

DRAFT

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

February 10, 2016 - Minutes Taken by Debby Galef

Members present: Debby Galef, Rob Gogan, Susy Jones, Debby Knight, Janet Mosley, Keith Cialino, Mary Verhage.

Members absent: Joanna Vanden, Laura Nichols, Meera Singh.

Staff present: Meryl Brott, John Fitzgerald, John Nardone, Owen O'Riordan, Mike Orr.

Guests: Judy Nathans. Helen Snively, Ted Live.

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

City Updates

Curbside compost pickup: a success so far. Participation has been around 50%, with 6 - 7 tons/wk. collected. Save That Stuff is building a slurry tank for the compost, which would feed into an anaerobic digester in Lawrence. Very little contamination. City looking at possible drop-off location in East Cambridge. Waste audit in April at Casella. More canvassing in North Cambridge and new incentives for participants.

Paint stewardship: State Senate passed a bill on 1/25, with an effective date of 10/1/17. Bill now goes to House.

ISD inspections: recycling questions part of form. Info from 12/31 renewals still being compiled.

BYOB update: waste reduction outreach assistant position approved, 15 hrs./wk. for 6 mos. Mike was on CCTV. Whole Foods will donate first month of bag fees to City Sprouts. Star Market has stickers. City will purchase around 3200 bags with goal of 6000 total. 800 businesses will receive mailing from city. DPW will send letter to Council, detailing what's been done and problems foreseen. Billboards will be used to remind public.

Market update: Costs for recycling continue to rise. Some commodities, especially glass, being warehoused until they can be sold. Cambridge will be paying maximum price under contract for foreseeable future.

Discussion Topics

Polystyrene ordinance: City wanted to be a leader in this area, hence a restrictive ordinance. Washington, D.C. has begun by banning only expanded polystyrene; will get to oriented next year. Brookline exempts businesses smaller than 2500 Sq. ft. Cambridge ordinance originally set to take effect in 180 days but DPW asked for a year, due to need for BYOB planning. DPW wants aggressive outreach so any possible problems can be dealt with sooner rather than later. Subcommittee might be good route. This was originally presented as a ban on foam but now it's all polystyrene, even though oriented polystyrene is currently being recycled. City will help businesses find alternative products. May mean switch to compostables. Will be more expensive for schools, but the process would be simpler: fewer items to sort. NYC public schools want to switch from Styrofoam to compostable trays. Discussion with Sierra Club and

other organizations would be advisable. It is important to clearly state the distinction between household recycling, which will continue to accept many of these items, and banning their use (dissemination) by businesses. Possibility for ReFoamIt (or similar) event to take place in Cambridge in future, likely in conjunction with hazardous waste days.

Action Items

- 2/16 bag sorting at DPW
- 2/22 "Bag It" shown at Cambridge Public Library
- 2/27 watching and tallying at stores - to learn what kind of bags people are using
- 3/1 curbside compost outreach at polling places
- Keith to look into NYC switching to compostable trays
- members to send agenda suggestions for upcoming meeting to Keith and John by last Wed. of month