

**DRAFT**  
**City of Cambridge Recycling Advisory Committee**  
October 10, 2012 – Minutes Taken by Rob Gogan

**Members Present:** Michael Arnott, Mike Cosgrove, Claire Davies, Jan Dillon, Debby Galef, Rob Gogan, Juliana Lyman, Adam Mitchell, Robert Winters  
**Members Absent:** Liza Casella, Luis Baigiorria, George Delegas, Jarrod Jones, Laura Nichols  
**Staff Present:** Meryl Brott, John Fitzgerald, Randi Mail  
**Guests Present:** None  
**Public Comment:** None

Minutes were approved from the September meeting.

### **Market Update**

Adam gave his thoughts on market in Liza's absence: market prices are the lowest since 2008. China's factories have manufactured lots of products with huge inventories, so little demand for new materials to manufacture more goods. Liza sent Randi updates after the meeting: Mix paper rose \$5 in New England, down \$10 in Buffalo region. Cardboard and newspaper stayed steady in all regions, fiber market is still strong and steady. Everyone seems to still be hungry for tons. China may be replenishing depleted raw material inventories while prices are down. Move did slow with the lack of equipment. With the significant difference between domestic and export this trend could hold for a while especially while supply increases. On the domestic side, with pricing not changing this will help alleviate pressure for these tons to stay local but also change how they have to go out and aggressively seek tons which they haven't had to do for a while.

Plastics dropped in October but are now moving along, probably won't see any further correction. Supply and demand seems to be in check. Tin took a big drop from September to October settling at a \$50 - \$60 drop. Some buyers think this drop was too big and price may improve in November. Once again the European market and the uneasiness of how people feel about selling into that market had a lot to do with tons staying domestic and disrupting supply and demand.

### **Tonnage**

Randi gave an update on curbside recycling and trash stats. **Tons recycled** year to date January-September in 2012 is 6,753 tons, down .03% from 6,755 tons year to date in 2011. **Tons disposed\*** year to date in 2012 is 11,451 tons, down 4% from 11,932 tons year to date in 2011. \*Tons disposed includes trash collected by city crews from about 31,500 households, public schools and city buildings. It does not include multi-family buildings served by private haulers, businesses, or the universities.

### **City Updates**

#### EPA Zero Waste Workshop

Randi attended the Zero Waste EPA Region 1 workshop in Chelmsford. Gary Liss, a national zero waste consultant came from California. He spoke about 1) the need to focus on reducing and reusing materials first, then recycling and composting the rest; 2) the "Wasteberg" and that 70 tons of waste is generated upstream (during extraction and production) for every 1 ton of waste downstream; and 3) green businesses/jobs. EPA administrator Jeri Weis reviewed EPA's new program for [Sustainable Materials Management](#), which includes WasteWise, the WARM model, Food Recovery Challenge, Electronics Challenge and the Federal Green Challenge. In the afternoon, Jeri asked participants to brainstorm on what would be helpful for an E-guide being developed on "How to become a Zero Waste Community."

#### City Buildings

Randi said that DPW Commissioner Lisa Peterson asked for ways to improve city building recycling as part of the City's efforts as a [Green Community](#), a designation by the MA Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. Since the 1990s school custodians have tracked and reported weekly recycling to DPW and now city building custodians will begin too, and include trash information. The Recycling and Buildings Division are working closely to increase education of staff and building occupants, improve procedures, and continue to ensure bins are available throughout city facilities.

### **Discussion Topics**

#### Brainstorm on Small Businesses

The subcommittee wants to move forward on its recommendations and the Council wanted to address complaints from residents and business owners in East Cambridge and specifically, Cambridge Street, that "there are too many vehicles" on the street. They want to know if the City can help reduce vehicle congestion and improve air quality in this neighborhood by possibly better coordinating all these trash and recycling haulers?

In preparation for this discussion, Randi asked members to review the following (included as attachments to the minutes):

1. Business subcommittee's recommendations.
2. City Manager's 6.4.12 report to the Council on whether to provide recycling and trash service to small businesses. In short, the DPW does not recommend providing trash service to small businesses and if recycling service were provided, it would have to be included in the next curbside bid or as part of a new procurement process because DPW estimate small businesses generate 7,150 tons/year of recycling. Importantly, DPW is aware that offering recycling service may create discontent among haulers since they have been encouraged to provide recycling service to small businesses for the last two decades, and in 2010, required to do so.
3. City Council meeting minutes from the 8.8.12 hearing.
4. Minutes from the RAC's 4.27.11 meeting with haulers on how to improve business recycling.

