

DRAFT

Recycling Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting Minutes

February 13, 2019, 8am – 9:30am

City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Ave, Council Chambers

Minutes taken by Matthew St. Onge

**Members Present:** Ilana Bebchick, Debby Galef, Rob Gogan, Martha Henry, Susy Jones, Laura Nichols, Michael Pappas, Anne Sherman, Quinten Steenhuis, Matthew St. Onge, Mary Verhage, Kristen Watkins

**Members absent:** Debby Knight, Janet Mosley, Meera Singh

**Staff Present:** Deb Albenberg, Meryl Brott, John Fitzgerald, Mike Orr, Camilla Elvis

**Members of the Public:** Helen Snively, Katharine Davis

**Housekeeping:**

January minutes were approved.

**Leadership roles discussion:**

Anne announced that she will be leaving the committee and that her last meeting would be in April. We will need to elect a new chair and possibly a new vice chair or co-chair. Anyone interested in either of these positions should feel free to reach out to Anne or Mike for further information. Elections will take place at our March meeting. Feel free to nominate yourself or someone else by contacting Anne. The new chair will take over as of the April meeting.

Ilana asked about membership details in general. Anne said there are a minimum of nine members, each appointed for three year terms. It was noted that many of the current members began their term two years ago and if all these members elected to retire a big hole would be needed to fill. Perhaps staggering new members every year would be prudent.

**Discussion of 2019 Goals:**

Mike Orr explained that we were going to review the results of last meeting's brainstorming exercise with the intention of arriving at a new 2019 work plan. Mike explained that he had scored our ideas by rating feasibility and impact. Anne created the power point sheets by averaging those two scores to arrive at the best/most realistic options.

The RAC then went into a wide-ranging discussion focusing on the ideas from Mike's scorecard and also offering new areas of interest to focus on in 2019.

Debby G. offered that participatory budgeting and bin monitoring should just be regular activities that we all just do and need not be big committee issues to tackle.

Quinten suggested adding composting to the list.

Anne asked "what resources do we need and how do we define success?" And, we need to be mindful of RAC members' time availability to take on these big issues.

Debby G. said addressing policy goals is a mandate of RAC. Mike said that the new, standardized trash bins coming in the next fiscal year were an example of policy change.

Kristen suggested that we elevate policy and dig into the HDR plan and the ZWMP and each of us use our specific expertise to review and comment on those particular areas.

Mike reminded us that now is prime time to review and comment on the ZWMP because public comment period ends March 15th. He recommended that this activity rise to the top for 2019.

Susy suggested an exploratory committee be assembled to review the feasibility of hosting a city-wide yard sale/swap fest.

There was discussion about the Taste Test activity; Martha was surprised it ranked so low, and Anne noted that young people are using reusable containers so it may not have mass appeal. It was also noted that other plastic bottle products like sugary sodas, etc. are much less healthy than water. Ilana said we could broaden it to all single use plastic bottles.

Rob mentioned we can't take our eye off clean recycling and composting. Mike said the city is promoting these activities through the Waste Wizard program, Get Rid of it Right and the monthly newsletter. Mike noted that the recycling contamination rate was at 7.3% in January, a decline. He said the RAC can help promote clean recycling and composting by talking to neighbors and friends.

People still need education to help understand what is recyclable, especially when it comes to plastic bags. Electronics recycling is another issue. Does Staples only offer recycling with a purchase or at any time?

There was a suggestion to add Business Recycling and Extended Producer Responsibility to the list.

It was noted from our meetings with HDR that promoting compost participation worked best with door-to-door, face-to-face conversations. People are slow to adapt; they do so at their own pace.

At the end of this discussion each RAC member wrote down the top two choices for the RAC to focus on in 2019. Here are the results:

#1 – Single use plastics

#2 – Compost (tied)

#2-- Citywide yard sale (tied)

#4 – Business recycling

Before our next meeting each RAC member should review the ZWMP, focusing on our particular fields of interest, and we will discuss and compile comments at our March meeting.

Before the meeting, comments can be uploaded to Google docs or sent by email to Anne.

### **Announcements**

\* Cabot Science Library Fix It Clinic on Earth Day, Monday, April 22

\* May 4 next city shred day

Meeting adjourned at 9:30.

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# RAC 2019 Priorities

## Brainstorming Results & Next Steps

Meeting: February 13, 2019

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# Objective

- 1-2 Annual Goal/s
- 1-3 Quarterly Goals

# Agenda

- Review top ten ideas & rank
  - Discussion:
    - Mike Orr Presentation
    - RAC Comments
  - Commitments/Vote
  - Work Plan
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# Definitions

**Feasibility:**

Ease of ability to accomplish successfully with considerations for resources & expertise available from Cambridge DPW and RAC, as well as the time frame from initiation to completion.

**Impact:**

Ability to provide direct, immediate, and measurable impact on the waste habits of the Cambridge community and stakeholders.

**Score:**

Average of impact and feasibility rating.

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## **Gut Check: Are We Solving the RIGHT Problems?**

- Does this add sufficient value to the DPW's efforts?
  - Does this create appropriate challenges?
  - Does this reflect an understanding of the key issues with regard to the City's Climate Protection Plan, ZWMP, Climate Protection Plan?
  - Are we involving enough, or the right stakeholders?
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## Gut Check: Are We Solving the RIGHT Problems?

