

City of Cambridge

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT*Vice Mayor Henrietta Davis, Chair**Councillor Anthony D. Galluccio**Councillor Brian Murphy*

In City Council January 6, 2003

The Health and Environment Committee held a public hearing on December 12, 2002, beginning at five o'clock and forty-five minutes P.M. in the Sullivan Chamber.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the issue of recycling in the city.

Present at the meeting were Vice Mayor Henrietta Davis, Chair of the Committee, Mayor Michael Sullivan, Councillor Brian Murphy, Garrett Simonsen, Assistant to the Mayor and Vice Mayor, Lisa Peterson, Public Works Commissioner, Randi Mail, Director of Recycling, Public Works Department, Courtney Forrester and Rich Leandro, Recycling Division of Public Works Department, Julia Bowdoin, Assistant to the City Manager, Rosalie Anders, Community Development Department, Robert Paine and Jean Davis, Cambridge Health Alliance, Moe Gentile, School Department and Donna P. Lopez, Deputy City Clerk. Also present at the meeting were Kevin Healy, MIT Recycling, Rob Gogan, Harvard Recycling and Robert Winters.

Vice Mayor Davis opened the meeting. She stated that she invited representatives from the School Department, the Hospital, MIT and Harvard University to discuss this issue.

The city has prepared a Climate Protection Plan. The goal of the plan is to reduce the amount of waste. She turned the meeting over to Randi Mail who gave a brief presentation to the committee.

Ms. Mail discussed the Massachusetts Solid Waste Plan as well as the City's Recycling Program. Massachusetts, she said, is implementing strict emission control standards for municipal solid waste combustors that will reduce mercury emissions by 85 percent or more when in place.

Vice Mayor Davis asked about MA's Zero Net Export and Net Import Goal regarding waste. Ms. Mail stated that Cambridge sends waste out of state and part of the solution is for the city to look at reducing waste. Waste reduction encompasses recycling, source reduction (using less material to put into waste stream) and toxic reduction. A Product Stewardship Institute was created with DEP funds at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell to help companies reduce the toxic content of their products and increase their recyclability. In MA, there are over 100 "pay-as-you-throw" (PAYT) communities, where residents pay for each unit of waste discarded rather than a fixed fee per household. PAYT communities achieve higher recycling rates while

lowering the overall trash tonnage. The State's Solid Waste Master Plan has a target goal to reduce waste by 70% (60% municipal solid waste reduction and 88% construction and demolition debris reduction) by the year 2010.

The city's recycling program consists of:

- Curbside Recycling – in which Paper, cardboard, bottles and cans, yard waste, white goods (appliances), computer monitors, hard drivers and televisions can be recycled.
- Drop-off center, open for small business, nonprofits and residents
- 4 Household Hazardous Waste collection days annually. In addition, the
- Schools, city buildings and large apartment buildings also participate.
- Drop-off Center accepts fluorescent bulbs, non-alkaline batteries, motor oil and operates a mercury thermometer exchange.
- Composter sales – over 2500 composters sold since the mid 1990s.

Ms. Mail stated that the city is looking to revitalize the commercial recycling program. She added that not all businesses are aware of the existing waste bans outlined in the material distributed (**Attachment A**).

All sixteen schools and fourteen city buildings participate in the recycling program. Revenue from the School Department recycling equals \$17.00 per ton. The schools have benefited from the state REAP Program. The recycling committee has been instrumental in setting up recycling programs in the city.

On the future of the Cambridge Program, Ms. Mail stated that a waste analysis needs to be done to review the way waste reduction and recycling efforts are targeted. Increased coordination is needed with the Purchasing Department to ensure that more and more environmentally friendly products are purchased. Universities and non-profit organizations can be partners with the city to capitalize on community resources and knowledge.

Ms. Anders stated that green house gasses were reviewed in the Climate Protection Plan (CPP). The CPP looks at emissions in the city. Reducing waste is a part of that emissions reduction plan.

Vice Mayor Davis stated that in construction and demolition waste recycling is a short-term goal. Ms. Mail stated that the C&D waste ban is targeted to the solid waste handling facilities. The waste handling site will have the ultimate responsibility. Vice Mayor Davis asked if construction and demolition debris have to be recycled. Ms. Mail responded in the affirmative; waste-handling sites will have to recycle.

Mr. Robert Winters, 366 Broadway, stated that facilities for handling construction debris are limited. He asked whether there are facilities where this kind of recycling can be done. Ms. Mail responded that DEP has stated that bans will not be imposed before adequate infrastructure is in place. Mr. Winters informed the committee that some home

renovators use dumpsters. Commissioner Peterson reiterated that a waste composition study needs to be done, especially in view of what is picked up at the curb.

In response to a question from Vice Mayor Davis, Commissioner Peterson stated that the curbside recycling contractor picks up recycling from residents, city buildings, schools, and approximately 100 businesses and 100 non-profit organizations.