Randi and John prepared the following questions to help guide RAC discussion:

**Congestion:** What kind of traffic causes congestion? What times of day does congestion affect residents? What is baseline? How to measure reductions? Who measures it? What is acceptable? To whom?

**Coordination:** How could the City help coordinate business pickups for recycling and trash? What is the RAC's position on the city offering recycling pickup for "small businesses"?

**Compliance:** How does hauling pricing compare for recycling vs. trash service? Is recycling less expensive? What kinds of financial incentives would motivate businesses to recycle? What other incentives would motivate businesses to recycle?

**Administration:** What/how to "make data collection & tracking more consistent among Departments"? What to revise in Ordinances (Mandatory Recycling, Refuse & Litter, Dumpster)? Where is there overlap between Council request & Subcommittee recommendations? Why does Council think that it's not easy for small businesses to recycle?

**What do we need more information on?** What kind of traffic causes congestion, and how much do the trash/recycling haulers contribute to congestion? Can the city say which hauler businesses must use? I.e. Can we create "hauling districts" and select a single hauler to serve all businesses within a given district? Can city require haulers price recycling / compost services at the same rate or less expensive than trash service?

This was an extremely productive conversation and members came up with the following suggestions and questions:

1. Haulers should require that customers bring trash/recycling to the curb. Many collection vehicles idle longer because haulers have to walk to get the barrels and dumpsters and then replace them.
2. Require delivery trucks to take back packaging (pallets, shipping crates, cardboard, plastic wrap) from customers for recycling by the vendor.
3. Allow collection trucks to provide service early in the morning in business districts.
4. Extend loading zones times to coincide with trash/recycling pickup times, or remove parking spots to create more space for commercial vehicles to pull off the street.
5. Congestion pricing for parking meters during peak collection and delivery times to discourage on street parking.
6. Help businesses be more self contained. Offer subsidies or group purchasing for balers for cardboard or even on-site digesters for food scraps. Advocate for landfill surcharges to generate revenue to pay for this assistance.
7. Ensure that building code requires storage space for recycling, trash and compost since insufficient storage fuels the need for frequent collection.
8. Recognize that congestion is inevitable within a City.
9. Can the Police pose a 3 minute limit on stopping? What City rules affect trucks?
10. What does the Traffic Department measure? Through traffic vs. stopped traffic?
11. If the City creates hauling districts and one hauler serves an area, how to deal with existing business contracts?
12. What are all the fees that businesses pay to operate in the City? I.e. dumpster permit, food permit, property taxes?

#### **Upcoming Meetings (Volunteer to Take Minutes)**

Nov 14 (Jan), Dec 12 (TBD), Jan 9 (Adam), Feb 6 (Debby), Mar 6 (Juliana), Apr 10 (Robert W.), May 8 (Mike), Jun 12 (TBD).

Committee adjourned at 9:30 AM.

## Business Sub Committee Mission & Focus

**Mission:** Assist the Recycling Dept in promoting the value of recycling and composting to the business community and increasing participation of non-recycling businesses.

**Possible Actions:**

- Review existing practices within DPW for responding to and/or reaching out to businesses & business associations (status: informal review underway, recommendations included)
- Assess options for greater enforcement of recycling ordinance for businesses (status: underway, recommendations included)
- Identify businesses that appear to not be recycling and understand barriers (status: attempted 'data mining' to identify businesses with little luck)
- Determine how to provide technical assistance to businesses (i.e., city staff? trained volunteers? other organizations already set up to offer support?) (status: underway, recommendations included)
- Explore feasibility of creating a decal/logo that businesses who recycle can use in their literature or window displays (similar to *Cambridge Local First*) (status: not yet initiated)
- Develop contacts with the Business Associations in Cambridge to help promote recycling of member businesses (status: limited involvement with the Chamber of Commerce)
- Consider development of a purchasing collaborative for recycled and recyclable products to benefit Cambridge businesses (status: not yet initiated)

