

DRAFT
Recycling Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting Minutes
March 16, 2022, 8 am – 9:30 am
Virtual Meeting Minute Taker: Meera Singh

Members present: Leah Beckett, Dailey Brannin, Holden Cookson, Catrina Damrell, Shirley Elliott, Debby Galef, Martha Henry, Sakiko Isomichi, Susy Jones, Debby Knight, Scott MacGrath, Richard Nurse, Meera Singh, Quinten Steenhuis

Members absent: Janet Mosley, Laura Nichols, Mary Verhage

Staff Present: Mike Orr.

Public present: Helen Snively

1. Housekeeping

- The February 2022 minutes were approved

2. City Updates

- Updates on standard trash cart roll-out
 - The roll-out is scheduled for June 6 – June 24, 2022.
 - A virtual public meeting was held on March 2. About 90 attendees.
 - Discussion included:
 - size of the trash carts – sizes offered are 35, 45 or 65 gallon carts depending on the size of the building.
 - Possibility of sharing a trash cart with a neighbor for households with little trash.
 - Storage of trash carts, concerns about space.
 - Next public meeting is on May 10, 2022.
- Discussion on disposal of old trash carts
 - There will be about 20,000 old trash carts to dispose of.
 - 40-50% of them have holes or are otherwise damaged – these can be re-used for yard waste. Preference is to reuse them rather than recycling them (some can't be recycled).

Brainstorming on re-use

- City of Boston does not purchase trash carts for its residents – can the old carts be used there?
- Can we add the old carts to MIT's reuse platform?
- Holden's company could use a bunch of the old carts
- Question about need for a 2nd cart if trash overflow?
- Mike – Prefer to have trash in bins as opposed to placing black trash bags on the curb. Food causes a problem. Big clean outs are more likely to have dry waste so that would not be a problem if placed in trash bags,
- Resident outreach/education needed to help residents divert waste – use Helpsy for textiles, reuse drop off points, etc.
- Debby G. – got 2 used trash bins from DPW which she uses for yard waste – can old trash carts be stored in the Recycling Center for residents to pick up for re-use?

- Mike – logistically complicated – there are seven varieties of trash bins used by Cambridge residents (based on survey) – different sizes, metal, Rubbermaid, with and without wheels, etc. – so old bins are hard to stack/store. Carts with wheels will have to have their axels removed to stack. DPW has to figure out these logistics.
- How can we encourage reuse?
- Maybe there's a platform to facilitate reuse of old trash bins
- Mike – DPW will be sending postcards to inform residents new trash bins are coming.
- Think about – 1. Who can take old carts in good condition? 2. How to get them to those who want them?
- Identify partners to help with re-use –like Boston Building Resources
- Approach schools and municipalities with smaller budgets for re-use?
- Mike – asked Arlington – they are not interested. Will reach out to other cities.
- Reach out to gardening clubs
- Ask residents to sign up if they want to donate their old bins
- Suggest ways to re-use old bins to residents
- Mike – hire a contractor for pick up?
- Can old trash bins be used as recycling bins?
- Mike – trash bins are not compatible to use as recycling bins – they might have plastic grab bars instead of metal grab bars, might confuse the guys who collect the recycling

3. Susy Jones – update from MIT and potential reuse ideas

- MIT has partnered with Rheaply, a Chicago-based company, which works with institutions to create platforms to share unused or unwanted supplies/items.
- This enables orgs to check out what's available before purchasing new items.
- What happens if stuff remains? If there are no takers?
- Does it make sense to build out these sharing networks for other groups in Cambridge to join – like Harvard Univ, other local groups?
- Dailey (Harvard) met with Susy's colleague Brian – need to think about how to operationalize "Reuse" of items in HU's Surplus Center in Allston. How to find organizations that need these items and can collect them.
- Susy shared a recap slide from the MIT reuse Rheaply project, which includes all sorts of items and MIT furniture exchange too
- Are other schools connected with this project?
- Susy – currently no ability to share with other institutions, only labs. May be able to share with HS teachers/labs.
- MIT Furniture Exchange – not open to the public, only for the MIT community, person to person tool
- Is there value to expanding the Reuse platform with some community groups?
- What groups can you imagine benefitting from this?
- Risk involved in transporting hazardous lab items like hydrochloric acid
- Is there a hierarchy of whom to offer the lab items to?
- Susy – they are open to anyone (at MIT)
- Mike – there needs to be a log in system as some items are extremely hazardous

- Chemicals are expensive, highly regulated shipping policies. How do we identify who can take these? Though reuse/swap is valuable as these items are expensive to dispose of.
- Create a network with other communities
- Would Find It Cambridge be useful in identifying takers? Mike discuss with Nancy Tauber
- Mike – suggested one platform with different layers – e.g. household items, lab items, commercial
- Would it be possible to share household items with platforms such as Next Door, Buy Nothing, etc.?
- Susy – have not yet discussed with MIT's safety office to discuss the safety protocol for swap process
- This tool could be of benefit to local non-profits – filter out lab/research items
- Mike – suggested reaching out to Kendall Sq Association
- MAAP (Material Aid & Advocacy Program), a Friends initiative that Helen is involved with, needs sorting contraptions and so could use some old bins.
- Did Rob have a list of what was available in the HU Surplus Center? It would be helpful to have a communication network to update what items are available
- People have stuff to give away but can't/don't want to hold on for very long which makes it tricky for timing and availability.