- What can we agree to **pursue**?
  - What can be **evolved**?
  - What can be **discarded**?
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# Brainstorming Results: Scores

IDEA	FEASIBILITY 1=Difficult 10=V. easy	IMPACT 1=Low 10=High	SCORE
ARTICLE/VIDEO ON RECYCLING AUDIT: WACKY STUFF IN PEOPLE'S BINS	9	5	14
RAC PROPOSALS FOR PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING	9	4	13
CITY WIDE YARD SALE/SWAP FEST	4	8	12
BIN-MONITOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM FOR CITY EVENTS	8	4	12
REUSABLE WATER BOTTLE DRIVE	7	3	10
FILM/SPEAKER SERIES OR WORKSHOPS FOR THE PUBLIC (W/GUEST SPEAKER)	6	3	9
TASTE TEST CAMBRIDGE VS. BOTTLED WATER (VIDEO OF EVENT)	8	1	9
ONE POLICY GOAL TO ADVOCATE WITH COMMISSIONER (ALIGNED W/ HDR, ZWMP)	3	5	8
LARGE SCALE PUBLIC ART PROJECT ON WASTE	2	5	7
FAMOUS RESIDENTS PLAY SORTING GAME	1	5	6



# Brainstorming Results: Impact

IDEA	FEASIBILITY 1=Difficult 10=V. easy	IMPACT 1=Low 10=High	SCORE
CITY WIDE YARD SALE/SWAP FEST	4	8	12
ARTICLE/VIDEO ON RECYCLING AUDIT: WACKY STUFF IN PEOPLE'S BINS	9	5	14
ONE POLICY GOAL TO ADVOCATE WITH COMMISSIONER (ALIGN W/ HDR, ZWMP)	3	5	8
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TASTE TEST CAMBRIDGE VS. BOTTLED WATER (VIDEO OF EVENT)	8	1	9

# Brainstorming Results: Highest Feasibility

IDEA	FEASIBILITY 1=Difficult 10=V. easy	IMPACT 1=Low 10=High	SCORE
ARTICLE/VIDEO ON RECYCLING AUDIT: WACKY STUFF IN PEOPLE'S BINS	9	5	14
RAC PROPOSALS FOR PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING	9	4	13
BIN-MONITOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM FOR CITY EVENTS	8	4	12
TASTE TEST CAMBRIDGE VS. BOTTLED WATER (VIDEO OF EVENT)	8	1	9
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ONE POLICY GOAL TO ADVOCATE WITH COMMISSIONER (ALIGN W/ HDR, ZWMP)	3	5	8
LARGE SCALE PUBLIC ART PROJECT ON WASTE	2	5	7
FAMOUS RESIDENTS PLAY SORTING GAME	1	5	6

# Brainstorming Results: Low Feasibility

IDEA	FEASIBILITY 1=Difficult 10=V. easy	IMPACT 1=Low 10=High	SCORE
ARTICLE/VIDEO ON RECYCLING AUDIT: WACKY STUFF IN PEOPLE'S BINS	9	5	14
RAC PROPOSALS FOR PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING	9	4	13
BIN-MONITOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM FOR CITY EVENTS	8	4	12
TASTE TEST CAMBRIDGE VS. BOTTLED WATER (VIDEO OF EVENT)	8	1	9
REUSABLE WATER BOTTLE DRIVE	7	3	10
FILM/SPEAKER SERIES OR WORKSHOPS FOR THE PUBLIC (W/GUEST SPEAKER)	6	3	9
CITY WIDE YARD SALE/SWAP FEST	4	8	12
ONE POLICY GOAL TO ADVOCATE WITH COMMISSIONER (ALIGN W/ HDR, ZWMP)	3	5	8
LARGE SCALE PUBLIC ART PROJECT ON WASTE	2	5	7
FAMOUS RESIDENTS PLAY SORTING GAME	1	5	6

# Brainstorming Results: Full list

Diaper recycling	Story-- interviews with people who are composting--why they love it, why they participate and how they manage it
Prizes for people seen using reusable bag or tableware	Tours of GLSD
Circulate large posters throughout City	Partner with nearby municipality to co-host zero waste day (Arlington, Belmont)
Create neighborhood ambassador program--volunteers who live in neighborhood to help educate neighbors who move in about how to recycle and compost	Public compost bins at certain events
promote awareness on connection between climate change and waste	Bike amnesty (Sharing/scrapping)
Engaging the business community through biz associations or chamber	Public brainstorm session: "design charette" invite specific people
Continuing/re-education about what is and is not recyclable	Support more compost/organics outreach to neighbors (similar to initial pilot) and share the data with them, reiterate purpose
Invitations from RAC to public to join meetings	Creation/promotion of very simple one message, recycling posters
Regular RAC meeting with youth/teen committee	Promote existing reuse channels (Buy Nothing, MITx, donation sites)
Have several "bring your old clothes, or batteries, or styrofoam or shoes" days in different locations	Waste audits

# Brainstorming Results: Full list

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Waste audits

More education on contamination of recycle bin

Recommendation to Commissioner for stronger enforcement of existing policies

Work with cafes to build reuse culture (eg, Boulder steel mugs)

Focus on data: how much gallons of trash setout

In your face posters/ads

Serendipitous rewards for participating in programs, possibly the gift of a standard trash can

provide an educational component to the preschools (fun & games)

Comic book version of waste/compost communication

All representing business or institutions on RAC present their zero waste goals

Common offences: monthly short article or video about one item that can't be recycled and why

Anything to make the Recycle Center seem less like a dark alley

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## Gut Check: Are We Solving the RIGHT Problems?

- What can we agree to **pursue**?
- What can be **evolved**?
- What can be **discarded**?

“Are you curious enough to ask the hard questions?”  
- *David Kelley, IDEO*

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**Discuss....**

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# Discussion

Annual Goal/s

Quarterly Goals

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# Vote:

Annual Goal/s

Quarterly Goals

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# Commitments

Goal:

Volunteers:

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# Next Steps

Work Plans:

- Roles
  - Responsibilities
  - Deadlines
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