

**DRAFT**  
**City of Cambridge Recycling Advisory Committee**  
December 14, 2011 – Minutes Taken by Judy Nathans

**Members Present:** Michael Arnott, Jan Dillon, Debby Galef, Rob Gogan, Juliana Lyman, Judy Nathans, Robert Winters, Jason Zogg

**Members Absent:** Luis Baigiorra, Bruce Comen, Claire Davies, George Delegas, Jarrod Jones. Lisa McMenemy, Adam Mitchell, Laura Nichols

**Staff Present:** Rosalie Anders, Randi Mail      **Guests Present:** Joel Dashnaw

**Public Comment:** None

**Approve Minutes:** Minutes were approved from the November 9 meeting.

## City Updates

### Tonnage

Randi gave an update on curbside recycling and trash stats. **Tons recycled increased** in Nov 805 tons, up from 781 tons in 2010. **Tons disposed decreased** in Nov 1318 tons, down from 1329 tons in 2010. \*\*Tons disposed does not include multi-family buildings served by private haulers, businesses or the universities.

Randi commented on quality of curbside recycling: even though residents still do include unaccepted items such as plastic bags and Styrofoam, Casella has never rejected a single stream load from Cambridge since the program began, and has always told staff that Cambridge loads are among the cleanest they receive. Casella's residue rate at the Charlestown facility is around 7%, which includes loads from many other communities and businesses served by private haulers.

### 12/7 Trash Sort

Staff and volunteers held another sort. The trash was from 12 multi-family buildings (6-60 units, C recycling grade, City trash service). 20% was recyclables. If annualized for 10,251 households in 6+ unit C buildings, this is 100 more pounds of recycling per household per year, or at least 600 more tons per year. Debby and Randi reported seeing aluminum foil, magazines, paper bags and food waste. Randi said that she is working on tips to reduce food waste for the website.

### MassDEP Carpet Recycling/Reuse Workgroup

Randi went to a recent MassDEP on carpet recycling and reuse, out of an interest that developed after reading about the climate footprint of carpet from recent studies from the Northwest. Recent [waste characterization studies at the 6 incinerators](#) in MA found that carpet comprises about 3% of the waste stream; this includes padding, dirt and moisture in the carpet. Data from carpet sales in MA project this figure to be less, but carpet still represents tens of thousands of tons in MA alone. Several companies were at the meeting that offers carpet recycling including [Environmental Recovery and Consolidation Services](#) from North Reading, [User Friendly Recycling](#) from Taunton, and [Interface](#) from Georgia. Jason and Michael were familiar with Interface, which was founded by sustainability visionary Ray Anderson.

### Recycling Works – Assistance for MA Businesses

MassDEP has a new program to provide recycling, composting, and waste reduction assistance to businesses and institutions. The Recycling Works program will be implemented by the Center for EcoTechnology, under contract to MassDEP. It will provide statewide technical assistance via a phone hotline and email address: (888) 254-5525 [info@RecyclingWorksMA.com](mailto:info@RecyclingWorksMA.com). The website should be live by March 2012. The program will address common questions such as how to manage specific materials, how to find a service provider, and how to start a new program or improve an existing one. The program will include coordination of the MA WasteWise program, workshops and training opportunities, and more hands-on assistance to businesses and institutions through site visits and waste audits.

## Discussion Topics

### Outreach on Climate Protection

Special guest, Rosalie Anders, from Community Development came to speak. On outreach efforts, the City and CPAC:

- Plan to hire an outreach consultant for about 1 year to develop a stakeholder process, strategic messaging, social media strategy and coordinate visible events, focusing on key stakeholders (entities that use a lot of energy).
- Surveyed and interviewed many community groups, both those with a climate focus and others – neighborhood associations, churches, affinity groups, etc. Questions differed for both types of groups. There will be more outreach;

focus is on going to groups.

- CPAC wants to increase the average citizen's awareness of actions. Rosalie said that people think of recycling because it's visibility, they see bins on the street as reminders every week. Other actions are less visible, e.g., energy efficiency measures. Over 60% of residents are renters, similar figures with businesses. Renters typically pay utility bills, but major retrofits need to be done by owners, property managers. Considering a door-to-door campaign work. Energy Alliance has done some of this.