## Business Recycling Recommendations

Barrier/ Opportunity	Recommendation	Owner/Dates
Difficulty in identifying businesses that are not recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review recycling plans filed with DPW. Identify missing plans or updates needed given 'hauler list' of recycling clients</li> <li>• Request plans/updates from select businesses, including updated waste audits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bus Sub Comm (BSC) 9/1/12</li> <li>• DPW 9/30/12</li> </ul>
Difficulty in enforcement of current Rules & Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain commitment for recycling adherence to be included in ISD reviews</li> <li>• Identify specific activities to be included in inspections</li> <li>• Notify businesses of expanded inspection process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DPW/BSC 8/1/12</li> <li>• DPW/BSC 8/31/12</li> <li>• 9/15/12</li> </ul>
Opportunity to leverage landlords of multi business properties to provide broader recycling support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convene session of landlords (similar to 'hauler' meeting) to identify top barriers, opportunities, actions for consideration, areas for collaboration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DPW/BSC 9/30/12</li> </ul>
BSC time/impact limited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocate DPW staff person (or portion of time) for business recycling focus.</li> <li>• Conduct more thorough data analysis to determine companies that are not recycling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DPW 9/30/12</li> </ul>
Technical assistance lacking in some small businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leverage/publicize MassDEP Recycling Works technical assistance with haulers, businesses, landlords &amp; business organizations</li> <li>• Allocate DPW staff for technical assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DPW/BSC 9/30/12</li> </ul>

## Recommendations

Barrier/Opportunity	Recommendation	Comments
Opportunity for greater use of city Drop-Off Center by small businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand hours to cover more week day hours when 'traditional' businesses are open</li> <li>• Continue to promote/communicate drop-off options and hours to businesses, landlords</li> <li>• Continue to expand materials accepted, products offered for exchange</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DPW 8/31/12</li> <li>• DPW 8/31/12</li> <li>• DPW ongoing</li> </ul>
Opportunity to encourage 'Near Zero-waste' or 'Zero-waste' businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate dumpster fee for businesses that can validate they are 'zero-waste'</li> <li>• Reduce or eliminate 5% limit of recyclables in waste stream for 8.24.070 Mandatory Recycling Policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DPW 10/31/12</li> <li>• City Council 12/31/12</li> </ul>
Lack of knowledge/buy-in by businesses impacts investment in recycling programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See previous recommendations for technical assistance and DPW staff support for business recycling, promotion of MassDEP Recycling Works technical assistance</li> <li>• Consider letter by RAC/DPW to encourage businesses to recycle based on results of recycling plan reviews</li> <li>• Communicate technical assistance available as part of ISD inspections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DPW/RAC 9/30/12</li> <li>• DPW/RAC 10/31/12</li> <li>• DPW/RAC 11/1/12</li> </ul>

## Options Considered But Not Recommended

Barrier/Opportunity	Recommendation	Comments
Noise ordinance limits early morning pick-ups in residential areas, impacts route efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considered proposing ordinance move from 7am to 6am, but felt approval was not feasible</li> </ul>	
Space limitation for businesses to store/sort recyclables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beyond using Drop-Off center, no additional recommendations are applicable</li> </ul>	
Encourage leaders/business owners to drive recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No specific recommendations at this time. If logo or program similar to 'Cambridge Local First' is created, it might encourage leaders to promote recycling</li> </ul>	
Haulers may not be aware of specific businesses that are not recycling, and associated opportunity to drive their business higher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Haulers asked for consolidated list of businesses receiving trash and recycling services (and those without). Decision was made not to share this with the Hauler community</li> </ul>	
Create economic incentives to encourage business recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No specific recommendations at this time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Studies show financial incentives do not impact long term recycling</li> </ul>

## Options Considered But Not Recommended

Barrier/Opportunity	Recommendation	Comments
Recycling ordinance is too complex and confusing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Haulers recommended simplifying ordinance, potentially by business type (e.g., retailers must recycle cardboard, restaurants must recycle food containers). No specific recommendations at this time.</li> </ul>	
Opportunity to focus on landlords and support smaller business in multi-tenant buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Previous recommendation is supported to convene a group of landlords to identify barriers/actions, but no specific recommendations are currently outlined.</li> </ul>	
Ensure outreach materials are multi-lingual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DPW currently creates communication materials in a variety of languages, which will continue. This will be considered if RAC/DPW create any additional flyers/brochures/etc.</li> </ul>	

