

DRAFT

Recycling Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting Minutes

November 8, 2023, 8:00am – 9:30am

Virtual Minute Taker: Elka Kuhlman

Members Present: Dailey Brannin, David Demme, Lee Elliot, Debby Galef, Sakiko Isomichi, Debby Knight, Elka Kuhlman, Emily Lee, Scott MacGrath, Richard Nurse, Carlie Peters, Diane Roseman, Meera Singh, Helen Snively, Quinten Steenhuis, Alexandra Toupal, Julia Tsang, Rob Vandenabeele, Stephanie Wasiuk

Members Absent: Tracie Gordon, Audrey Ng, Laura Nichols, Dawn Quirk, Siddharth Vedullapalli

Public present: Judy Nathans, Tamene Tedla, Amy Waltz

Staff Present: Mike Orr, Cambria Ung

1. Housekeeping

- Vote on October Minutes - Approved

2. City Updates

Debrief Oct. 25: City Council hearing:

- Power point of presentation was shared in 10/26 email from Mike
- policy order was assigned to look at single use plastics in retail and miniature liquor bottles
- focus on jumping into the zero waste master plan and getting as much community input as possible

Outreach brainstorming for next 3 months:

- Postings on Reddit and Nextdoor - there is a Cambridge MA subgroup on Reedit
- Continue writing articles. The department's article on composting pumpkins was picked up by some news outlets. We had 13 tons of food waste collected this past Monday (after Halloween), usually see 10.5 on Mondays.

- Reach out at upcoming community events. Check library calendars, CFF (Center for Families), public school events....
- Attend Food for Free's School Markets happening monthly at certain Cambridge schools.
- Zoom event, sharing our waste services to bring attention to the recycling center.

Tour of the newly renovated Casella facility is happening on Dec 4, (10 am-12:30) for RAC and city staff. There are only a limited number of spaces. Let Mike know if you want to go.

3. Discussion with Cambria Ung, Stormwater Program Manager. She also deals with yard waste.

- focus is on monitoring quality of water that flows through stormwater pipes into Mystic River through Alewife Brook, and the Charles River for the southern portion of the city.
- About half the city has separate waste and storm water pipes and half has single set of pipes for waste and storm water.
- Homeowners are technically responsible for clearing snow, ice and leaves as far out as the middle of the street in front of their homes. City supports with street cleaning and plowing.
- Street cleaning debris goes to a landfill. Much better if leaves are raked up and placed in yard waste.
- Key pollutants city is focusing on are phosphorus, oil, grease and sediment
- Green infrastructure work is done in conjunction with reconstruction road/sidewalk work.
- Tree Box Filters – looks like a tree in a little square planted in the sidewalk. Under the sidewalk is extra space, soil, and rocks, to allow storm water to pool
- Porous pavements
- Rain gardens – looks like a landscaped area – Cambria will share locations of rain gardens in Cambridge. One is by DPW on Hampshire St. We will investigate the possibility of a tour of rain gardens.

Working with residents on improving water quality

- Asking residents to collect leaves before they get in storm pipes
- Put articles in DPW newsletter about storm drain care

- Include storm drain care in zero waste master plan
- Get message out to use See Click Fix if you notice something other than rainwater around storm drain.

Email Cambria if you have any questions - cung@cambridgema.gov

4. Continue conversation on goals of Zero Waste Master Plan

- Consultant has been selected. They will be brought on by the end of this month. Mike will share who they are once they sign a contract.
- A lot has happened since the initial report was written 6 years ago
- The importance on focusing on a succinct list of goals
- Possible hybrid pay as you throw plan: you would buy bags for trash beyond what fits into your trash cans. Some complications could be that bags attract rats, there is an equity issue around affording bags, people might choose to dump garbage elsewhere.

5. Closing, 9:15am (15 min)

Public Comment

- None

Action Plan/Decisions

- Investigate outreach ideas for the winter months.
- Sign up for tour of Casella with Mike
- Adopt a storm drain.
- December 13th meeting will be hybrid.
- Send articles and other items that you think will be good to put in monthly newsletter to Mike.
- Send suggestions to Mike on ways to help people understand what can and cannot be recycled.

Announcements

Newsletter going out will highlight National Recycling Day events.

Next hazardous waste day is in March or April.

Committee members are appointed by the City Manager. All meetings are open to the public. Members of the public may speak during the public comment section for up to two minutes. If you wish to speak, please contact Mike Orr at 617 349-4815 or morr@cambridgema.gov by 1pm the day before the meeting. You may also email or mail written comments for inclusion in public comments in lieu of speaking during the meeting. The Committee Chair must grant permission to non-members who request to speak at the meeting.

