

DRAFT

City of Cambridge Recycling Advisory Committee, Council Chambers, 795 Mass Ave

October 14, 2015 - Minutes Taken by Joanna Vanden

Members present: Keith Cialino, Debby Galef, Rob Gogan, Susy Jones, Debby Knight, Laura Nichols, Janet Mosley, Meera Singh, Joanna Vanden, Mary Verhage. **Staff present:** Meryl Brott, John Fitzgerald, Randi Mail, Owen O’Riordan. **Guests:** Rob DeRosa, Gerry Gorman, Adam Mitchell, Judy Nathans

Housekeeping: The September minutes were approved. No public comment.

City Updates

Curbside compost pickup: Efforts to expand the program in the Monday collection route are underway. Bins and bags were delivered to eligible residences and door to door outreach commenced this week. As of 9/28/15, Save That Stuff began to pick up compost from the pilot program households and participation increased even before the official expansion date on 10/19/15. Outreach efforts have included door to door (D2D) campaigning, A-frame signage, postcard mailers, tabling efforts, and more.

Outreach: Camila Elvis was hired as the City’s new part-time Recycling Outreach Assistant. She has been tabling at parks, t-stops, and libraries, focusing on educating North Cambridge residents about the curbside compost pickup. Outreach for the program will continue all year and the RFID technology embedded on the totes will allow the City to track participation. Since Camilla joined DPW, Cambridge Recycling has been at 12 events, spoken to 815 people, and received 36 new emails for the newsletter. These numbers do not include the D2D outreach, which included 100 volunteers, 242 hours, knocking on 2,439 doors and talking with 1,106 households. This is a 45% talk to rate. About 80% of eligible households remain for outreach efforts – please email morrr@cambridgema.gov to sign up for D2D outreach on Saturday, November 14 from 9:30am-12:30pm.

Discussion Topics

Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance (BYOB): The RAC decided to sponsor a reusable bag drive November-January. Many of us have more reusable bags than we actually use. Let’s reuse and donate clean, empty and useful bags! The goal is to collect 10,000 bags and give them to Cambridge residents that need them most, in advance of the Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance, which takes effect March 31, 2016. The reusable bag drive would reuse existing resources, avoid the impact of buying new bags, and begin public education about the Ordinance. DC Food Pantry successfully collected used bags to distribute to food pantry clients and a Seattle group called Cool Moms did too. Questions include: where to collect bags, how to coordinate pick-up, sorting, cleaning and redistribution to residents that need them most. The committee decided to establish collection locations at city buildings and possible businesses/churches via donations from the broad public, as well as asking the Boston Convention Center for leftover bags from events. A subcommittee was formed to continue work on this group project.

Compost outreach after 10/19 launch: Outreach for curbside compost pickup will continue after the launch with more D2D outreach on Saturday 11/14/15 in the morning, please email morrr@cambridgema.gov to sign up. Tabling efforts will continue at farmers markets and polling places on Election Day. Staff will identify other events to attend, videos, and a spring event focused on the finished compost.

Action Items for Reusable Bag Drive

- Randi and Keith will finalize a project description and Randi will make a flyer.
- Janet and Laura will identify local food pantries and the Cambridge Weekend Backpack Program as partners to distribute bags.
- Randi, Debby K and Rob will identify collection sites.
- Keith will connect with Convention Cares for possible donations and Cool Moms on best practices for running a drive.
- Meera will explore potential partnerships with local laundromats for washing donated bags.