## Next Steps

- Review recommendations with other DPW/City members
- Develop detailed implementation plan for actions supported by Commissioner Petersen and other City representatives
- Draft letter to 'Haulers' to communicate recommendations underway (and those not endorsed) based on work session
- Explore funding for recommendations outside of current budget (block grants, MassDEP, etc)



**Lisa Peterson**  
Commissioner

147 Hampshire Street  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
617-349-4800  
TTD 617-349-4805

TO: Robert W. Healy, City Manager  
FROM: Lisa Peterson, Public Works Commissioner *Lisa Peterson*  
TOPIC: **Awaiting Report #12-33 regarding a plan for implementing separate trash or recycling curbside pickup for small businesses along existing curbside pick up routes**  
DATE: June 4, 2012

Based on preliminary analysis, DPW staff has considered the operational and financial impact of providing curbside recycling and trash service to small businesses in Cambridge. Data provided by the Economic Development Department included a list of about 1835 businesses with 5 employees or less. The data does not include businesses located outside of the major business districts. The number presented below has been rounded for discussion purposes.

Some important considerations are that:

- ✓ The DPW has spent the last decade encouraging private haulers to pick up recycling at small businesses; this has been successful ---all solid waste haulers in the City provide options for recycling. If the City were to take over the recycling pickup at small business, there may be discontent within hauler industry.
- ✓ These small businesses are not evenly distributed across the Monday-Friday collection routes. DPW would recommend revising the collection day boundaries of the Tuesday and Wednesday routes to help address this, with particular attention to the Harvard Square area.
- ✓ The City may choose not to provide service to chains (which ultimately employ more than 5 employees and may not be designated as a small business).
- ✓ Need to ensure that businesses that generate hazardous waste handle it properly through their own vendor.

Recycling

This service would be a significant change to the curbside collection contract with F.W. Russell & Sons, which expires 10/31/15. Currently, the total curbside recycling tons from residences and city buildings currently served is about 9,000 tons. The City pays Russell a flat rate, which increases each year of the contract.

For FY12, the cost per ton for recycling collection is about \$160/ton. DPW estimates that each business would generate 150 pounds of recycling per week (2 totes), totaling over 7,150 additional tons/year, close to double the level of existing service. This could cost the City around \$1,144,000 more per year.



Revenue would bring in approximately \$93,000 at an average of \$13/ton for recycling, lowering the net cost increase to \$1,051,000. Please note that the recycling processing contract is structured to pay us revenue in good market conditions but could cost us in poor market conditions. These annual costs do not include increases that would be required for education and outreach and other administrative/operating costs.

Recycling toters would be an additional one time cost of approximately \$200,000.

In order to provide this service, the City would have two options. 1) Include this service in the next curbside recycling bid or 2) Initiate a new procurement process for the service, which could mean that a different vendor would provide the service to small businesses.

### Trash

It is estimated that DPW would have to add 2 more trucks to the fleet and 6 employees to the Rubbish crew. We estimate that each business would generate 100 pounds of trash per week (two barrels), totaling over 4,770 additional tons/year, a 30% increase to existing trash collection provided by the City to residences and city buildings. At \$89.11/ton for disposal fees for FY12, this service would cost the City over \$425,000 more in disposal fees. FY13 disposal costs are higher. In addition to the extra trucks, employees, fuel and maintenance would bring the total cost to the City to over \$1,252,000 more per year, using FY12 costs.

DPW would need additional staff to increase enforcement of business recycling to avoid paying disposal tip fees on recyclable material in the trash. Ultimately, we do not recommend providing trash service to small businesses. It is very important to create the right incentives that encourage recycling and composting and ensure commercial compliance with existing and planned state waste bans.





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**ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS** In City Council September 10, 2012  
 Councillor Minka vanBeuzekom, Chair  
 Councillor Leland Cheung  
 Councillor Craig A. Kelley

The Environment Committee conducted a public meeting on Wednesday, August 8, 2012 at 5:05 p.m. in the Sullivan Chamber.

The purpose of the meeting was to conduct a public meeting to discuss implementation of a plan for separate trash or recycling curbside pickup for small businesses along existing curbside routes.