4. Sub-Committee & Goal-setting discussions

Report from Sub-Committee Break Out Groups

- Education/Communication – Working on WHY compost. Working on creating a hierarchy of five top reasons to compost, and how to explain these reasons effectively.
 - Food waste reduction – For the next couple of months sub-committee will work on composting outreach and compost bins, and also how to address off-campus graduate students
 - Textile Recycling – Adding reminder in the next monthly recycling newsletter; also why is textile recycling important. Camilla has compiled a list of businesses that could host a Helpsy bin. How do we reach these hosts? Create a list of companies that take back used clothing/items, e.g., Allbirds, Patagonia
- Do we have data on which Helpsy bins are the most used?

Announcements:

Really, Really Free Market on Saturday, March 19, 2022, 1pm - 5pm, at the Cambridge Community Center on Callendar St.

We Thieves is having a swap and mending session in Union Sq. on March 27

5. Action Items

Sign up to be Minutes Taker for future meetings

Sign Rob's e-card

How do members feel about having in-person RAC meeting in April and beyond? – email Mike your thoughts

6. Closing

The meeting closed at 9:31 AM.

Zoom chat:

08:08:29 From Susy Jones to Everyone:

digital card for us all to sign for Rob Gogan after his 30yrs of being on the RAC. Please sign when you get a chance. You can also attach photos or fun “recycling” themed GIFs.

<https://www.kudoboard.com/boards/vCLMZTzF>

08:09:41 From Deborah Galef to Everyone:

Here’s the link to sign up for minute taking:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1pAd9fYlpNZVgC3_2kumtPnrsfa6JZbJ6dl6bOXD4Nps/edit#gid=0

08:16:14 From Susy Jones to Everyone:

Boston Building Resources?

08:42:18 From Susy Jones to Everyone:

Current categories:

08:42:19 From Susy Jones to Everyone:

§ Electronics

§ Household Goods

§ Lab research

§ Manufacturing and Industrial

§ Workspace

08:44:31 From Helen Snively to Everyone:

great points, Shirley! So many ways we can share with other communities.

08:45:16 From Shirley Elliott to Everyone:

Thanks Helen!

08:46:23 From Catrina Damrell to Everyone:

I really like the idea of serving schools K - PhDs.

08:46:30 From Catrina Damrell to Everyone:

(Great idea, Lee!)

08:49:31 From Shirley Elliott to Everyone:

Thanks, Catrina!

08:50:16 From Debby Knight to Everyone:

Can you have two Rheaply accounts - one that's specifically for lab materials which then networks with other schools and labs?

08:50:45 From Shirley Elliott to Everyone:



08:51:44 From Shirley Elliott to Everyone:

Excellent idea Debby! Rheaply & Rheaply Lab

08:52:12 From Susy Jones to Everyone:

thanks! i'm copying these suggestions into my doc 😊

09:03:45 From Diane Roseman to Everyone:

what about BBN?

09:13:47 From MICHAEL ORR to Everyone:

Trash cart program PPT video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dvgr5E0-GYs>. See 3:09 for info on cost for recycling and compost.

09:21:25 From Susy Jones to Everyone:

Put any announcements/special events in chat!

09:22:39 From MICHAEL ORR to Everyone:

Please sign the digital card for Rob Gogan when you get a chance. You can also attach photos or fun "recycling" themed GIFs.

<https://www.kudoboard.com/boards/vCLMZTzF>

09:22:45 From Susy Jones to Everyone:

Mike - could we see metrics on which helpsy bins are most popular?

09:22:55 From MICHAEL ORR to Everyone:

Yes--next month. I can share that

09:23:32 From Susy Jones to Everyone:

seems like everyone can only do direct messages so scratch that!

09:24:26 From Holden Cookson to Everyone:

sweet

09:25:35 From Helen Snively to Everyone:

Really really free market This Saturday the 19th, 1 to 5 pm.. 5 Callender St, Central Sq. Camb Commtty Center. Bring anything in good condition, and look around.. Spread the word.. The organizer is doing it monthly.

09:26:47 From Helen Snively to Everyone:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/no-frills-all-fun-clothing-swap-tickets-256846513837>

09:26:53 From Holden Cookson to Everyone:

Against The Grain has delivered 1million lbs of spent grains as of last Friday. 🐦

09:27:07 From Helen Snively to Everyone:

that url above is for the event by We Thieves.. swap and mending..

09:27:07 From MICHAEL ORR to Everyone:



09:27:09 From Scott Macgrath to Everyone:

That's amazing!

09:27:39 From Susy Jones to Everyone:

Also volunteer for note taking next month!

09:27:39 From Susy Jones to Everyone:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1pAd9fYlpNZVgC3_2kumtPnrsfa6JZbJ6dl6bOXD4Nps/edit#gid=0

09:28:00 From Diane Roseman to Everyone:

Terracycle has a list, not sure it's up to date: <https://www.terracycle.com/en-US/brigades>

09:30:55 From Debby Knight to Everyone:

I know someone but don't know if he's still doing the balloon thing. He actually wrote the Klutz books on balloon tying and made a living on balloon gig! I'll let you know.