

## DRAFT

### City of Cambridge Recycling Advisory Committee (RAC), Council Chambers, 795 Mass Ave

June 8, 2016 - Minutes Taken by Susy Jones

**Members present:** Keith Cialino, Debby Galef, Rob Gogan, Susy Jones, Debby Knight, Janet Mosley, Laura Nichols, Meera Singh, Joanna Vanden, and Mary Verhage

**Members absent:** None

**Staff present:** Meryl Brott, Recycling Program Manager; John Fitzgerald, Environmental Services Manager; John Nardone, Deputy Commissioner; Owen O’Riordan, Commissioner; Michael Orr, Waste Reduction Program Manager

**Members of the public present:** Adam Mitchell, Save That Stuff; Judy Nathans; Helen Snively

#### Housekeeping

The May minutes were approved.

#### City Updates

##### Polystyrene Ordinance Update

Commissioner Owen O’Riordan updated the Committee on a recent communication with Casella, the city’s recycling processor. Previously, there had been an understanding that there was a market for recycling oriented polystyrene (\$100/ton), which the RAC had used as a main point in its letter expressing concerns about the ordinance banning polystyrene. DPW recently learned from Casella that polystyrene is not something they are currently recycling, which means that the letter has lost some of its reasoning.

There was discussion about whether Cambridge is still listing oriented polystyrene on its website as a recyclable material, and it currently still is. Rob Gogan pointed out that commodity markets are constantly shifting from month to month, and it could be confusing to the public to try to articulate this complexity. It can be a catch-all to say that the public should recycle #3-6 plastic. Commissioner O’Riordan agreed, but stated that there is an expectation that when people in Cambridge place items in the recycling bins, they expect them to be recycled. While a nuanced message might be difficult, the integrity of system may be at risk. DPW may try to put together a video in the future to clarify these issues to the public.

The Commissioner stated that the Ordinance (“Prohibition on the use of Polystyrene Based Disposable Food containers”, Ordinance Number 1374) will move forward, given that there is more merit to it now.

##### School Updates

Meryl Brott announced that all schools now have a lunch composting program. Winners were also announced for the Go Green Challenge, in which classrooms indicate green things they are doing. The top 3 schools, the Morse, Tobin and Peabody, received trophies made of recycled materials by a local artist. Keith said that through his work there may be an opportunity to do a marine debris awareness week in schools.

##### Volunteer Opportunities

Handout of Volunteer Opportunities Summer 2016. Committee members should try to do at least one or two each.

#### Discussion Topics

##### Legislative Update

Bottle Bill: The committee discussed the draft of a letter to Owen, recommending that the City of Cambridge oppose the legislative proposal (H. 646) to eliminate the 5-cent deposits on bottles and substitute a three-year, 1-cent per container fee. The legislation is strongly opposed by environmentalists but supported by industry groups. The Committee passed a motion to request that the letter be forwarded to the City Manager and that the City Manager send a letter on behalf of City to Legislature opposing the bill. Debby Galef will add a sentence and send to Keith and Meera.

##### RAC Accomplishments and goals check in

Keith read 12 goals the Committee set out for itself and asked for feedback. Rob said this list illustrates the complex scope of materials management. The two things he is most proud of: helping the city implement curbside composting, and the Bring Your Own Bag drive, his highest goal being reuse. When the polystyrene ban takes effect he thinks we should do a “bring your own mug” drive or similar, focusing on reuse. Find avenues for positive messages.

Additional comments included:

- Make data public about effect of Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance
- Make the timeline on the City-wide organics pickup public as well. Mike Orr said the timeline is Sept/Oct 2017, but there are still issues to figure out
- Is it possible to have more sites for compost drop-off before expansion? Mike Orr said yes, trying to find new location in East Cambridge.
- Do more on furniture reuse. Possibly have an annual yard sale. Could be a volunteer opportunity.
- Work further to integrate materials management into climate strategy by working collaboratively with CPAC members. Renew dialog with CPAC, think about how to make climate part of our agenda next fall.
- Promote drug take back program, which is being spearheaded by Product Stewardship Institute.
- Update Janet's spreadsheet on reducing pounds per household. Could add new data and refresh.
- Do more with multi-family housing next year.
- Quarterly report of outreach budget spending for better planning. Bring market update back into meeting as well.