Vice Mayor Davis stated that she wants to hear what the universities, schools and hospitals are doing on recycling. Without the leadership of the big users in the city it will be difficult to encourage other commercial entities to recycle.

Robert Paine, Cambridge Health Alliance, stated that there are 38 buildings and three hospitals in the Cambridge Health Alliance. The Cambridge Health Alliance is a member of Hospitals for Responsible Environment and Health Care Without Harm and complies with state, federal and OSHA regulations. He informed the committee that a better job needs to be done working with other agencies in the city. Programs need to be marketed. He informed the committee that kitchen grease is recycled, reprocessed carpeting is used at the hospital and computers are recycled. What is done now is good, but more can be done, he said. Mercury does not go out into the waste stream.

Vice Mayor Davis stated that it is important to recycle bottles, cans and paper. Mr. Paine responded that the hospital collects mixed package. Bins are provided at three main facilities. Can and bottle recycling is planned for Year 2003.

Rob Gogan, Harvard University, stated that Massachusetts regulation requires recycling to be done if more than 5% of the weight of the trash is bottles or cans. Many janitors are opposed to recycling of cans and bottles because the janitors supplement their income by collecting cans and bottles. Mr. Paine stated that the good news is that cans and bottles are not going into the waste stream.

Adam Mitchell of Save That Stuff, Inc. stated that the bottle bill has restrained the public sector. It is important to offer can and bottle recycling where these products are sold, said Mr. Gogan. Most people think of recycling as cans and bottles. It must be mandatory that vendors take back the empty cans and bottles.

Vice Mayor Davis asked Mr. Gogan about Harvard University's tracking of its recycling program. Mr. Gogan stated that Harvard University's recycling rate totals 32%.

Mr. Winters stated that statistics around the country must be looked at because all types of waste are counted. Mr. Gogan stated that tonnage, toxicity and reuse must be reviewed. Creating one lap top computer generates ten tons of waste. Reuse is the biggest issue on the horizon. MIT, he said, has a fantastic furniture reuse program. Harvard University is working with students, charities and agencies to reuse furniture.

Mr. Gogan outlined needed steps for reuse programs:

- timely information

- locate sources
- contact
- retrieve
- transport
- delivery

Harvard University can give a lot more items to individuals, charities and agencies than it is throwing away.

Councillor Murphy suggested an exchange of information on reusables. Mr. Mitchell stated that the problem with the exchange program is that the materials need to be stored. Mr. Gogan stated that in January there will be a website that lists surplus items.

Vice Mayor Davis stated that CPP has an issue with food. Compost is recycled food and other organic matter. Mr. Mitchell stated that three collection services are needed:

- food waste;
- Containers and mixed paper; and
- cardboard.

Mr. Winters said that there are too few people investing in collection. Mr. Mitchell added that the infrastructure is not developed in the eastern part of the state. Governments need to promote collection and to set the alarm. Vice Mayor Davis added that leadership needs to come from the government.

The committee heard from Kevin Healy, MIT Recycling, who stated that students have a reuse list with 1,000 people on the list. MIT recycles mixed paper, cardboard and co-mingle (cans and bottles). Desk-side bins are used for recycling. Money from bottles and cans help pay for health insurance. MIT's Environmental Health Department is very strict because of all their labs. A special department oversees this department.

MIT recycling totals 20%, stated Mr. Healy. Vice Mayor Davis asked Mr. Healy what would help to increase this number. He responded: cutting down on contamination and having more people recycle. It would be beneficial if there was a mandate. Mr. Winters added that the best systems are those where waste disposal and recycling are the same job.

Moe Gentile, School Department, stated that the School Department is doing a good job. Vice Mayor Davis asked how the school department measures up with recycling. Ms. Gentile responded that cardboard and paper is picked up from schools. Mr. Leandro informed the committee that paper, cardboard, cans and styrofoam are recycled every week from every school but rates differ by schools. Private schools are also recycling paper and cardboard. Vice Mayor Davis asked where the School

Department can improve. Mr. Leandro stated that more bottles, cans and paper can be recycled in schools.

Mr. Paine informed the committee that some hospital products cannot be reused. Vice Mayor Davis stated that hospitals could have both an exempt and nonexempt items. This Council committee could discuss targets that this group can sign onto. Recycling and waste reduction are concrete ways to meet the goals, she said. Mr. Winters suggested that information can be provided in a collaborative way.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the recycling ordinance needs to be reviewed. The city needs to enforce the ordinance. Businesses, he said, might do more if more was required from businesses.

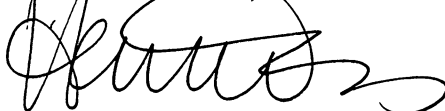
Vice Mayor Davis stated that an additional meeting needs to be held on this matter. The goal of the next meeting will be to come up with a pledge that could be signed onto by those represented at this meeting and other target entities for a percentage waste reduction or an increase in the percentage of recycling currently being done.