Meeting Minutes are located online here: CambridgeMA.Gov/Services/Recycling

Upcoming Meetings

- December 13, 2023 (hybrid meeting)
- January 10, 2024
- February 14, 2024
- March 13, 2024
- April 10, 2024
- May 8, 2024
- June 12, 2024

All meetings will be held virtuality until further notice.

08:02:01 From alex toupal To Everyone:

iPhone 2 is Alex toupal! Sorry just changed the name

08:11:58 From Amy Waltz To Everyone:

Yes, Helen - I am actually really concerned about the largey missing conversation about environment/climate as well as advocates. I am hopefull of ways to include candidates that have expressed interest.

08:13:22 From Helen Snively To Everyone:

interesting thinking Amy.. how do we get more people to run who are really interested in environment? A question to hold for the next couple years.

08:13:48 From carlie To Everyone:

Do we ever partner with events in libraries especially during colder months?

08:14:00 From Lee (Shirley Elliott) To Everyone:

Yes

08:14:13 From Helen Snively To Everyone:

oh, Carlie, that's a good idea.. what else can we think of that happens indoors.. and is large?

08:14:28 From Scott MacGrath To Everyone:

^Was going to ask the same thing, Carlie.

08:15:28 From carlie To Everyone:

Or like, after school pick up — pick up your kids and a compost bin?

08:16:14 From Stephanie Wasiuk To Everyone:

There's a centralized calendar that the library has with all events they're holding

08:16:18 From carlie To Everyone:

Or some local museums might have evening events / weekend events

08:16:27 From Stephanie Wasiuk To Everyone:

Reacted to "Or like, after schoo..." with 👍

08:17:10 From Debby Knight To Everyone:

The main library has a LOT of students there after school, and I think we've seen students pick up bins for the families sometimes.

08:17:17 From carlie To Everyone:

Reacted to "The main library has..." with 👍

08:17:51 From Amy Waltz To Everyone:

Online outreach is a crucial and underutilized. I find it could be helpful to have content to repost - even bits of the newsletter (which I can't copy paste or reference by URL).

08:18:06 From carlie To Everyone:

Reacted to "Online outreach is a..." with 👍

08:19:03 From Debby Knight To Everyone:

School pick-up probably has to be fast and outdoors in the 20 minutes or so before pickup times. In terms of museums, I wonder about the Harvard Art museums on Quincy when they have their free evenings, which probably attract different groups of people.

08:19:31 From Quinten Steenhuis To Everyone:

Reacted to School pick-up proba... with "👍"

08:19:38 From carlie To Everyone:

Reacted to "School pick-up proba..." with 👍

08:22:16 From Helen Snively To Everyone:

the Casella tour... do go, folks.. it's fascinating..

08:23:19 From Mike Orr To Everyone:

Learn more about stormwater management here:

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/Departments/publicworks/Initiatives/stormwatermanagement>

08:29:53 From Diane Roseman (she/hers) To Everyone:

We need to publicize that info that street cleaning goes to the landfill. I think that would sway people

08:30:15 From Emily Lee To Everyone:

Reacted to "School pick-up proba..." with 

08:30:31 From Helen Snively To Everyone:

another thought for Richard.. I wonder if you can mobilize a few neighbors to help you with the leaves.. that would be public education and community building.. but I also don't want to load more work on you.

08:32:08 From Helen Snively To Everyone:

to build on what Elka said.. maybe the next newsletter could THANK the folks who clean storm drains and otherwise keep leaves out of the street?

08:32:34 From Stephanie Wasiuk To Everyone:

Reacted to "to build on what Elk..." with 

08:34:35 From Mike Orr To Everyone:

would any of you be able to take a photo of the before/after of cleaning storm drains? that would be really helpful for the newsletter!

08:35:17 From Deborah Galef To Everyone:

I can do that.

08:36:47 From richard To Everyone:

Helen, my neighbors are a story on to themselves. I wish!

08:38:20 From richard To Everyone:

I have very noisy workmen in my location so have to take a breakl. Sorry.

08:41:29 From Rob Vandenabeele To Everyone:

I have seen that too.

08:41:45 From Amy Waltz To Everyone:

For residents, many will be happy for the tradeoff: personally placing leaves in yard waste as oposed to adding days for moving vehicles (parking hastles) for street cleaning. Along with environmental benefit of it not going into the landfills.

