DRAFT Recycling Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting Minutes

September 11, 2019 8 am - 9:30 am

City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Council Chambers

Minutes taken by Kristen Watkins

**Members Present**:, Debby Galef, Rob Gogan, Martha Henry, Susy Jones, Debby Knight, Janet Mosley, Laura Nichols, Michael Papas, Meera Singh, Quinten Steenhuis, Mary Verhage, Kristen Watkins

**Members Absent**: Ilana Bebchick, Matthew St. Onge

**Staff Present**: Meryl Brott, John Fitzgerald, Michael Orr

**Members of the Public Present**: Judy Nathans, Richard Nurse, Clint Richmond, Helen Snively

Minutes from the August 14 meeting were approved.

Single Use Plastics

Clint Richmond from Brookline was invited to talk about how they had gone about their ban. Original plan had been to phase out all single use plastics but there was pushback from businesses. So decision made to focus on those with the highest toxicity. Polystyrene law was amended to cover and focus on single use plastics and packaging in general. PET banned. Those remaining items not recyclable must be compostable. Also discussion of banning PFAS lining used in paper products such as cups and on plates. (Berkeley is eliminating compostable flatware and banning PFAS.)

Brookline’s bylaw passed in Nov. 2018, to take effect Jan, 2020, along with many others.

Not a lot of movement at the state level.

Help/support for small businesses provided: providing materials about options; waivers.

Perhaps we can work with distributors.

Subcommittee updates

Janet researched other ordinances. Recommends that committee review Palo Alto summary of how they plan to move to zero waste in a phased manner. <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/news/displaynews.asp?NewsID=4609>

Debby G. put together list of questions for business survey, added to by Susy.

City Updates

Waste audits coming up.

Five year curbside hauling recycling contract going out to bid soon. Processing contract in ~ six months.

Citywide mailer work continues. Should be in mail to residents by the end of the month.

Call for new RAC members going out soon. All current members wishing to continue will need to reapply.

Mattress recycling has been very popular, with backlog around Sept. 1. About 150/week picked up.

Curbside textile collection (the pink bag program with Simple Recycling): looking to start this in the spring.

Curbside composting: working on expanding program to buildings with 13+ units. About 60% have expressed interest. Outreach involves mailers and speaking with property managers and others who will be managing. Also info available at PARK(ing) Day table (volunteers needed).

Trash tonnage is down 5%.

Public comment: compostable plastics are going to be confusing here given that they aren’t accepted in our curbside compost.

Announcements:

Shred Day is September 28.

Harvard stuff sale was very successful. Raised $30,000 for Habitat for Humanity.

The Head of the Charles will begin composting. Contact Judy Nathans if you’d like to sign up to help.

Mass Recycle fundraising gala Oct. 16th at the Aquarium.