



City of Cambridge

O-20

IN CITY COUNCIL

March 17, 2003

VICE MAYOR DAVIS
COUNCILLOR MURPHY
COUNCILLOR GALLUCCIO

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to instruct the appropriate departments to develop a recognition program for the targeted recycling goal of forty percent by 2005.

In City Council March 17, 2003.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy: *D. Margaret Drury*

ATTEST:-

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

varying population segments, housing types, owner/rental status, student housing and income level. Vice Mayor Davis commented that she is reluctant to let go of the pledge issue. She has a goal number in mind. What problems would be encountered if a number was set, she asked. She asked representatives from M.I.T. to discuss their recycling figure of seventeen percent.

Mr. Winograd informed the committee that M.I.T. would conduct a waste analysis study. M.I.T. wants to increase its recycling percentage. In a recent demolition of a campus building, MIT recycled 95% of the material and plans to do the same on future projects. If Harvard University has a recycling percentage of thirty-four percent, M.I.T. would like to be at thirty-five percent, he said.

Vice Mayor Davis questioned the recycling rate for the school department. Mr. Rita responded that the Public Works Department keeps track of the school recycling. Mr. Leandro stated that the tonnage and per pupil rates are tracked. The recycling numbers have steadily increased. He felt a percentage should be established in order to see if there is an increased improvement could be accomplished at some schools. Ms. Mail stated if school waste was segregated, the city would compute the recycling rate for the schools. However the City does not have trash tonnage numbers for the schools as a whole, or individually. Mr. Leandro informed the committee that food composting is done at some schools. Vice Mayor Davis suggested composting food waste from the cafeterias. The students would have to separate styrofoam and other materials that cannot be composted from food waste. There is potential to capture food waste from the cafeterias, but Mr. Leandro stated that there is not much food waste from the kitchens. Vice Mayor Davis wanted to know how this could be started in the schools. Mr. Rita stated that the school department uses ten blue dumpsters per week. Another barrel would be required in the cafeterias for the food waste. This is could be an opportunity for the schools.

Currently, all schools have styrofoam recycling in the cafeterias. However, styrofoam is not the best choice environmentally and by using only paper or cornstarch products the styrofoam could be eliminated from the waste stream. Ms. Mail stated that the styrofoam recycling contract for the schools expires in June. This is a window of opportunity to determine to switch to cornstarch or paper based products. The schools may have to pay more for the food trays. A suggestion was made to review the buying group.

Ms. Mail informed the committee that it costs \$13,000 annually to recycle the styrofoam trays. The financial issues need to be discussed also stated Vice Mayor Davis, since the School Dept pays for the trays, but Public Works pays the disposal and recycling costs. Commissioner Peterson stated that \$90,000 was cut from the state grants to the Recycling Division. The Public Works Department is struggling to maintain service for the FY04 budget. She would prefer to continue the recycling incentive payments to the schools. This program is funded by the state grants that have been cut. The School Recycling Incentive Program (SRIP) awards about \$6,000 in total, to the schools for their recycling tonnage. The school department needed to identify steps to achieve the recycling goals, stated Vice Mayor Davis. The school department needed to be recycling at the same rate as the city. Currently, the City is recycling 36% of its

waste, which includes the schools, city buildings and residences. A goal gives an incentive for a level at which the city should be recycling. The climate protection goal timeline of 2010 is around the corner. She asked the Health Alliance about their recycling.

Mr. Paine stated that the Health Alliance has done a self-assessment. Medical waste is not recyclable. Carpet recycling is done by the Health Alliance. Four tons of carpet was recycled in FY02. Construction and demolition waste represents twenty-three percent. There is not a lot of waste from the kitchens. The Health Alliance is involved in a world health effort where furniture was shipped to Ghana. Mr. Winograd informed the committee that M.I.T. collects books that are sent overseas. Mr. Paine stated that 2,018 pieces of furniture were cleaned up and redistributed, but weight was not evaluated. The Health Alliance is almost 100% mercury free. Silver is reprocessed in the laboratories. All the data has not been captured. The Health Alliance recycling numbers will increase when the data is collected. No styrofoam is used in the kitchens. Cornstarch and paper products were reviewed; but are too expensive. The hospital is contemplating going back to washable kitchen utensils.

