DRAFT

Recycling Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting Minutes

April 11, 2018, 8am – 9:30am

City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Ave, Council Chambers

Minutes Taken by Meera Singh

**Members present**:  Joel Dashnaw, Debby Galef, Rob Gogan, Martha Henry, Susy Jones, Debby Knight, Janet Mosley, Michael Pappas, Anne Sherman, Meera Singh, Quinten Steenhuis, Matthew St. Onge, Mary Verhage.

**Members absent**:  Ilana Bebchick, Laura Nichols, Kristen Watkins,

**Staff**:  Deb Albenberg, Camilla Elvis, Michael Orr,

**Members of the public present**:   Pat Richardson, Helen Snively

**Housekeeping**

* The March minutes were not approved because a few changes were needed.

These will be approved at the next meeting together with the April minutes.

* No public comment.

**City Updates**

Status of curbside compost expansion

Some chaos in delivery of compost bins. Delivery company had underestimated traffic in Cambridge and Allston. Delivery of all bins was finally finished on Sunday, April 9.

Many emails and calls from residents asking about bins not received.

Mike shared picture of kickoff with City officials and City Councilors.

Overall, very high positivity, community very supportive.

Mary Verhage complemented Mike on his/the department’s pre-launch marketing efforts.

Mike – Cambridge’s curbside compost expansion is creating a buzz, ripple effect in other communities.

Pitfalls:  due to new routes, new drivers, collection process has been hard, one reason for growing incrementally.

The compost site online is getting a lot of traction – 2nd after the public library

Tonnage:  5 ½ tons of compost collected on April 10.

Rob asked

1. if there was comparative data for trash since the citywide expansion. Currently none. Mike will share at the next RAC meeting.
2. about the quality of compost – Deb A said so far so good.
3. what happens if a bin gets rejected? Implications due to odor, etc.

Mike – no plan to further expand the program until this one is all figured out.

Anne – what is the reason for a bin being rejected?

Deb A’s feedback – found yard waste, dog poop, in Monday’s route compost.

At the Open House at Tobin School last month, Quentin shared experience having participated in the Monday route pickup – residents who attended had concerns about raccoons.  Larger bins are raccoon proof.

Martha Henry’s story*Spring brings citywide curbside composting, practice that goes deep in Cambridge history* that appeared on Cambridge Day was well received.

Number of people added to the monthly e-newsletter has gone up significantly.

Door to door canvassing explaining the program and giving ”how to”  instructions will continue until the end of April, Monday to Saturday.

Rob – could be a huge problem in August when people go away and leave food scraps in their compost bin, because of the heat.

Mike – DPW is shifting focus from recycling to composting.

Next waste audit probably in the fall (summer months not a good time to do one).

Waste Wizard/GROIR – has received 17,000 clicks.

Mike – City is looking at mattress recycling in 2020.

Issue – where to store mattresses that are picked up for recycling?

Discussion on rearranging the DPW yard – suggestions to consider various locations in Allston, Charlestown, suggestion to collaborate with neighboring communities to share storage for recyclables.

Currently, no option to relocate Recycling Drop-Off Center - too expensive.

Pilot Commercial Curbside Recycling in the next FY – from City budget.

Susy – regional collaboration for a shared recycling center?

Rob – due to the seasonality factor of mattress disposal, is there a case for proposing a temporary collection site for mattress recycling? A pilot?

Martha – collect mattresses for recycling in a large trailer truck on Household Hazardous Waste Day?

Not feasible because of traffic back up, where to line up cars?

Joel – explore partnerships with businesses on Rutherford Ave, Charlestown, including Casella, to use their space.

Anne – brainstorm on depot sites for the next meeting.

**Sub-committee breakout groups**

Behavior Change Committee

Science Festival starts on the 13th.

Cambridge Interfaith Composting.

Riverfest and Fresh Pond Day – tables.

Deb A. – leading compost route tours April 20th and 21st as part of Science Festival.

Policy Group

They’ve given themselves the goal of writing recommendations, on behalf of the RAC, proposing to the City Council that we reduce the residential weekly trash allowance.

Education group

Discussed agenda for Friday’s meeting with Meryl.

**Announcements**

Mike will send reminder for Save That Stuff tours on April 23 (not organics, only paper, cardboard, Styrofoam) and April 25 (slurry facility).

Rob – Fixit Clinic on April 28, 11:00 – 2:00 pm, at the public library in Allston. Need more coaches and volunteers.

Joel Dashnaw is moving to Seattle in May. May RAC meeting will be his last.

RAC social on April 11 at Cambridge Common at 5:30.