

Recycling Advisory Committee (RAC) Minutes

February 11, 2026, 8:00am – 9:30am

Minute Taker: Elka Kuhlman

Hybrid Meeting

Members Present: Olufolakemi Alalade, Dailey Brannin, Dave Demme, Tucker Dammin, Tian Feng, Debby Galef, Brian Goldberg, Tracie Gordon, Eric Herman, Sugandha Karmacharya, Debby Knight, Elka Kuhlman, Emily Lee, Carlie Peters, Ashan Rodriguez, Suzanne Shaw, Meera Singh, Helen Snively, Rob Vandenbeebe, Stephanie Wasiuk, Monica Yudron, Jenna Zwanger

Members Absent: Richard Nurse, Ting Zhang

Staff Present: Mike Orr

Public Present: Courtney Forrester, Tamene Tedla, Amy Waltz

1. Housekeeping

- Vote on January 2026 Minutes – minutes passed.
Question about whom (we the RAC) are advising. Technically it's the City Manager.

2. Intros

- a) All members: Name, Neighborhood, how long you've lived in Cambridge, profession (if you would like), personal interests, and:
 - i) New members: What sparked your interest in joining the RAC?
 - ii) Returning Members: How long you've been on the RAC? What's your favorite part of the RAC?
- b) What is your favorite part of Cambridge's zero waste ecosystem?

It took a long time but was well worth the effort, as we got at least an initial sense of the make up of the new RAC. Brian Goldberg is the new MIT representative.

3. Free Store

The presentation of the free store brought lots of suggestions for next steps, including ways of supporting smaller sized community led swaps, getting the idea out through the materials shared from the city block party dept., reaching out to the artist community, moving our organized swap to other areas of the community.

Mike shared the possibility of having the next swap at the Reservoir church on Rindge and Middlesex in North Cambridge. There's a large parking lot. Event would have to be held on a Saturday.

Mike and the co-chairs will be looking at continuing the discussion at a future meeting and from there form a subgroup to work on a focused idea (or two).

4. Closing, 9:20am (10 min)

- Public Comment – none

Mike will be doing an orientation session for new members, which will be open to all members. He will send out a doodle to find a date, and the presentation will be shared with everyone.

We are creating an in-house "face book" to get to know each other a bit more. Mike will be sending out the document.

Mike will send out a sign-up sheet for tabling upcoming public events

- **Announcements**

- Volunteer opportunities for spring events, Mobile Recycle Center events upcoming.

Earth day - probably April 18th

Fix it clinic – in conjunction with earth day, both to be held at the main library

Parking Registration – at the City Hall Annex - volunteers will be needed to hang out and talk food scraps collection at the City Hall Annex while folks are waiting to renew or obtain parking permits

March 11 meeting will be fully remote, with breakout rooms.

Upcoming Meetings

- March 11
- April 8
- May 13
- June 10
- September 9
- October 14
- November 18?
- December 9

RAC Free Store based on Helen and Buy Nothing Cambridge's community swaps



Cambridge
Community
Center Swap

Organized by
Helen
Snively

2024 and 2025 RAC Free Store at Cambridge Community Center (in Riverside) to reduce move-out waste

Sun, Aug 25, 2024 from 12-2pm



- Accepted “items in good usable condition”
- 35 volunteers signed up
- Took leftover items to Helpsy bin, Goodwill, DPW for recycling, local non-profits, Make & Mend

Sun, June 1, 2025 from 11 am-1 pm



- Accepted “items in good usable condition except furniture, large items, TVs/computer monitors/hazardous waste”
- Separate donation hours and entrance from shoppers’, larger sorting area (10:30 am-12pm)
- 37 of 51 volunteers who signed up showed up
- DPW picked up recyclables; Helpsy picked up textiles and non-breakable household items (892 lb!!); car runs to Goodwill
- To improve on: finding a venue that has parking to help with traffic control and a larger dumpster bin; relying exclusively on Helpsy and DPW for transporting leftover items

Continuing community swap initiatives

- Interest in organizing a 2026 Free Store?
- Working with neighborhood groups to put on smaller swaps?