Vice Mayor Davis stated that Harvard University and M.I.T., the city and the Health Alliance need to be working together to do things for the good of the environment. This is a marketing issue. Ms. Mail stated that the consensus is that more information is needed on what is in the waste stream before goals are established. To set a recycling goal, we must first understand what percent of the trash is recyclable material and what materials should be targeted for waste reduction and reuse.

Mr. Paine stated that departments have done recycling but the information has not been shared. Communication has not been done interdepartmentally, let alone throughout the city. The public needs to get this information to achieve a buy-in. Vice Mayor Davis again stated that community based marketing needs to be done. Mr. Schlaver suggested getting various businesses involved, such as a restaurant, a nursing home and a retail establishment. The establishment would be assessed to see how it could improve its recycling or reduce waste. Other business sectors need guidance with recycling. Vice Mayor Davis suggested launching a campaign to identify where progress or more partnerships could be achieved. Gains, she said, needed to be shown each year. Internal to the city, her target is the school department.

Ms. Mail suggested having focus groups with members of the recycling committee to see where potential collaborations could exist between the City and large institutions. The goal would be to find out where reuse and/or recycling operations could overlap. Mr. Gogan informed the committee that there is a lot of area for overlap. Huge amounts of work or collaboration could be done. The recession has caused a frugal life style. For example, Mr. Gogan stated that every week the City picks up about are thirty appliances that may still work and could be distributed to those that need them. Harvard University's recycling goal is forty percent by 2004, fifty percent by 2005. Recycling needs to be as easy as discarding trash. Water and beverage residue is also a waste of resources. He asked why do people feel that they have to buy bottled water when water

is piped in to every building. Furthermore, the manufacture and transportation associated with consuming bottle water products degrades the environment. Maybe bottled water is the first item that needs to be cut from the budget, said Vice Mayor Davis.

A discussion ensued about establishing a consensus. Mr. Gogan expressed his support for a concrete percentage goal. Ms. Mail expressed her concern that a citywide goal would be difficult for M.I.T. to meet on the same timeline. Mr. Winograd stated that a waste analysis needed to be done. He would commit to a ten percent increase in waste reduction and recycling. Ms. Anders stated that each entity should set its own goals. Vice Mayor Davis suggested that each entity increase their recycling by fifteen percent over its current levels. Ms. Rasmussen supported absolute goals. Mr. Paine stated that the Health Alliance goal is thirty-five percent by 2005. Harvard University's goal is fifty percent by 2005. Ms. Mail stated that waste reduction goals should be discussed. Reducing the waste tonnage would achieve greater greenhouse gas reductions than recycling. Commissioner Peterson suggested a campaign of reducing, reusing and recycling the first year. A citywide number may be difficult for all entities. Councillor Murphy suggested a reduction competition for each entity. For example, four puzzle pieces all fitting together. Ms. Rasmussen further suggested a list of the reduction initiatives that were implemented by each entity. Mr. Gogan commented that there is good data for the institutions and the city on the amount of trash, but it may be hard to measure for small institutions. He supported a percentage improvement or a percentage as of a certain date. Vice Mayor Davis suggested a target of forty percent by June 30, 2005 with a commitment from Harvard University, M.I.T., the Health Alliance and the city. This could kick off "Go Green Month". Councillor Murphy suggested that a link be made on the city's website. Vice Mayor Davis submitted the following motion:

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to instruct the appropriate departments to develop a recognition program for the targeted recycling goal of forty percent by 2005.

The motion –

Carried.