Present at the meeting were Councillor Minka vanBeuzekom, Chair of the Committee; Councillor Leland Cheung; Councillor Tim Toomey; Richard Rossi, Assistant City Manager; Lisa Peterson, Commissioner of Public Works; John Fitzgerald, Environmental Services Manager; John Nardone, DPW Operations Commissioner; Randi Mail, Recycling Director; Kevin Douglas, Russell Disposal; Adam Mitchell, Save That Stuff; Quinton Zondervan, Green Cambridge; Terrance Smith, Cambridge Chamber of Commerce; Judith Nathans, Cambridge Advisory Recycling Committee; Juliana Lyman, Cambridge Advisory Recycling Committee; Robert Winters, Cambridge Advisory Recycling Committee; David Stern, Cambridge Resident; Jason Alves, Aide to Councillor Toomey; Meg Montgomery, Aide to Councillor Cheung; Savitri Khalsa, Aide to Councillor vanBeuzekom.

Councillor vanBeuzekom welcomed all present and noted that this meeting was convened to discuss the possibility of implementing a plan for trash or recycling curbside pickup for small businesses along existing curbside routes. The committee was referred a Council Order (**Attachment A**) originally submitted by Councillor Toomey that requested the City of Cambridge consider a consolidation of recycling and/or trash haulers for residential and commercial areas of the Cambridge community. The city manager submitted in response to this council order request a preliminary analysis report from Public Works Commissioner Lisa Peterson with his advisement that he did not recommend the implementation of such a program based on the estimated costs noted in the preliminary analysis. (**Attachment B**).

Councillor vanBeuzekom agreed that the city picking up trash was not feasible, but called this meeting to explore if picking up recycling for small businesses. Picking up recycling for businesses could increase recycling rates, decrease truck traffic, improve air quality, and decrease congestion.

Recycling Director Randi Mail provided a map (**Attachment C**) that documented the **Number of Businesses Located within City Regions By Trash Day**.

Region 1/Monday	372 Businesses
Region 2/Tuesday	557 Businesses
Region 3/Wednesday	151 Businesses
Region 4/Thursday	565 Businesses
Region 5/Friday	301 Businesses
<b>Total</b>	<b>1945 Businesses</b>

Commissioner Lisa Peterson reviewed for everyone present key points of the report that

was prepared in response to the Council Order, noting it was a very preliminary investigation of what operational costs, financial costs and general implications come into play when considering implementing a curbside pickup for small businesses along existing routes. She noted that the data on "small businesses" within the city is limited and therefore the public works department made several "assumptions." One being that this service would be added along every residential street and encompass approximately 1,835 businesses.

In relation to picking up recycling, some of the key points were this:

- The city presently picks up approximately 9,000 tons of recycling/year from residents and municipal buildings.
- Using the estimate of 150 pounds per business/week, picking up citywide small business recycling would add an additional 7,000 tons of recycling /year to that which the city presently picks up. This is about an 80% increase in recycling picked up by the city.
- At a rate of \$160/ton, just the cost of picking up this quantity of recycling would be \$1.12 million.
- In this year's contract for recyclable processing with Casella, the city gets a rebate for recyclable materials. The rate is \$13/ton. So, for example, 7,000 tons of recycled materials pays back to the city \$91,000. This revenue subtracted from the cost provides a net cost for picking up recyclables from small businesses that is close to \$1.02 million/year. (\$1.12 million - \$91,000 = cost for pick up is \$1.02 million).
- Selling recyclables does not generate a constant revenue stream. The price per ton for revenue from recyclables is quite variable because of market conditions. For example, in July, the city actually had to pay Casella instead of receiving a rebate.
- Toters for businesses recycling would be a one-time cost of \$200,000 (\$54/toter x 2 toters/business x 1,835 businesses).

Rich Rossi noted that in the past, the total volume of trash within the city was generated in this way:

1/3 from city residents/city buildings

1/3 from universities

1/3 from private businesses

He noted these ratios may no longer apply. He also noted that in any program of this sort, it is very important that the businesses "get on board" with the concept. Lisa Peterson confirmed that the correct incentive(s) need to be in place in order to entice businesses to participate.

Randi Mail added that the value of recycling rebates vary dramatically.

She presented a chart (**Attachment D**) that contains City of Cambridge historical data (Nov, 2010 through July, 2012) documenting recycling since its implementation of single-stream recycling. This chart shows the number of tons of city-served curbside trash collected each month, the number of tons of single-stream recycling collected each month, the total recycling revenue paid to the city each month, and the per ton rebate rate paid to the city.