08:42:08 From Rob Vandenabeele To Everyone:



08:42:16 From Mike Orr To Everyone:

SeeClickFix: www.CambridgeMA.Gov/311

08:43:45 From Mike Orr To Everyone:

learn more about sewer separation plan: https://www.cambridgema.gov/-/media/Files/publicworksdepartment/Engineering/10yearsewerplan/sewer10yp_v2_final_accessible.pdf

08:44:48 From Amy Waltz To Everyone:

Reacted to "We need to publici..." with 👍

08:48:07 From Amy Waltz To Everyone:

Reacted to "interesting thinki..." with 👍

08:54:02 From Helen Snively To Everyone:

rain garden walking tour.. yes please.. I think there are 2 around Huron/Fayerweather neighborhood.

08:54:12 From Emily Lee To Everyone:

Replying to "rain garden walking ..."

seconded!

08:54:24 From Stephanie Wasiuk To Everyone:

Reacted to "rain garden walking ..." with 👍

08:54:57 From Rob Vandenabeele To Everyone:

Reacted to "rain garden walking ..." with 👍

08:58:31 From Lee (Shirley Elliott) To Everyone:

Reacted to rain garden walking ... with "👍"

08:59:07 From Lee (Shirley Elliott) To Everyone:

Unfortunately, I need to run. Have a great day

08:59:12 From carlie To Everyone:

Reacted to "rain garden walking ..." with 👍

08:59:59 From Tamene Tedla To Everyone:

Sure I will email you, then and once we (you and I) are on the same page I'll make an introduction

09:02:00 From Debby Knight To Everyone:

Belmont adopted the hybrid model a few years ago and at that point I noticed that the bags, which could be purchased at a number of stores, cost \$3

09:02:40 From Debby Knight To Everyone:

I think hybrid - but perhaps for every bag, as in Malden?

09:02:59 From Amy Waltz To Everyone:

I don't think a hybrid pay as you throw would actually reduce waste unless we made pick up every other week. Our new trash bins

09:05:10 From Amy Waltz To Everyone:

...are much larger than what we should be throwing out. Watertown has a good system for large items.

09:05:36 From Tamene Tedla To Everyone:

No I will talk next meeting one

09:05:46 From Tamene Tedla To Everyone:

Thanks!

09:06:04 From Meera Singh To Everyone:

Nov 15 is National Recycling Day!

09:06:17 From carlie To Everyone:

Reacted to "Nov 15 is National R..." with 

09:08:54 From Amy Waltz To Everyone:

Sorry - I will send Email. my zoom is messed up.

09:10:40 From Tamene Tedla To Everyone:

Do we have any plan for Nov 15 National Recycling Day?

09:10:45 From Deborah Galef To Everyone:

I'd love to hear about India!

09:11:21 From Helen Snively To Everyone:

national recycling day.. do we know of any events about then? Real soon.. but maybe an opportunity to give out green bins?

09:15:15 From Meera Singh To Everyone:

Can we update the Zero Waste App - in reply to Debby G's ques

09:16:13 From Amy Waltz To Everyone:

The mail recycling page is great for initial info, but there is a quiz on the mass site is a great training - even for me.

09:17:09 From Helen Snively To Everyone:

maybe we could create a small list of the NO items... like ice cream and milk cartons .. I'd love to have answers to maybe 10 things that confuse me as I stand at the blue bin. Anyone wanna work with me on that? Small simple project....

09:17:34 From Helen Snively To Everyone:

Elka and Debby.. let's try to do something simple?

09:18:06 From Amy Waltz To Everyone:

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/services/curbsidecollections>

09:18:32 From Helen Snively To Everyone:

thanks mike, that's a good simple solution.. and then we create another top 10 a couple months into next year..

09:19:35 From Emily Lee To Everyone:

potential "No" item-toothpaste tubes (esp Tom's says they're recyclable even though Mass Recycling says it's not), lotion tubes (not bottles)?

09:20:20 From Amy Waltz To Everyone:

<https://recyclesmartma.org/quiz/> The no.2 quiz was interesting - it would be great to know if everything is applicable in Cambridge.

09:20:23 From Emily Lee To Everyone:

Replying to "potential "No" item-..."

disposable paper coffee cups

09:20:32 From Sakiko Isomichi To Everyone:

Reacted to "disposable paper cof..." with 

09:21:06 From Meera Singh To Everyone:

Reacted to "disposable paper cof..." with 

09:22:16 From Emily Lee To Everyone:

Replying to "potential "No" item-..."

tissue paper


09:22:31 From Mike Orr To Everyone:

cung@cambridgema.gov

09:23:57 From Scott MacGrath To Everyone:

Aeronaut (Somerville..technically) does trivia every tuesday with volunteer hosts who decide the theme

09:24:07 From Emily Lee To Everyone:

Reacted to "Aeronaut (Somerville..." with 

09:24:27 From Tamene Tedla To Everyone:

Thanks!