

DRAFT

Recycling Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting Minutes September 14, 2022, 8:00am – 9:30am

Virtual Minute Takers: Scott MacGrath / Leah Beckett

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

Staff Present: Mike Orr

Public present: Helen Snively

1. Housekeeping

- a. Vote on June Minutes was unanimous

2. City Updates

a. Trash cart rollup update

- i. Was a challenge for DPW
- ii. Inundated for a month (July) with cart requests/swaps
- iii. Took this opportunity to encourage composting. Many bins given out.
- iv. Recycled several thousand of the old trash carts

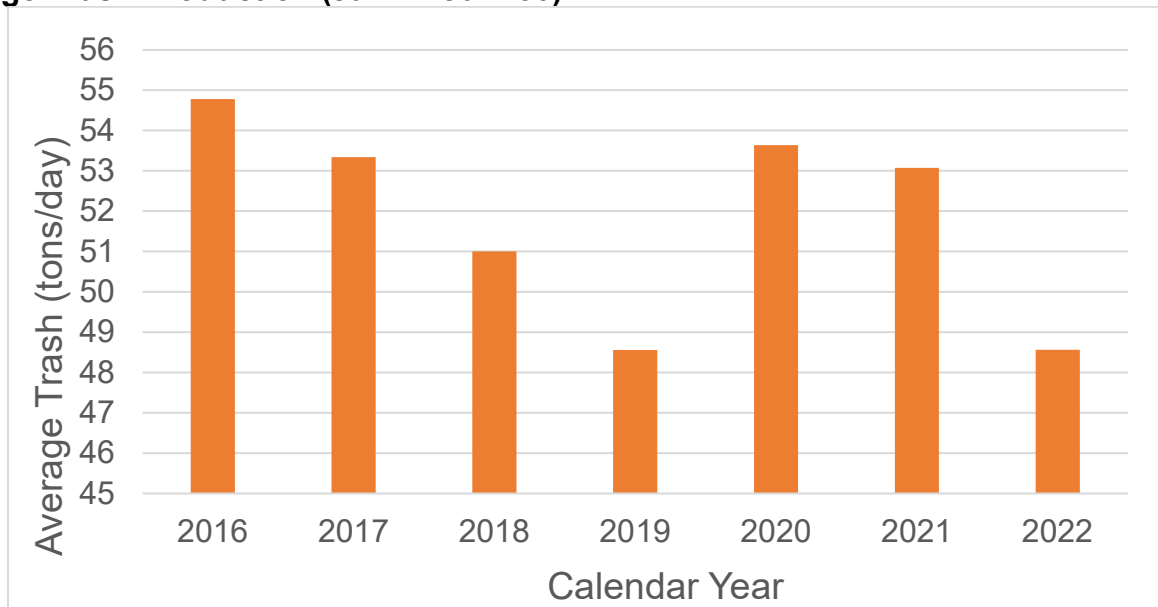
1. Challenge was logistics

b. Trash/Compost/Textiles (see charts)

- i. Caveat – more working from home skews data
- ii. Trash drop off from 2021 to 2022 likely due to compost return
- iii. Giving out bins regularly, high frequency, which is encouraging
- iv. Rodent control is one pitch to get the tougher participants
- v. How do people find out about compost?
 - 1. When people come in for trash bins, the city/DPW first points them to recycling and composting
 - 2. Form on website has streamlined process
- vi. Get out the word that the bags are available for free at libraries

- vii. What is estimated daily compost tonnage if 100% participation?
1. Hard to know for sure, but Mike estimates 11 - 12 tons
 2. Going to do a waste audit in the next few months
- viii. Kitchen bins – open vs. sealed? Is there a recommendation?
1. Different people have different experiences

Average Trash Production (Jan. 1- Jun. 30):



Average *daily* compost tonnage:

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August
2019	6.57	6.45	6.99	6.77	7.16	6.72	6.09	5.62
2021					5.27	5.48	5.33	5.42
2022	6.67	6.92	6.72	6.87	7.23	7.29	7.04	6.87

NOTE: Small Business Compost Pilot started 11/2021. Apprx 0.75 tons/day from businesses.

