

DRAFT
Cambridge Recycling Advisory Committee
July 13, 2011, Meeting Minutes Taken by Adam Mitchell

Members Attending: Michael Arnott, Jan Dillon, Debby Galef, Rob Gogan, Jarrod Jones, Adam Mitchell, Laura Nichols, Jason Zogg,

Staff Attending: Meryl Brott, John Fitzgerald, Randi Mail, Lisa Peterson

Guests Attending: Ted Live

This meeting was dedicated to a discussion with the Cambridge DPW Director, Lisa Peterson.

The Committee introduced themselves to the Lisa, and she presented her credentials to the Committee. She spoke about working in the City Manager's office in the early 1990s and working on actual implementation of the curbside recycling program when it first began.

Representatives from the CRAC's three sub-committee updated the Commissioner on their activities.

Business Sub-Committee

Jan lead the discussion pointing out that the committee was focusing on non-recyclers, and their work to review the list from haulers of businesses that receive trash and recycling services. Although this list needs to be cleaned up, it appears that about 70% of businesses do recycle. She reviewed the findings from the April haulers meeting, and repeated the top three recycling barriers for businesses that do not:

1. Limited space can cause need for more frequent service which increase cost if small volume
2. Haulers may charge more due to difficult pickup access due to noise ordinance limitations, delivery trucks /cars blocking access or building setup
3. Businesses may be uninformed about recycling (unrealistic expectations about getting paid for small amounts of cardboard, and/or takes time for program to work and for businesses to realize benefits)

The committee discussed the current mandatory recycling ordinance and how to make it more effective and enforce it. Lisa asked how to measure progress. She described the workload for staff in Inspectional Services, since they inspect every restaurant twice annually. She suggested that the committee look at specific barriers for non-participation. Once the Committee is completed with this, the Commissioner offered to meet and discuss.

Zero Waste Sub-Committee

Jason led the discussion, starting with the committee's mission statement, focus on reuse, changing incentives for waste, designing buildings to include storage space for recycling, and the developing a Zero Waste Resolution for the City. Lisa pointed out that the City has addressed recycling through green building requirements for large projects over 50,000 square feet.

In terms of operational strategies, Lisa discussed changes in the Teamsters contract that would allow compost collection by City staff, and plans to expand of recycling in public parks. She advised the Committee to ensure that ideas complement City initiatives or work plans (ex. Committee wants to use Google maps for donation locations, where City may be using different web platform.

The Committee talked with Lisa about aspirational vs. measurable goals regarding zero waste. She advised the Committee to think more about helping develop a plan for zero waste rather than setting a goal.

Outreach Sub-committee

Debby led the discussion. The committee talked about recruiting volunteers to help attend events, promote the 50% pledge and grow the list of residents that receive the monthly recycling eNewsletter. The Committee would like the City to expand the recycling FAQs (such as questions on plastics, donating fabric scraps), make the recycling program consistent at home and in public areas. Jan suggested that the sub-committee should coordinate with efforts of the Climate Protection Sub-committee on Outreach.

Lisa pointed out that there's an infinite need for more education. She felt that the City's website is pretty robust, and that there are discussions about adding mobile apps to make it even more user friendly. She also talked about some strategies developed in the 1990's when non-recycler's were identified and Randi suggested that when educating people about recycling, it's best to figure out what types of benefits motivate them: environmental, social, economic or convenience.

Volunteer Orientation

After the regular meeting, Randi ran an outreach training attended by 4 committee members: Jan Dillon, Michael Arnott, and Laura Nichols. Debby Galef attended a previous training. Randi gave each volunteer a t-shirt, 50% pledge clipboard & stickers, presentation flip book of information on recycling, composting and trash as well as outreach materials to give to residents on these topics.

The next RAC meeting is scheduled for September 14, 2011 at 8am