

Recycling Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting Minutes  
January 12, 2022, 8 am – 9:30 am  
Virtual Meeting Minute Taker: Martha Henry

**Members present:** Leah Beckett, Dailey Brannin, Holden Cookson, Debby Galef, Martha Henry, Sakiko Isomichi, Debby Knight, Scott MacGrath, Janet Mosley, Audrey Ng, Richard Nurse, Diane Roseman, Meera Singh, Quinten Steenhuis, Mary Verhage

**Members absent:** Ilana Bebhick, Catrina Damrell, Shirley Elliott, Susy Jones, Laura Nichols

**Staff Present:** Deb Albenberg, Mike Orr

**Public present:** Katharine Davis, Helen Snively, Suzanne Watzman

## 1. Housekeeping

- Minutes from December 2021 meeting approved, no amendments.

## 2. City Updates

- Helpsy Update
  - First collection was December 7, 2021, with bins out in community earlier.
  - 7 tons collected in first 3 ½ weeks, primarily in bins.
  - Two trucks filled in New Year.
  - Helpsy said Cambridge launch most successful of any city they have launched.
  - Slots for curbside collection are booking up. Very successful launch.
- Two RAC Letters to the DPW Commissioner from June 2021
  - Letter about standard trash bins taken into consideration.
  - Letter about single-use plastic. No update.
- Gift for Rob Gogan
  - No update
- Citywide mailer feedback
  - Review of fall 2019 mailer that provides Information about all recycling services as City prepares new mailer for some time in 2022.
  - Add QR codes with links to pages on City website where people can access and print out information on their own, and/or links to YouTube Video(s).
  - Add “Cambridge” to Recycle Center
  - Too much information for a mailer, perhaps create a booklet.
  - Mike clarifies that recycle & compost fliers are available in 8 ½ by 11, paper or laminated from DPW. Mailer meant to be one time only with everything you need to know.
  - Consider saying “food scrap collection” so as not to confuse about “composting.”
  - Confusion about what’s recyclable. People learn rules and rules change. People who learned one way and haven’t adjusted to changes.
  - Omit “Recycling is Easy” because it isn’t.
  - Updated stickers for recycling and compost carts?
  - Mike says new stickers are available and can be mailed out.
- **Recycle markets update**

- Mike reported commodity prices have risen greatly over last 6 months. We pay to recycle glass but are paid for all others. City has saved hundreds of thousands of dollars over the last year.

### **3. Sub-committee Breakouts**

- Communications - Chair: Sakiko
  - Hope to meet with other subcommittees
- Food Waste - Chair: Catrina Damrell, Dailey reports.
  - Setting specific goals
  - Collaborating with Communication subcommittee.
  - More on-site events when warmer
- Textiles - Chair: Leah Beckett
  - Group will read articles and report back to develop information piece to be included in next newsletter.

### **4. Closing**

- Public Comment: None
- Future 2022 topics to discuss
  - How can RAC best offer advice on mailers, website and other communication efforts?
  - Compost bag handouts
- Action Plan/Decisions
  - None
- Announcements
  - MLK events and blanket sewing, remote?

### **5. Zoom Meeting Chat**

08:13:25 From Helen Snively to Everyone:

you'll see Suzanne Watzman on here.. She's my neighbor, interested in textiles.. Like me, not a member, but listening in. Welcome Suzanne!

08:13:42 From Scott Macgrath to Everyone:

Welcome!

08:15:19 From Suzanne Watzman to Everyone:

Thanks. My focus as a textile designer- is impact of textiles on climate change.

08:19:12 From Scott MacGrath to Everyone:

Love that idea Holden, completely agree.

08:20:06 From Helen Snively to Everyone:

Mike.. have you sent this to all of us so we can comment individually?

08:20:48 From Audrey Ng to Everyone:

I agree, that's a great idea, Holden! If we can add a QR code everywhere that there's a little mouse icon, that would be very thorough. Can you add one for news letter sign up too? Too much?

08:21:16 From Suzanne Watzman to Everyone:

Hard to see this- happy to comment, am graphic designer.

08:22:08 From Scott Macgrath to Everyone:

Helen - I just forwarded it to your email

08:22:28 From Helen Snively to Everyone:

Thanks Scott.. I found it.. and sent it to Suzanne. Will look at it now.

08:22:56 From mary to Everyone:

Agree it's too much information. Did you have a professional design it? How about testing it with Cambridge residents.

08:26:38 From Leah Beckett to Everyone:

I agree it's a lot of information and is more of a manual and a QR code for more detailed info would be great. If you standardize where lines start, it might look a little cleaner.

Example: in the trash / large items / yard waste / clothing and textiles section the columns are all different widths that are hard to take in at quick glance.