A general discussion regarding the data in this chart noted several things. The quantity of single stream recycling remains relatively constant (between 675 - 850 tons/month), while the per ton rebate rate paid to the city for this recycling varies dramatically. The revenue per ton rebate has run as low as negative \$2.25 (July, 2012) to as high as positive \$27.13 (August, 2011).

Randi Mail noted that the rate for single-source recyclables varies depending on the material within the stream, the material's market value, and the percent of that material within the recycling stream. She gave the example, that while aluminum (one of the materials collected) has a high material market value; it is not a high percentage within the waste stream. The composition of the recyclables and the market for each recyclable material therefore dictates the rebate rate per ton returned to the city. For this reason, Lisa Peterson noted that the city budgets very conservatively its expected revenue from recyclables to be \$20,000/year.

The composition of recyclables was talked about. Randi Mail noted that generally Cambridge recyclable composition is 60% Paper/Cardboard and 40% Bottles/Cans. Lisa Peterson said any offering of business recycling would require a waste audit of selected businesses. Quinton Zondervan, Green Cambridge, noted that there is quite a broad difference in needs for recycling depending upon the type of business. Some businesses

have 5 soda cans at the end of the week, while others, like a business he ran, required an entire dumpster just for the collection of cardboard. He noted having a lease in which the building landlord is responsible for trash and recycling is more efficient.

Councillor Toomey noted that while he appreciated this discussion, but the goals of his original order were in response to concerns from residents and business owners in the Cambridge Street area of East Cambridge. He has noted that on trash day in this area, there are far too many vehicles on the street. He asked the following questions and expressed the following concerns. "If you look at the data map for pick-ups you'll notice that the area from Lechmere Square to Inman Square has the highest number of businesses contained in one area (565 businesses). Can the city do something to reduce the congestion, the number of vehicles, the number of vehicle trips and as a benefit improve the air quality in this neighborhood? Can the city better coordinate all these haulers? In the past, there was a fee paid by businesses for the city to pick up trash. Can the city pursue reducing perhaps 50% of the traffic? This is a cost that is worth bearing for the residents of Cambridge."

Terri Smith, the Director of Government Affairs for the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce, agreed with Councillor vanBeuzekom noting recycling for businesses is a great idea. He pointed out though, there needs to be a clear understanding of how to approach this possibility. Lots of challenges exist. For example, many businesses do not even have the required space needed to store on site recycling totes. Councillor vanBeuzekom poised the idea that the city didn't need to provide totes - but could charge businesses for the totes - as part of a reasonable fee for participating in a recycling program.

A discussion in relation to a question posed by Councillor Minka vanBeuzekom followed.

"How well are the city and its business owners doing complying with the city's Recycling Ordinance?"

All members of the meeting participated in this discussion. Important background was communicated by all stakeholders, city executive staff, city DPW staff, members of the Cambridge Advisory Recycling Committee, city councillors, business representatives, environmental activists, and several hauler/recycling company representatives.

Lisa Peterson noted that there are lots of issues that need resolution. The current recyclable ordinance is mandatory for any business that has greater than 5% of recyclable material in the waste stream. The ordinance requests businesses to submit a plan for its recyclables to the city. The compliance portion of this ordinance is about 15 years old, is out-of-date and needs updating. The city has not been enforcing recycling for businesses. It also has not been collecting any data. Regulation and education was more effectively carried out several years ago when there was a DEP-funded commercial enforcement recycling person working on the issue.

The city offers a drop-off center for businesses with 50 or fewer employees. Haulers that collect trash are required to provide recycling services as well to all businesses. Some of the bigger businesses and the educational institutions such as Harvard and MIT do a great job complying and have successful onsite recycling programs in place.

Both Randi Mail and Juliana Lyman, from the Cambridge Advisory Recycling Committee noted that 2 years ago they attempted to collect data regarding business recycling. In 2010, changes to hauler's license required haulers to provide recycling services and a list of customers to the city. Randi and Juliana worked with the License Commission to get from all the Haulers a list of their clients. There were many challenges with compiling this data, including many haulers subcontract their work (data missing); there are often many businesses in one location (data aggregated when it needs to be separated); and technically the submission of the data was not in a cohesive form that could be easily merged into one usable database. Given these obstacles to a good data set, the results of this data showed that at least 35% of commercial businesses do not have a recycling program in place.

