

City of Cambridge Recycling Advisory Committee
October 8, 2009- Meeting Minutes Taken by Judy Nathans

Members Present: Ruth Davis, MIT; Rob Gogan, Harvard University; Laura Nichols, Cambridge Consumers Council; Judy Nathans, Cambridge Resident; Andrea Yonge, Casella;

Guests Present: Randi Mail, Recycling Director, Ted Live, Cambridge Resident, Jeanette Rebecchi, Tufts student

Market Update

Andrea reported that Casella's ribbon cutting event for their new "zero-sort" technology was successful with Mayor Menino and Rob Gogan among the speakers and over 100 people in attendance. She said that the plastic water bottles given out were made by a company in Western Mass, 100%PET, but degrades in 5 years.

Commodity prices for newspaper stayed at \$75/ton. Export news selling \$15-20 above the yellow sheet pricing, though softening. OCC went down from \$100/ton in Sept. to below \$90/ton in October. Plastics no change from Sept. Have stabilized with HDPE (milk jugs) selling at \$400/ton levels and both HDPE Color and PET selling at the \$250/ton range. Glass, no change, and Casella is glad to have a contract with Strategic Materials, a glass to glass processor in Franklin MA. Some facilities pay up to \$40/ton for disposal. Bi-metals (tin) went down in October, \$15/ton. Probably related to supply and demand. No change on Aluminum, stabilized at the \$900-\$1000/ton range.

Casella is accepting rigid plastics like toys and milk crates, pizza boxes, spiral food cans and empty paint cans with their new zero sort contracts. Casella is processing 750/tons a day, 400 of which are from zero sort communities, including Everett, Revere and Arlington.

The Committee briefly discussed the Governor Patrick's proposal to expand the MA Bottle Bill to expand the containers subject to the \$0.05 deposit to include those containing water, flavored waters, coffee based drinks, juices and sports drinks of less than 1 gallon in size. See

<http://www.mass.gov/dep/recycle/reduce/bottleca.htm>.

GrassRoots Recycling Network Zero Waste Conference

GRRN held a conference on zero waste and recycling in Devens, MA October 19-21. Randi attended sessions on practicing zero waste, getting all organics out of landfills, online material exchanges, and reuse centers. Rob offered a tour of Harvard on Wednesday and Dawn Quirk offered a tour of Tufts University. The Harvard tour included the surplus distribution site, compost transfer, reuse for non-profits, and kitchens. Conference organizers say that the presentations will soon be available at www.grrn.org.

Business Recycling and Proposed Changes to Hauler License

The City chose not to rebid the business recycling contract which expired in July since there are many haulers now providing affordable recycling service. [City Ordinance](#) mandates recycling for any building that generates waste and [MA State Waste bans](#) support the local law. Specifically, if any of the following materials comprise at least 5% of the waste stream, a business must separate them for recycling: cardboard; construction waste (asphalt, brick & concrete); paper; glass, plastic & metal containers; scrap metal; wood waste; and leaf & yard waste. In addition, all computer monitors, televisions, lead acid batteries, tires and white goods must be recycled.

Any company that transports waste must apply for an annual license to operate in Cambridge. DPW recently proposed a series of changes to the license that would require haulers provide recycling services along with trash disposal and report to the City which services are provided to each customer. The RAC did some work on this issue in the past.

The proposed changes were discussed at the License Commission hearing on October 6. The transcript is posted [online](#), this topic begins on page 73. Currently, about 20 haulers are licensed in Cambridge. Representatives from the hauling industry attended and testified, including SWANA, McGeoghean Waste, Allied Waste and E.L. Harvey. Unlicensed haulers working in the City should be reported to the License Commission.

The original proposal included several items that drew debate including that recycling be less expensive than trash. The spirit of this was to ensure that recycling is financially attractive for businesses, in addition to being the right thing to do and in compliant with state and local law. Randi asked Committee members for feedback on this. Andrea said costs varies depending on container size, pickup frequency and weight. Rob said commodity prices for recyclable impact the cost of collection and that the City cannot dictate cost. Randi said that the zero waste agenda advocates “changing the rules” by ending subsidies for wasting. Members agreed that haulers should be asked to describe how they promote their recycling services to customers and inform them that it is mandatory in Cambridge. Andrea said this works well during the point of sale. Laura said information on City Ordinances are available at the

Inspectional and Licensing counters 831 Mass Ave.

A [new recycling flyer for businesses](#) includes the current list of licensed haulers and what they services they currently provide in terms of materials collected and containers provided (ex. toters, dumpsters, roll-offs).

Random Tidbits

- Randi reported that the City passed a new ordinance that takes effect January 1, 2010 requiring licenses for all dumpsters and a dumpster plan that details the location, who is responsible for cleaning and maintenance, MassDEP permits and waste hauler information with proof of recycling. For more information see www.cambridgema.gov/dumpsters.
- Rob asked whether used tissues can be composted, in light of increased single use related to the concerns over flu and germs. Tissues are NOT accepted in the Drop-off Organics program. He noted that paper products create methane emissions when buried in landfills, exacerbating climate change. Randi said that San Francisco composts paper towels in school bathrooms.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20.

FY10 meeting dates:

Date	Time	Location
11/5/09	8am-9:30am	City Hall, Sophie Room
12/10/09	8am-9:30am	City Hall, Sophie Room
1/14/10	8am-9:30am	City Hall, Ackerman Room
2/11/10	8am-9:30am	City Hall, Ackerman Room
3/11/10	8am-9:30am	City Hall, Ackerman Room
4/15/10	8am-9:30am	City Hall, Ackerman Room
5/13/10	8am-9:30am	City Hall, Ackerman Room
6/10/10	8am-9:30am	City Hall, Ackerman Room