Vice Mayor Davis stated that small a group needed to be formed to discuss the recognition program. Ms. Rasmussen stated that the Community Development Department would work on public relations and marketing. Mr. Winograd commented that the four entities needed to pool their ideas.

Vice Mayor Davis stated that she liked the idea of a local "free bay", a website where Cambridge residents could post wanted or available items for reuse. This would help waste reduction efforts. M.I.T. has an email reuse list. Vice Mayor Davis asked how can the four entities share the information. Ms. Mail asked if Harvard or M.I.T. had a student who would design the website. Ms. Mail suggested naming the website

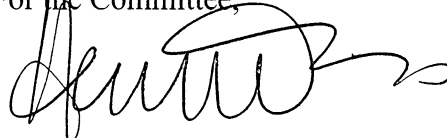
Reuse Cambridge.org.

In conclusion Vice Mayor Davis stated that she would schedule a subsequent meeting to discuss the “local free bay” concept.

Vice Mayor Davis thanked those present for their attendance.

The meeting was adjourned at nine o’clock and thirty minutes a.m.

For the Committee,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Henrietta Davis', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Vice Mayor Henrietta Davis, Chair

City of Cambridge

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

Vice Mayor Henrietta Davis, Chair

Councillor Anthony D. Galluccio

Councillor Brian Murphy

In City Council March 17, 2003

The Health and Environment Committee held a joint public meeting with the Recycling Committee on Thursday, February 6, 2003 at eight o'clock and five minutes a.m. in the Ackermann Room.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the development of a pledge on increasing recycling or reducing waste either by a percentage increase or by weight.

Present at the meeting were Vice Mayor Henrietta Davis, Chair of the Committee, Councillor Brian Murphy, Lisa Peterson, Public Works Commissioner, Randi Mail Recycling Director, Courtney Forrester, Rick Leandro and Dawn Quirk, Public Works Department, Susanne Rasmussen, Director of Environment and Transportation Planning, Community Development Department, Rosalie Anders, Community Development Department, Bob Paine and Jean Davis, Cambridge Health Alliance, James Rita, Cambridge School Department and Donna P. Lopez, Deputy City Clerk. The following members of the Recycling Committee were also present Judith Nathans, Rob Gogan, Harvard University, Kevin Healy, M.I.T. and Paul Schlaver, Consumers' Council. Also present were Dan Winograd and Justin Adams from M.I.T.

Vice Mayor Davis opened the meeting and stated the purpose. She gave a summary of the discussions of the December 12, 2002 Health and Environment meeting. The meeting was called to kick off the waste management goals of the Climate Protection Plan, which commits the city to reducing greenhouse gas emissions twenty percent below 1990 levels by 2010. The Climate Protection Plan endorsed the MA Solid Waste Master Plan waste goals, by 2010, 43%-53% recycling and 24%-34% waste reduction. She would like to find out what is happening on recycling with particular key departments such as the school department and the Cambridge Health Alliance, which manages three hospitals and 38 buildings in the City. She presented the idea of a pledge. Some of the top twenty-five companies could also participate in the pledge. The committee heard from Randi Mail, Recycling Director.

Ms. Mail stated that the pledge was discussed at the January Recycling Advisory Committee meeting. She stated that the Committee members agreed that a waste composition study needed to be done in order to develop realistic goals. A waste composition study will provide essential information about the maximum achievable recycling rate and determine which materials in the waste stream should be targeted for waste reduction and reuse. Specifically, a study will provide information on the amount of recyclables in the trash versus the amount of recyclables set out for recycling; the composition of our waste stream and differences in and rates of participation among

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Committee Report #1

Committee Report from Vice Mayor Henrietta Davis, Chair of the Health and Environment Committee, for a meeting held on February 6, 2003 to discuss the development of a pledge on increasing recycling or reducing waste either by a percentage increase or by weight.

In City Council March 17, 2003

**REPORT ACCEPTED.
PLACED ON FILE.
ORDER ADOPTED.
SEE ORDER #20.**