

**Cambridge Recycling Advisory Committee**  
April 13, 2011, Meeting Minutes by Debby Galef

**Members Attending:** Michael Arnott, Luis Baigiorria, Claire Davies, Jan Dillon, Debby Galef, Rob Gogan, Juliana Lyman, Lisa McMenemy, Adam Mitchell, Judy Nathans, Laura Nichols, Robert Winters, Jason Zogg

**Guests Attending:** Ted Live, Helen Snively, Minka vanBeuzekom

**City Staff Attending:** Meryl Brott, Randi Mail

The March minutes were approved.

**Market & Tonnage Update**

Lisa reported not much change on fibers. Cardboard dropped \$5/ton, selling strong at \$160/ton domestically and \$170/ton overseas. Sorted office paper rose \$20/ton. Paper is selling at \$140/ton domestically and over \$150/ton overseas. Plastic prices holding firm with continued pressure on pricing, may soon increase. HDPE Nat selling at \$800/ton, HDPE Color and PET at \$650 and \$700/ton. No change in bi-metals selling at \$300/ton. Aluminum stable at about \$1600/ton. Markets are in balance right now. Supply and demand have balanced out with April usually this brings back generation. Export is still buying, but not aggressive. Fuel increases may affect prices on materials. April seems like it is just a transition month where all markets seem to be just catching their breath at the moment.

**Tons recycled increased** 4% month to month: Mar 2011 629 tons, up from 613 tons in Feb 2010. Rob pointed out that last March figures skewed due to severe rain and many more open recycling bins.

**Tons disposed decreased** 11% month to month: Mar 2011 1204 tons, down from 1358 tons in Mar 2010. Tons disposed does not include multi-family buildings served by private haulers or businesses.

**City Update**

Randi reported that in lieu of a spring mailing, the DPW will pay for 4 weeks (late May/early June) of recycling advertising with MBTA including interior bus cards (above seats) and platform posters at Porter, Central, Kendall and Lechmere. Specific buses cannot be targeted because buses change to different routes. She read aloud a [report from the City Manager on curbside composting](#) as requested by the City Council. The Environmental Committee will hold a hearing on April 26th at 5:30 on this, and [a report on plastic bags](#) that discusses developments by MassDEP, MA Food Association, supermarkets and pharmacies.

Members plan to develop a list of waste prevention tips for block parties, which may be modified from [tips already online](#). At the Committee's request, Randi described the 3 types of special events that the City permits:

1. [Block parties](#). Traffic Department permits these events. Randi has asked if waste prevention tips can be included with permit application and on their website.
2. [Non-athletic events in parks](#). I.e. birthday parties and weddings. DPW permits these events. Permanent recycling bins are available in Danehy Park, Fresh Pond, Russell Field, Riverside Press Park, and Winthrop Park. DPW has a proposal to expand recycling in about 10 parks, but it was not approved for FY11. The cost includes buying the bins and ongoing operating expenses for the City's contractor to service them weekly, currently Metro Pedal Power.
3. [Large events in public spaces](#). I.e. MayFair, Riverfest, Oktoberfest, Caribbean Carnival. Applicants must meet with Special Events Committee, chaired by DPW. The Committee also has representatives from the following Departments: Police, Fire, Inspectional Services, Traffic, Electrical, Recreation and the License Commission.

**MA Recycling and Organic Summit:**

Various members that attended the conference presented by MassRecycle and MassDEP March 28-30, 2011 gave reports. Presentations are available [online](#). Members attended many workshops, including some discussed:

- [A Closer Look At Our Trash](#). Included results of waste audits conducted at MA waste-to-energy facilities, required MassDEP. 30-40% recyclables found in trash, 25% food scraps, all by weight.
- [Producer Stewardship](#). Included presentation by the [Product Stewardship Institute](#). Free to government bodies (of which we are one) and MA Recycle members. Method of getting producers to pay so taxpayers don't have to. Parts of Canada require packaging producers to pay a tax. Electronics sellers in NY will have to pay soon. MA

has a law pending.

- Five Farms Organics Project. Presentations by A Green Energy and New England Organics, a subsidiary of Casella. The first anaerobic digesters at a dairy farm will soon open in Rutland, MA.
- Second Time Around – Giving New Life to Old Cloths.
- Setting Up Food Waste Composting for School Cafeterias. Meryl presented on the City's Food to Flowers lunchroom composting.
- The Pathway to Zero Waste – Panel Discussion. Randi was on a panel with MassDEP, Center for Ecological Technology and EL Harvey & Sons to discuss their visions for zero waste, the challenges and opportunities.
- What a Difference A Day Makes – The Benefits of One-Day Reuse & Recycling Events. Swaps can build community and reduce waste. In Cambridge, community groups have organized these independently.
- Getting Reusables Out of the Waste Stream. Presentation by [More than Words](#), a nonprofit social enterprise that empowers youth who are in the foster care system, court involved, homeless, or out of school to take charge of their lives by taking charge of a bookstore/café in Waltham. They accept book donations and employ youth for 6 - 12 months, and plan to expand to a second location in South Boston.

### **Subcommittee Updates**

Minutes of all subcommittee meetings are [posted online](#) and members are strongly encouraged to read those from other committees to stay informed of activities.

- Zero Waste: Jason said they are working to finalize their list of possible topics and definition of zero waste.
- Business: Jan said they are organizing a meeting with haulers licensed in Cambridge to discuss how to increase business recycling. The meeting will be Wednesday April 27, 9am-11am, in the Lecture Hall at the Cambridge Public Library, 449 Broadway.
- Outreach: Claire reported on an overview of possible topics. Evaluating effectiveness of the City's current outreach efforts, helping the City with outreach, and being involved in developing messaging.