**DRAFT** Recycling Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting  **October 10, 2018,** 8am – 9:30am City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Ave, Council ChambersMinute Taker: Michael Papas

**Members present:**  Ilana Bebchick, Debby Galef, Rob Gogan, Susy Jones, Debby Knight, Janet Mosley, Michael Papas, Anne Sherman, Meera Singh, Quinten Steenhuis, Matthew St. Onge, and Kristen Watkins.

**Members absent:**  Martha Henry, Laura Nichols, Mary Verhage**Staff**: Deb Albenberg, Camilla Elvis, Michael Orr

**Members of the public present**: Mark Evans (Casella), Laura Guerriero / Reporter from Cambridge Chronicle.

 **Housekeeping:** September Minutes Approved

**City Updates**

Mark from Casella Recycling gave an update on the market for recycled commodities, which changes daily. Contamination is an industry wide problem. Cambridge is around 10%, much lower than many other communities, but we need to get it down to under 7% to avoid penalty. Casella employees visit all transfer stations to observe, and visually audit and grade containers. It is a time consuming process. Domestic pulp mills are cropping up. If pulp, rather than paper/cardboard is exported to China, contamination is not an issue.

 **Debriefing on the City Council hearing of October 9** 5 RAC members were present at the City Council Zero Waste Committee Hearing.The DPW gave a strong presentation in defense of our food scraps disposal program, noting its success in creating an 8% decrease in trash disposal citywide in the first six months after implementation. It was also explained that composting our food scraps is just not feasible at the moment, given the logistics of trucks having to drive a much greater distance to get to a suitable farm. Letters from state and federal government agencies were submitted in support of the City’s program and the City’s processing of food waste.

 Some members of the public testified that they felt strongly that the City should be composting instead; creating soil is more beneficial than creating energy. **Commercial Recycling Update**

Deb Albenberg reported on the small business recycling service beginning Nov 5. Restaurants, retail, minority and women-owned businesses have been encouraged to participate. There were 180 applications, 130 were accepted, and 120 are in the program. 65 gallon containers will be picked up for collection twice a week. Retail association groups wanted to promote this waste management program as one way to reduce the costs of doing business in Cambridge.

**Future Discussion**

Anne asked what are the best ways for the RAC to support DPW?What do we want to accomplish as a group and what kind of recommendations to support DPW?What worked within our discussions and break outs and what didn't work.Feedback for next month.

**Announcements** Oct 16 Casella Tour.Reminder: respond to Doodle for the Fall Social Saturday November 3 is the next Fixit Clinic, at the Jamaica Plain Library There will be a Halloween costume swap at the Cambridge Community Center on Callendar St.Comments about the PBS Newshour special starring Meera Singh. Part 2 will air on Thursday, October 11.Meeting adjourned at 9:20 AM