Next, followed a discussion of all the pros/cons and challenges that arise when considering adding business recycling pick up to the present recycling contract which is just for residential recycling curbside pick up.

One obstacle to businesses recycling is that many choose not to participate for a variety of reasons. Quinton Zondervan, Green Cambridge, noted that he has been partnering with the DPW to educate businesses to the pros of and the how-to's of recycling. He states some businesses level of recycling is so small, it makes sense to allow them to be considered part of the "residential recycling" pick up.

Cambridge resident, David Stern voiced concern that many small business owners, pedestrians with recyclable trash, in the Harvard Square to Porter Square area would really like to do more recycling, but there is a total lack of recycling containers on the

streets in this part of Cambridge. He asked, "Can the city do more? Can the city make an overture to small businesses such as Marathon Sports or the Montrose Spa, to assist them in recycling? Can the city place recycling totes for motivated recyclers to use in this part of town?"

Cambridge Advisory Recycling Committee member Robert Winters noted that it seems very illogical to have individual business plans submit recycling plans in locations where for example, there are multiple businesses within one building, or for a strip of businesses. There should simply be a "building plan" for recycling or a "strip of businesses plan" for recycling in that area.

Adam Mitchell, from Save That Stuff, pointed out that there are two different key ideas contained within this discussion on Cambridge businesses recycling. It is important to clarify each idea.

1) **Access** to recyclable services.                      Versus                      2) **Choosing** to access recyclable services.

One suggestion for increasing and encouraging business recycling was to increase the recycling rate by technical enforcement and by having inspectional services for example, go over a simple recycling checklist of what businesses must do. This checklist would review the basics with a business and communicate that they are expected to recycle by checking that obvious elements of a plan are in place, i.e. recycling containers, sticker with posted schedule for pick up, etc.

Councillor Toomey asked why people do not want to recycle. Individuals replied, small business owners often say, they are too busy, they do not have enough time, they do not have enough space, and it is too costly to do. Noted again, were that businesses have to want to recycle. Impediments to recycling need to be cleared. For example, ordinances that require trash/recycling be placed on the curb before the business opens in the morning basically keeps businesses from recycling. On the other hand, a recent dumpster ordinance has been extremely helpful. The city can continue to look into how it can do things "differently" in order to assist efforts toward recycling.

Councillor vanBeuzekom asked Kevin Douglas, from Russell Disposal whether he thought reducing the number of vehicles for picking up recycling from Cambridge businesses could be achieved and if excess capacity existed for picking up recycling from businesses. He noted that some days were busier than others, so his company could possibly pick up more. He also felt that more trucks would be on the road if the city selected to use one recycling hauler for businesses.

Cambridge Advisory Recycling Committee member Robert Winters encouraged the city to think creatively about this challenge. Instead of implementing broad citywide policies, work together with specific neighborhoods or strip of stores and address the challenges unique to each. Choose solutions that address each problem individually. In response to trash haulers picking up all day long, he suggested the city consider asking haulers to pick up all within the same limited window of time.

Adam Mitchell noted that while waiting for this meeting he noticed 4 different mail delivery trucks arriving at City Hall and across the way 5 different food delivery trucks arriving for a restaurant. He asked why the city was focusing on hauler's trucks specifically, while the delivery and pick-up trucks for other industries came and went all day long unregulated. If we are targeting truck traffic we may be choosing the wrong type of vehicle.

Assistant City Manager Rich Rossi acknowledged that recycling for Cambridge businesses is not a simple issue of regulating the number of trucks along a specific corridor. The entire topic is a complex one that, if given some time, he would be willing to brainstorm an interim strategy with the Department of Public Works staff Lisa Peterson, John Fitzgerald, John Nardone, and Randi Mail. It was noted by those present that this problem may best be worked on in conjunction with all stakeholders - the City officials/employees, the many businesses within the Chamber of Commerce, the Recycling Advisory Committee, residents, and the Recycling/Hauler agencies.

Councillor vanBeuzekom noted that she would look to Assistant City Manager Rich Rossi and staff for their assistance in improving business recycling within the city and reducing recycling truck traffic. She then thanked all those who attended the meeting for their input on this topic.

The meeting concluded at 6:15 p.m.

For the Committee,

Councillor Minka vanBeuzekom, Chair