

**Recycling and Renewable Energy Committee  
Meeting with Town Manager, 25 August 2008, 12pm, Town Hall**

**Attending: Mike Leger, Ghee Patrick, Jane Donoghue, Amy Germain, Lee Bartell, and Sandy Turner from the DPW, Sharon Lynn, Town Manager**

**History of Committee: Mike gave a brief history of the Recycling Committee, going back to the early 1980s, and bringing it up to the present.**

**DEP Grant: Amy will call the grant office to see if we can get as many wire mesh bins as we want. Turns out that we have 150 trash cans, but not all need a recycling bin next to it, so 100 would be fabulous, as the bins, made by Mass. Correctional facility, cost \$177 each. We could get as few as 10-20, but hopefully will get more.**

**Recycling: We had a long discussion about all aspects of recycling and trash pick-up. We know that the DPW staff works so hard all summer, and that as a result of recycling having doubled this past year (since we got organized as a committee and hit the ground running), there's more work dealing with all the recyclables. Sandy told us there are 2 pick-ups a day through town, one end to the other, and a 3rd trip just through the center.**

**In a perfect world, we would have 2 mesh bins next to a trash can, one for glass, the other for plastic and cans. Because we have one for all recyclables, (glass, plastic and cans), it needs to be sorted. It doesn't take very long, but it does take time, and when it's necessary for dozens of bins, it adds up to hours of sorting. Lee has been monitoring the mesh bin at the top of the Johnson St. lot, and it's averaging less than 10% glass, overwhelmingly plastic, with some cans, and no contamination. It fills up between half and full every single day. Because we can see into and through the mesh bins, it seems to be a magnet for recycling and not for trash, unlike the opaque bins, that have had truly disgusting trash thrown into them. And at Johnson St., the 2 trash cans are not filling up at all. It seems clear that there's a huge volume of recyclables in trash cans all over town. It's an economic issue: we have to pay to get rid of our trash, and we make money, and/or it costs us nothing to get rid of recyclable materials. Lee found out that in Northampton, they have Pedal People who go around picking up recyclables. They have a trailer attached to their bike, and they empty the wire mesh bins into the trailer. Once they've filled up, they take it to the transfer station, empty it, and come back to town and pick up where they've left off. They don't have to sort, as all their glass and plastic go to Springfield, where it's sorted. If we had Pedal People, the trailer could have a small partition for glass, with all the rest for plastic and cans. The advantage of Pedal People is that they'd do the sorting. An alternative idea is for volunteers to sort at the transfer station, once the clear bags of recyclables arrive. But finding these volunteers is a perennial problem.**

**Single Stream: This is where all recyclables are put in together, and we do not sort it. Some communities around Boston are trying it, and we're interested in seeing how it's working.**

**The secretary had to leave to get to work at 12:50, so she doesn't know what else was discussed.**

**Minutes submitted by Lee**

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**"...let us promise to make peace not just a priority, but a passion.  
Let us pledge to do more, wherever we are in whatever way we can,  
to make every day a day of peace." Ban Ki Moon, UN Secretary-General**