Textiles Monthly Tonnage:

Month	Dec '21	Jan. '22	Feb '22	Mar '22	Apr '22	May '22	Jun '22	Jul '22
Tons collected	7.42	7.47	6.29	8.21	9.61	10.82	14.27	14.50

- c. [Small Business Compost Pilot expansion](#)
 - i. Small biz pilot expanding but no new food businesses yet
 - ii. City going to recruit businesses in coordination with inspection services department
 - d. Schools update
 - i. Most schools have yet to return to composting. Kids had been eating outside.
 - e. CDD's Circular Economy study; [see article write-up](#) about the Council hearing on this topic
 - f. New Truck Wraps appeared on Aug 27
 - g. Watertown and Boston, Susy included, are now collecting compost
 - h. No update on SUP ordinance
3. Updates from RAC members over the summer; any fun personal stories? Or waste stories?
- a. Meera in Goa and shared image of waste destinations, veg to cows and non-veg to dogs
 - b. Richard and his rotary club collected 500 pounds plastic film (LDPE and HDPE – number 2 and 4) to bring to the Waltham Hannaford - those who collect most receive a bench made from recycled materials
 - c. Audrey – hat tip to Cambridge DPW helping to get Boston schools' composting pilot up and running
4. Textiles
- a. See tonnage and Chat notes.
- **Sub-committee topics (15 min)**
 - Textiles: Where is this group's value with Helpsy taking off? Mending? Educating people? What about local donations for things that are more valuable like suits? Where do categories of clothes go post pandemic? Would we be more effective adding things to Get Rid of It Right to make it more built out?
 - Textile ban starting November 1, 2022 ([DEP site has more info](#))
 - Food waste: Susy: food rescue element of food waste. Opportunities for small businesses to donate food kept at a safe temperature.

- Outreach: Meera: Lincoln Way challenged with how to get more bags. Could some bags go to Management office for people to take since library hours don't work for all?
- Housekeeping:
 - Moving meeting from November 9 to November 2
 - Need minute takers for October, November, December – volunteer or be voluntold
 - Social: Pick a favorite spot or Mike will choose
 - Cambridge Community Center swap day Saturday 9/17 1–5

Action items:

1. During October meeting have subcommittees discuss
 - What did each accomplish?
 - Is this an effective use of committee members' time? If yes:
 - when should subcommittees meet? during the RAC meeting? Other?
 - Do RAC members support continuing the subcommittees into 2023?
2. How to increase residents' participation in composting? recycling? trash compliance? RAC members brainstorm/discuss. (doing all 3 topics may be too much for a meeting so spread them out)
3. DPW updates--- Mike and DPW did a great job with trash cart rollout etc. However, RAC members should already know about these programs. Let's use RAC meetings to tap the brain power of members and improve/accelerate the work of DPW, maybe add new ideas for DPW's consideration. Set goals/objectives for 2023; identify accomplishments for 2022
4. New Trash brochure
 - Has it been printed?
 - If yes, when will it be available? When will it be mailed? To how many residents?
 - If no, let's have a discussion and get input from "users" (RAC members).

- (RAC discussed this in a previous meeting. The version Mike sent with the September meeting info included one of the suggestions (a QR code) but other than that, the mailer is undifferentiated from the previous version.)

7. Webinar on Cambridge Food Pantry – place to plug composting?

Action items From the June minutes

1. Ordinance review
2. Discuss Sakiko's questionnaire and the results. How will the results be used? what did she and Mike learn from this experience? How could RAC use questionnaires in the future?
 - a. Follow up: what suggestions do RAC members offer to improve the ordinance? Especially in conjunction with inspectional Services?

Notes from chat:

Helen Snively to Everyone (8:21 AM)

and people were bored at home during covid, cleaning out, putting so much into trash..

Quinten Steenhuis to Everyone (8:31 AM)

I'll try rejoining

Debby Knight to Everyone (8:36 AM)

Isn't there a bin near the end of Essex Street next to the church on Harvard St? Unless it's been inaccessible during the park reconstruction.

