to pursue LEED-EBOM or Energy Star and pursue certification if economically feasible.

- There was a suggestion to add an intensity metric for electricity.

- Quinton & Susanne noted that the document could say that all new buildings must be net-zero energy (in that it is possible to achieve that through purchase of renewable energy if necessary) but were not suggesting that at this point.

4. VOTED: to approve November minutes.

John B. said that he would ask Randi to set up a joint CPAC/recycling subcommittee meeting.

VOTED: to incorporate the draft solid waste reduction goals into the CPAC goals and objectives.

5. ETP Director's Report

- * Vulnerability Analysis: The first meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee and the Expert Advisory Panel will be next Tuesday, and a public meeting will be held in January. CPAC members on the TAC include Barry H., Peter C., and Terry Smith. Penn Loh (Jackie's husband) is also a member.

- * The solar hot water grant project ended - nine installations were funded.

- * The energy efficiency block grant ended.

- * The Solar Map got 13,000 visits its first month. Now 300-500/week, and people are spending an average of five minutes each visit.

- * The Green Communities goal is to decrease municipal energy consumption 20% between 2008 - 2013. The City achieved a 16% reduction in buildings being

tracked (in existence in 2008) through 2012. Growth makes it harder to reach total reduction goals.

* The City is working with Harvard and MIT on a sustainability compact. The plan is to come up with common goals, strategies and projects and report out on the state of sustainability in the City. Next Monday's City Council meeting will discuss a Policy Order to work toward such a compact by Earth Day. The plan is to expand the compact to include Leslie College & business stakeholders.

Prepared by Keren Schlomy