**Action Items**

- Committee should participate in Volunteer Opportunities Summer 2016, e.g. Fresh Pond Day or Taste of Cambridge.
- Debby Galef will add sentence to Bottle Bill letter and send to Keith and Meera.
- Mike will send out Doodle poll about summer Social. Cambridge Common still works.

**Announcements**

- June 18-19 Fundraiser "Stuff Sale" – Harvard Habitat for Humanity
- Zero Waste Business Council having national conference in 2017
- Harvard Law School – Food Donation/Rescue conference - June 28, 29
- Blog Post on Clover Website: focus on compostable packaging and its problems
- Town of Brookline – pay as you throw program approved, 34, 68, 96 gallon options
- Reuse Conex Conference – Somerville hosting, October 17. Attend. <http://www.reuseconex.org/>

**Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 9:30am.



# Go Green Challenge 2016

Please hang this outside your classroom door, or just inside,  
and leave it up through April 15<sup>th</sup>.



## In our room, we proudly...

### ☐ Reduce

- ☐ Print double-sided
- ☐ Minimize margins or font size on documents
- ☐ Have paper-free days
- ☐ Bring reusable bags for shopping

### ☐ Reuse

- ☐ Collect and use scrap paper
- ☐ Print/write on "Good on One Side" paper
- ☐ Encourage reusable water bottles and drinking from fountains
- ☐ Use old materials to make something new

### ☐ Recycle

- ☐ Have a blue recycling bin next to each trash can
- ☐ Have a sign or label showing what to put in the recycle bin
- ☐ Have a lesson or class discussion on recycling
- ☐ Draw posters to encourage recycling and other green actions

### ☐ Conserve Energy

- ☐ Draw shades to keep the room cooler/warmer
- ☐ Turn off lights when they're not needed
- ☐ Turn off the smartboard when not in use
- ☐ Have a power strip for our printer/computer/monitor and turn it off at the end of the day

### ☐ Enjoy Nature

- ☐ Go outside for a lesson or a walk
- ☐ Have a plant or animal in our classroom
- ☐ Spend time in the CitySprouts school garden
- ☐ Promote safe walking and biking to school

### ☐ Compost

- ☐ Review how and why we compost
- ☐ Collect paper towels and snack scraps to compost in the cafeteria or in our worm bin
- ☐ Invite Meryl or Kristen to your class for a composting lesson

Here's what else we're doing! \_\_\_\_\_

We hope the Challenge inspires you to do new things! Mark new actions with ✱. Thanks!

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Classroom #: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher(s): \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\* please complete and hang outside your classroom \*\***

Dear Teachers,

We appreciate all you do to teach and involve your students in protecting natural resources.

Please complete the “Go Green Challenge” found on the reverse. It would be great if you could fill it out with your students.

Proudly hang your completed Challenge sheet outside your classroom door, or just inside, to show the school community the ways your classroom is “green.”

**Please hang your sheet as soon as possible and leave it up through April 15<sup>th</sup>.** We'll be by your school after Friday, April 1<sup>st</sup> to tally the sheets hanging proudly.

**The school with the highest percentage participation wins a trophy!** There will be second and third place prizes, as well. All participating classrooms will receive pencils made from recycled newspapers!

Need help with any of the actions? Contact us!

Thank you,



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**Go Green Challenge Trophies, 2016**  
by local artist Bobby Brown

First Place – Morse School  
Second Place – Tobin School  
Third Place – Peabody School

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES – SUMMER 2016

### JUNE

- Thu Jun 9, 12:00pm – 2:00pm - Inman Funch at Vellucci Park
- Sat Jun, 11:00am – 1:00pm - Tobin School Bake Sale
- Sat Jun, 11:00am – 3:00pm, Fresh Pond Day
- Sat Jun 18, 9:00am – 10:00am - Household Hazardous Waste Day - Volpe Transportation Center Lot 4 (via Munroe off 3rd St.)
- Sat Jun 18, 11:30am – 5:00pm, Hoops N' Health - Hoyt Field, near the Riverside Health Center on Western Ave in Cambridge
- Fri Jun 24, 7:00pm – 9:00pm - City Dance Party - In front of Cambridge City Hall *\*Option for Recycling Themed Costumes - we have some available\**
- Sun Jun 26, 3:00pm – 5:00pm - Pops on the Lawn - Sennott Park

