

City of Cambridge

APRIL 24, 1978

COMMITTEE REPORT

ENVIRONMENT

MEETING HELD IN WALNUT ROOM, CITY HALL, APRIL 12, 1978

COUNCILLORS DUEHAY AND CRANE PRESENT

MEETING CONVENED BY COUNCILLOR DUEHAY AT 8:44 A.M.

Councillor Duehay opened the meeting by stating that it was the intent of the Committee to conduct several informational and public hearings on many issues relative to environment. He further stated that he would involve the Conservation Commission in several of these meetings since much work has already been done by the Commission.

TOPICS DISCUSSED

Recycling

Councillor Duehay stated that he has received many calls over the discontinuance of the recycling program along with questions from neighborhood residents on how it could not only be reinstituted but expanded.

Commissioner of Public Works Conrad Fagone responded by saying the recycling program was terminated due to the extremely low level of community participation. The cost of running the program was approximately \$100,000 with only a rate of return of \$7,000 annually. He urged that prior to anything else being done in this area, recycling be mandated by the City Council, whereby residents would be obligated to participate. This has been done in communities such as Needham, Wellesley and Marblehead. Furthermore, requested additional money be put into his overall operating budget to maintain this program should the City Council pass an ordinance on recycling. Both the Committee, Conservation Commission and Commissioner Fagone agreed that an integral part of any recycling program is a strong public information and education program that should be implemented by the City.

Solid Waste Disposal

Commissioner Fagone informed the Committee that Cambridge is a member of 4 solid waste districts within the Greater Boston area. The purpose of this is to avoid getting locked into a long term costly proposal and being unable to compete for inclusion into a cheaper disposal program.

Currently under serious discussion is a proposal in the Route 128 area providing for a solid waste recovery plant that appears to be the best alternative for Cambridge. However, the Commissioner indicated it would be approximately 3 years away from actual operation.

The cost to Cambridge would be approximately \$12.00 to \$14.00 per ton with any profit that is made going back to each member community.

City of Cambridge

Both Mrs. Birkhoff and Ms. Bellows of the Conservation Commission indicated their interest in this plan as well as their deep concern for the reinstitution of the recycling program and offered their assistance wherever needed.

Sunday Trash Pick-Ups

Councillor Crane stated his concern over the trash which accumulates in Harvard Square over the weekends and urged that something be done.

Commissioner Fagone stated that beginning April 18th he was starting a pilot program of picking up trash at night in the business districts starting with Central Square. Should this be successful, he said, it would be expanded to all the business districts which would include Harvard Square. Furthermore, he said that as of April 1, 1978 the street sweeping has resumed which would aide in cleaning the squares.

PENDING REPORT

An analysis and evaluation of the public education program done during the time the recycling program was in effect as well as suggested alternatives for improvement was requested from the Conservation Commission.

Councillor Duehay stated he would schedule a public hearing in the near future in order to discuss these alternatives as submitted by the Conservation Commission and the Public Works Commissioner.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:10 A.M.

For the Committee,

Councillor Francis H. Duehay
Chairman

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Comm. from C. Duehay transmitting a report from
the Committee on Environment.

S-172

In City Council,
April 24, 1978

4/24/78

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