08:27:20 From Debby Knight to Everyone:

The most recent version of the Casella Virtual tour is really good! They've added almost a minute

08:28:24 From mary to Everyone:

How about creating new stickers for recycle, trash and compost totes that coordinate with the brochure? Stickers on our totes have worn off.

08:28:31 From Debby Knight to Everyone:

The video shows what happens when they have to unclog the machinery and how that's dangerous to workers, and they go over what is and isn't acceptable in a very clear way.

08:29:00 From Holden Cookson to Everyone:

Welcome Suzanne!

08:29:06 From Leah Beckett to Everyone:

Standardizing the headers / subheaders might also be helpful. The dropcap is also inconsistent and unnecessary.

08:29:59 From Holden Cookson to Everyone:

The QR could be to an online PDF to print as well.

08:32:32 From Meera Singh to Everyone:

I like the booklet idea but How will a booklet work for Camb's transient pop....with changes, etc. And expense, paper....

08:33:22 From Suzanne Watzman to Everyone:

Can this be done in 2 formats? This IS very important- to get to as many as possible.

08:35:11 From Suzanne Watzman to Everyone:

INFO about where to take other stuff

08:35:21 From Suzanne Watzman to Everyone:

INFO about Where to get bins

08:36:45 From Helen Snively to Everyone:

good points everyone.. Maybe say in bigger print: Get more info at Get Rid of it Right, and include qr code, and general Recycling website.

08:37:18 From Suzanne Watzman to Everyone:

Poster option good for those who have Airbnb, BNB's, etc

08:37:27 From Helen Snively to Everyone:  
or.. send this as a card, but have a booklet form available, and tell people they can phone or email for it.

08:37:28 From Holden Cookson to Everyone:  
Agreed Helen ^^ That page could have a bunch of online PDFs/printable documents

08:38:57 From Helen Snively to Everyone:  
maybe 3 forms: this card, booklet, and poster. Send the card, but tell people they can get the other forms.. and have all 3 forms available at any outreach event.. so they circulate but we don't use tons of paper

08:39:58 From Debby Knight to Everyone:  
Are the recycle bin stickers something we can pick up at the DPW and share with neighbors who have the older versions?

08:40:07 From Meera Singh to Everyone:  
Can we make this more "human" - maybe a group pic of the Recycling Dept staff or a staff member from the crew or Recycling Center - something to make a human connection

08:41:10 From Helen Snively to Everyone:  
great ideas Holden.. make it clear to non-tech people they can call for options if the tech is too hard to handle.

08:43:17 From Suzanne Watzman to Everyone:  
What about a kick-off event when it is warmer, including all sorts of "item" swaps and info/handout of this folder/brochure...

08:43:50 From Meera Singh to Everyone:  
1 second that idea Sakiko - or at our RAC mtgs

08:44:24 From Helen Snively to Everyone:  
I'd be happy to help with that.. DPW already does all they can, given covid, but we can all volunteer to get recycling info out at whatever events we are going to.

08:46:38 From Sakiko Isomichi to Everyone:  
Maybe stop scree share?

08:47:38 From Helen Snively to Everyone:  
richard.. maybe even extend that to middle shools?

08:49:31 From Debby Galef to Everyone:  
I think plastic film is a difficult term. Many may not understand it.

08:50:23 From Helen Snively to Everyone:  
Richard's idea of kids collecting film will get lots more people thinking about how MUCH comes into their lives.. and then they start trying to avoid it.. Meera's point.

08:51:07 From Audrey Ng to Everyone:  
Mike - Where (if at all) can folks access that recycling market data?

08:53:55 From Dailey Brannin to Everyone:  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1QJcXx-D8BKWzq72zsfzb-63BmmVz1GwD/edit>

09:19:11 From MICHAEL ORR to Everyone:  
1 minute!

09:20:32 From Debby Knight to Everyone:

<https://www.npr.org/2021/12/15/1064386006/as-demand-for-materials-surge-maine-paper-mill-asks-for-cardboard-donations>

09:20:34 From Meera Singh to Everyone:

Debby G and Sakiko I" email you to finish my story

09:20:36 From Helen Snively to Everyone:

leah.. i love your idea about sending out articles on textiles, and we each summarize one.

09:31:19 From Quinten Steenhuis (he/his) to Everyone:

Being more flexible about bags sounds like a good idea to me

09:31:38 From Sakiko Isomichi to Everyone:

I was thinking about paper bags or something

09:31:46 From Quinten Steenhuis (he/his) to Everyone:

paper bags are already allowed

09:31:51 From Helen Snively to Everyone:

sounds like yes.. good topic for another meeting!

09:32:01 From Sakiko Isomichi to Everyone:

I meant for distribution

09:33:23 From Helen Snively to Everyone:

let's all keep our eyes out for events when it's possible.. moer than just dpw stuff.. anywhere we can talk to folks

09:33:31 From Leah Beckett to Everyone:

Bye!