### JULY

- Thu Jul 7, 6:00pm – 8:00pm - Movie Night - Cooper Park
- Sat Jul 9, 10:00am – 2:00pm - Cambridgeport Farmers Market - Parking Lot: Morse Elementary School Magazine and Memorial Drive
- Tue Jul 12, 5:00pm – 9:00pm - Taste of Cambridge @ Sidney St and University Park (RAIN DATE 7/14)
- Thu Jul 14, 12:00pm – 2:00pm - Inman Funch - Vellucci Park
- Thu Jul 14, 5:00pm – 9:00pm - RAIN DATE Taste of Cambridge @ Sidney St and University Park
- Thu Jul 14, 6:00pm – 8:00pm - Movie Night at Cooper Park - Cooper Park
- Sun Jul 17 6:00pm – 7:00pm - Annual Movie Night (Curbside Compost Focus) - Raymond Park (RAIN DATE 7/24)
- Thu Jul 21 6:00pm – 8:00pm - Movie Night at Cooper Park - Cooper Park
- Sun Jul 24 6:00pm – 7:00pm - RAIN DATE Annual Movie Night (Curbside Compost Focus) - Raymond Park
- Mon Jul 25, 9:00am – 11:00am -Theatre Performance (Compost Focus) at Tobin Park
- Thu Jul 28, 6:00pm – 8:00pm - Movie Night at Cooper Park - Cooper Park
- Sun Jul 31, 12:00pm - 6:00pm - 2nd Annual Jazz Festival (Compost Focus)- Danehy Park

## AUGUST

- Tue Aug 2, 5:00pm - National Night Out Against Crime - Riverside Press Park 808 Memorial Drive
- Thu Aug 4, 6:00pm - 8:00pm - Movie Night - Cooper Park
- Thu Aug 11, 12:00pm – 2:00pm - Inman Funch - Vellucci Park
- Tue Aug 16, 11:00am – 6:00pm - Donation Drop Off (Get Rid Of It Right)- Riverside Press Park
- Wed Aug 17, 6:00pm – 10:00pm - Annual Movie Night (Curbside Compost) - Raymond Park (RAIN DATE 8/24)
- Thu Aug 18, 7:00pm – 8:00pm - Inman Movie Night - East Cambridge Savings Lot
- Fri Aug 19, 7:00pm – 8:00pm - Inman Movie Night - East Cambridge Savings Lot
- Sat Aug 20, 7:00pm – 8:00pm - Inman Movie Night - East Cambridge Savings Lot
- Sun Aug 21, 7:00pm – 8:00pm - Inman Movie Night - East Cambridge Savings Lot
- Wed Aug 24, 6:00pm – 10:00pm – RAIN DATE: Annual Movie Night Park (Curbside Compost) Raymond Park
- Thu Aug 25, 6:15pm – 7:30pm - As You Like It (Compost Focus) - Danehy Park
- Fri Aug 26, 6:15pm – 7:30pm As You Like It (Compost Focus) - Danehy Park
- Sat Aug 27, 1:15pm – 2:30pm - As You Like It (Compost Focus)- Danehy Park
- Sun Aug 28, 1:15pm – 2:30pm - As You Like It (Compost Focus)- Danehy Park

## SEPTEMBER

- Sat Sep 3, 12:00pm – 5:00pm - Area IV Back to School - Senott Park
- Sat Sep 10, 9:00am – 1:00pm - Household Hazardous Waste - Danehy Park Parking Lot on Field St at Fern St/ TBD
- Sat Sep 10, 10:00am – 6:00pm - Area IV Community Pride - Clement Morgan and Columbia Street
- Sat Sep 10, 6:00pm – 7:00pm - Annual Movie Night (Curbside Compost) - Raymond Park
- Thu Sep 15, 5:00pm – 8:00pm - Celebrating Observatory Hill
- Fri Sep 16, All day - PARKing Day
- Sat Sep 17, 11:00am – 4:00pm - Danehy Park Day

# H. 646 Massachusetts Bill: Elimination of bottle deposit program

## DRAFT LETTER

Dear Owen,

The RAC opposes Massachusetts Bill H.646, which proposes the elimination of the existing bottle deposit system, and the addition of responsibilities to municipalities, for the following reasons:

- Municipalities already do more than their share in managing consumer product waste. They provide access to comprehensive recycling to about 80% of Mass. households. Many municipalities lack the staff to pursue and administer competitive grants such as those proposed in this bill.
- The current Bottle Bill presumes that producers, retailers, and consumers take responsibility for recycling covered bottles and cans, mandating their redemption no matter what the value of the commodity.