As an overview on climate activities, she said that:

- Cambridge did not meet its 2010 goal to reduce emissions 20% below 1990 levels. [2009 interim recommendations](#) are posted online, as well as other reports from the [City's climate initiatives](#). City staff is working on a new plan in 2012 that matches State goals, 80% reduction by 2050, and 25% by 2020. They need to focus on what can be measured and increasing business involvement. The draft CPAC main goals for waste reduction / recycling include: 1) Move towards zero waste 2) Focus on composting 3) Increase business recycling and 4) Public area recycling. DPW is considering and discussing these.
- DPW and the RAC do a good job working on these issues, but CPAC wants to work more in tandem with DPW and RAC on goal setting, outreach activities, possibly planning an event, etc. Also, Zero Waste subcommittee will soon present their research and recommendations on zero waste community plans, which will be discussed with DPW Commissioner and considered with 2012 efforts to update CPAC goals.
- The [Cambridge Energy Alliance](#) is now a City program, part of the Community Development Department. The [Cambridge Climate Emergency Action Group](#) is separate from CPAC. They are a group of concerned citizens that held two events or climate congresses. Other Cambridge groups working on environmental issues include [Green Cambridge](#) (formerly Green Decade), Greenport (which grew out of the Cambridgeport Neighbors Association), [HEET](#) (spawned by Greenport), [Green Streets Initiative](#), [CitySprouts](#) and more.
- Cambridge is doing an assessment of the City's "vulnerabilities" to climate change (e.g. storm water, rising sea level, public health, etc.) This acknowledges that climate change is real and the City must prepare for the change that is happening and will increase. City was chosen by ICLEI to receive technical assistance with this assessment.

#### Review of Open Meeting Law

Randi reviewed MA [open meeting law](#) and relevant points from the new Open Meeting Law Guide, accessible online. More than a quorum of Committee members or a sub-committee cannot deliberate on email and express opinions. Members can distribute an agenda, report or document to be discussed at the meeting. Also scheduling or procedural information is not considered deliberation. Keep in mind quorum of RAC vs. quorum of a particular subcommittee.

Minutes should be available within 10 days. So minute takers need to send draft to Randi within 2-3 days of meeting so that she has time to edit and post. Minutes should include executive sessions, with the date, time and place, members present or absent, summary of discussion on each subject, list of documents and other exhibits (such as photos, reports, maps) used at the meeting, decisions made and actions taken including record of all votes.

The guide explains 10 reasons why a committee can have executive sessions. It's likely that only one might apply to RAC: to discuss competitively-sensitive or other proprietary information (e.g. reviewing list of hauler customers). To have an ES, first you convene in an open session, state the reason for ES and all subjects that may be revealed, without compromising the purpose of the ES, whether the public body will reconvene, and take a roll call vote to enter ES.

#### **Topics for Upcoming Meetings**

Zero Waste subcom review of zero waste community plans; Update on FY13 recycling budget; More discussion on coordinating with CPAC's outreach activities; Rob to report on January EPA Webinar on Food Waste; and Terracycle.

#### **Peabody Museum Events**

Upcoming Peabody Museum series on the Anthropology of Food and [Trash Talks](#): Jan 26, Stuff by the Yard: Campus Materials Management; Feb 9, Terrible and Charismatic Waste: A Close Reading of Ocean Plastics; Feb 29, Waste Ecologies; and Apr 19, Tornadoes, Twin Towers, and Hurricanes: 20 Years of Urban Disaster Clean-up.

#### **Subcommittees**

The subcommittees did not meet. Business to meet at 9am on 12/16/11. The Outreach subcommittee will plan for a separate meeting in early January. The next full RAC meeting will be 1/11/12 at 8am. Juliana will take minutes. Upcoming meeting dates: Feb 8 (Lisa, minutetaker), Mar 14 (Debby, minutetaker), Apr 11, May 9, and Jun 13.