Councillor Murphy suggested that the pledge be on the weight. The next meeting of the Health and Environment Committee will be a joint meeting with the Recycling Advisory Committee on February 6, 2003 at 8:00 A.M. in the Ackermann Room.

Vice Mayor Davis thanked all attendees.

The meeting was adjourned at seven o'clock and seventeen minutes P.M.

For the Committee,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Henrietta Davis', written over a horizontal line.

Vice Mayor Henrietta Davis, Chair

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE - RECYCLING HEARING - DECEMBER 12, 2002

PRESENTATION OUTLINE

Solid Waste Master Plan

1. Vision
2. Strategy
 - Waste Reduction
 - Toxics Reduction
 - Recycling

Cambridge Program

1. Curbside Collection
2. Drop-Off Center
3. Composting
4. Commercial
5. Schools
6. Household Hazardous Waste
7. Community Involvement

Future Efforts

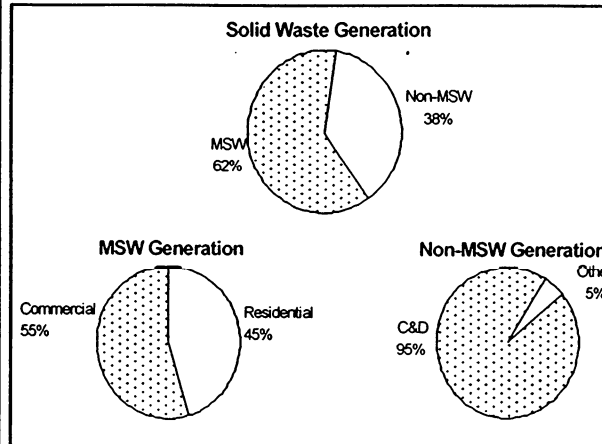
1. Waste Composition Studies
2. Waste Reduction
3. Green Procurement
4. More Commercial Outreach
5. Community Resources and Partnerships

Solid Waste Master Plan

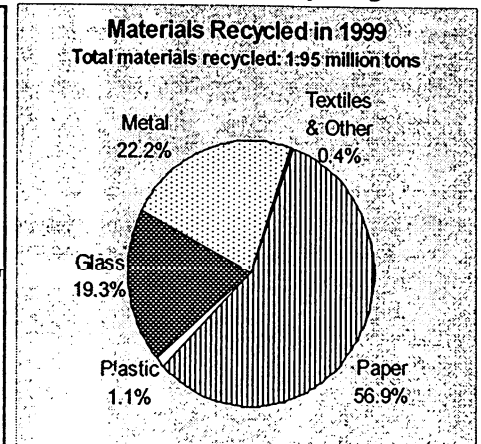
Waste Reduction Milestone: **70% waste reduction by 2010**

(60% Municipal Solid Waste, 88% Construction & Demolition Debris.)

MA Solid Waste Generation in 1999



Breakdown of MSW Recycling in 1999



Waste Bans In Effect

1. Lead-Acid Batteries, Effective 12/31/90
2. Leaves and Yard Waste, Effective 12/31/91
3. Whole Tires, Effective 12/31/91 (Landfills Only)
4. White Goods, Effective 12/31/91
5. Metal Containers, Effective 4/1/93
6. Glass Containers, Effective 4/1/93
7. Single-Resin, Narrow Necked Plastic Containers, Effective 12/31/94
8. Recyclable Paper, Effective 12/31/94
9. Cathode Ray Tubes, Effective 4/1/00

Waste Bans on the Horizon

1. Construction & Demolition Debris, Scheduled 12/31/03 (ASPHALT, BRICK, CONCRETE, METAL & WOOD)
**Directed toward solid waste handling facilities only
2. Construction & Demolition Debris, Schedule Undetermined (GYPSUM, ASPHALT SHINGLES, CEILING TILES, CARPET)
**Directed toward solid waste handling facilities only
3. Food Waste, Schedule Undetermined (INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL/INSTITUTIONAL)
4. Food Waste, Schedule Undetermined (RESIDENTIAL)

CAMBRIDGE RECYCLING PROGRAM STATISTICS

	FY99	FY00	FY01	FY02
Recycling Rate	31%	33%	33%	36%
Total Curbside Trash Tonnage	22,869	22,935	23,075	22,434
Total Curbside Recycling Tonnage	9,830	10,758	10,764	11,856
TOTAL CURBSIDE SOLID WASTE	32,699	33,693	33,839	34,290
Total Drop-Off Center Tonnage	172	176	196	179

For further information on:

Cambridge's Recycling Program, visit
www.ci.cambridge.ma.us
click on Resident Services and then Recycling.

The Massachusetts Solid Waste Master Plan, visit
www.state.ma/dep
select Solid Waste and Landfills in the right navigation menu.

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Committee Report #2

Committee Report from Vice
Mayor Henrietta Davis, Chair of
the Health and Environment
Committee, for a meeting held on
December 12, 2002 to discuss the
issue of recycling in the city.

In City Council January 6, 2003

**REPORT ACCEPTED.
PLACED ON FILE.**