Elimination of the bottle deposit system would add significant amounts of glass to our recycling streams, which are becoming increasingly costly to manage. Much of the “sorted” glass from Single Stream is too contaminated for glass recyclers to make into new glass. Already \$30/ton, adding more glass to Single Stream Recycling will drive up the costs even more. This material is best kept separate, as it is in the deposit system, where it has the most value.

We propose more study of the impacts of this bill before contemplating elimination of the Bottle Bill, which Bill H.646 would effectively do:

- How much would it cost to establish effective recycling programs that do not rely principally on municipal governments?
- Would the amount appropriated be distributed effectively enough, without mandates for implementation in the private sector (as proposed in H.3420), to create the needed infrastructure changes for both collection and processing to achieve the high recovery rate the current deposit-redemption system does?
- What if Bill H.646 is passed, and is found to be ineffective? There is no mechanism to measure its efficacy, or to bring back the current redemption system in that case.

For the above reasons, the RAC recommends that the City of Cambridge oppose Bill H.646.

Sincerely,

Debby Galef and Meera Singh

For the Recycling Advisory Committee



## POLICY GOAL ACTION ITEMS

Integrate extended producer responsibility (EPR) and materials management into the City's solid waste policy and climate protection activities.

1. Develop support statement for City to pursue **mattress recycling**. Explore & research **new bulky items to address**, such as furniture not in good condition.
2. Issue support statement for **paint EPR legislation** in MA so it's ready when the time comes in 2015.
3. Host a **roundtable or speaker series on waste reduction**, to assist with education and implementation of bag ordinance, possible distribution of rodent-proof trash barrels, and curbside organics. (Invite businesses, farmers markets, church bazaars, residents & seniors. Feedback on yes/no list of what is "trash".)
4. Ensure **pharmaceutical collection options** are in Cambridge recycling info. (Better understand extent of non-compliance and environmental hazards. Outreach and education about responsible disposal. More collection spots. Work with Cambridge Health Alliance.)
5. Review City's efforts on climate protection & net zero to develop **include materials management in climate strategy**. Work with CPAC to enhance education regarding climate and materials connection - part of PR campaign.
6. Engage City in planning, response & implications for Council order for a report on rodent control operations and the possibility of providing **rodent-proof trash barrels** to residents (Like Somerville's new program). Consider **2020/2050 trash and GHG reduction goals and propose short term, more tangible, zero waste goals**. (Compare with other zero waste communities. Public acknowledgement of low-waste producers)

## OUTREACH GOAL ACTION ITEMS

Increase knowledge and promote actions that establish a 5Rs culture (Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Recycle & Rot) through outreach, public relations, volunteerism, incentives and support to residents and multi-family property managers. Do it in a fun way!

7. Initiate a conversation with School Dept to make **CPS participation in Green Team** program stronger & more consistent. Talk to districts that are/aren't in GT, why and why not? How can high school students/green teams support our outreach goals in the schools and in the community at large? Define scope of the partnership. (Just high school? tap into existing students groups and/or recruit volunteers? Training to do outreach)
8. Assist City with more regular **outreach to large multifamily buildings** (face time, calls, info packets). **Brainstorm incentives. Publicize BB performance more. Conduct surveys of attitudes/awareness.** (Promote by building or area. Something fun to capture attention. Brainstorm incentives, competition. Should focus be on landlords, property managers with private trash collection, emphasizing savings of recycling?)
9. Support **organics outreach and program expansion**. Promote large multifamily organics/composting. **Publicize drop-off locations more.** (How does fit into curbside pilot? Help identify appropriate hosts for new drop-off locations in East Cambridge, West Cambridge and Cambridgeport.)
10. Review and discuss **DPW recycling outreach budget** in detail - RAC evaluate existing past & future efforts. How can City use professional marketing, probono or paid? What opportunities exist to leverage more? Develop outreach goals & 5R City media campaign similar to "Tree City USA". (Identify resources to help leverage existing RAC volunteer time while providing professional expertise. Develop a framework for assessing value and costs associated with such partnerships/contracts and make recommendations for which ones to use.

## BUSINESS GOAL ACTION ITEMS

Increase business and commercial recycling in the City.

11. Review and recommend changes to **Recycling Ordinance and Commercial Recycling Rules and Regulations**.
12. Review and follow-up on **Business Recycling Recommendations** presented to the commissioners in June 2014. (Letter to the commissioner for extra staff or ISD assistance. Second meeting. Prioritize recommendations and apply SMART goal framework.)