Helen Snively to Everyone (8:37 AM)

debby.. is that a Helpsy bin? Or some non-profit?

Scott to Everyone (8:37 AM)

This is the one I have: https://www.amazon.com/OXO-Grips-Easy-Clean-Compost-Charcoal/dp/B083FLCBFF/ref=sr_1_8?keywords=compost+bin&qid=1663159013&sr=8

-8

Diane Roseman to Everyone (8:37 AM)

There are two bins near me but the profits go to religious institutions.

Quinten Steenhuis (he/him) to Everyone (8:38 AM)

Not sure of the brand but ours looks like this one: https://www.amazon.com/Kitchen-Compost-LALASTAR-Hanging-Bathroom/dp/B0972RFM8P/ref=psdc_2422453011_t2_B083FLCBFF

Debby Knight to Everyone (8:39 AM)

I think the one at the Episcopal church is a Helpsy bin - but I should double-check

Susy Jones to Everyone (8:40 AM)

I'm in the Boston pilot!

Martha Henry to Everyone (8:43 AM)

It is a Helpsy bin.

Susy Jones to Everyone (8:43 AM)

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/07/06/science/when-organic-is-toxic-how-composting-facility-likely-spread-massive-amounts-forever-chemicals-across-one-town-massachusetts/>

Are the solids at the end tested?

Helen Snively to Everyone (8:47 AM)

in fact, food wastes don't have pfas.. so it's a benefit to add them?? Right? Or no..

Susy Jones to Everyone (8:47 AM)

It's an awful version of the circular economy - forever chemicals.

Helen Snively to Everyone (8:50 AM)

mike.. can you send us a link to this circular economy effort? Have they written anything or had a meeting? Thanks

susy.. could you find us that powerpoint? Thx

Susy Jones to Everyone (8:52 AM)

it's in the cambridge article

Mike Orr to Everyone (8:52 AM)

<https://www.cambridgeday.com/2022/07/26/plan-presents-blue-sky-ideas-for-a-greener-city-but-progress-to-circular-economy-appears-slow/>

Dailey Brannin to Everyone (8:56 AM)

I have to leave early - if there's any slots that still need minute-takers after the meeting today, happy to take Oct or Dec!

Meera Singh to Everyone (8:57 AM)

do u mean saran wrap and cling wrap Richard?

Scott to Everyone (8:57 AM)

Thanks, Dailey! I can send you the Google Sheet, feel free to put your name down for whatever spot you want.

Susy Jones to Everyone (8:57 AM)

Notetakers sign up fyi:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1pAd9fYlpNZVgC3_2kumtPnrsfa6JZbJ6dl6bOXD4Nps/edit?usp=sharing

Scott to Everyone (8:58 AM)

^^

Type to enter text

Thank you

Sakiko Isomichi to Everyone (8:59 AM)

I'm sorry, I have to go. Hope to catch up about the subcommittee meeting!

Susy Jones to Everyone (9:00 AM)

<https://nextrex.com/view/programs>

Meera Singh to Everyone (9:00 AM)

richard can you pls spell out the name of the company TREX?

Mike Orr to Everyone (9:00 AM)

see here for what people see when they search how to get rid of plastic bags:
<https://www.cambridgema.gov/Services/CurbsideCollections#!rc-page=253145>

Meera Singh to Everyone (9:00 AM)

oh tks Suzy

Susy Jones to Everyone (9:04 AM)

Some q's: What do we need this fall? What has changed? What have you learned?
What's one thing that would make an impact? What's one thing that would be creative?

Meera Singh to Everyone (9:05 AM)

suzy, can I sign up for minute taker in April pls? I'm in India until mid January at least.

Susy Jones to Everyone (9:05 AM)

yes meera

Meera Singh to Everyone (9:05 AM)

Tks

Me to Everyone (9:06 AM)

Me please!

Susy Jones to Everyone (9:24 AM)

Sign up for Oct, Nov, Dec Minutes:

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

Quinten Steenhuis (he/him) to Everyone (9:27 AM)

I'll be there for at least part of the day with my kids, can help table