

**Meeting of SalemRecycles  
Monday, January 25, 2016  
120 Washington Street, Salem, MA**

Present: Nancy Gilberg, Carol Hautau, Tony Keck, Myrna Soper, Beth Melillo, Lynn Murray, Julie Rose, Flora Tonthat, Gerry Yuhas, Eva Mossberg, Liz Vago

Guest:

Absent: Penny Neal, Susan Yochelson, John Roberts, Erin Huggard,

SalemRecycles Chair Beth Melillo kicked off the meeting at 6:35 pm. The minutes of the January 5th meeting were approved.

Julie connected with Evette Garshaw from CDC Community Development Coalition through Lucy Corchado, NIAC representative from the Point neighborhood. They'd like to collaborate with SalemRecycles for the Drop and Swap event. Julie thinks there's no down side to having someone else publicize it and provide additional volunteers.

**Polystyrene collection event** will be tied into the E-Waste collection day on Saturday, June 25th. It's for Salem residents only but we won't stop you from helping a friend. Nancy pointed out that peanuts & bubble wrap is usually accepted if ReFoamIt is there. She'll check on it and put the event up on Facebook.

**Articles for NERC.** Beth & Julie discussed it. Julie asked us to think about articles we want to submit to them. They have more coverage & leadership. Lynn thought lessons learned from our Butt Bin experience might be a good share as it didn't go as smoothly as we had thought.

**Subcommittees:**

**Landlord TODO:** Beth, Tony, Nancy, Julie met to put together information in the form of a rack card on How to Better Recycle with FAQ. They want the message to be accessible, beautiful, and good for sharing. Penny will help produce it. Please submit any comments to Julie.

**Compost challenge:**

Flora debriefed the SalemRecycles' presentation at the Jan 13 NIAC. Julie gave a broad mission statement, introduced Beth as the new chair. Beth talked a bit about our events. David Holland talked about his job as the new Je MREC. Myrna talked about the Butt Bin program and Flora talked about the idea of partnering with Neighborhood Associations to collect Polystyrene.

Julie brought a draft of the letter that will be sent via email. She will update it in March and mail out a hard copy at that time.

Nancy summed it up by letting the group know that we want to keep the cost as low as possible. To do that, we must meet a minimum number of subscribers. Basically, Connor needs 600 subscribers to keep it at or under \$7/month. We want to issue a challenge to folks who want to continue in the program to get one friend or neighbor to subscribe. Lynn asked if we can share past data? Yes, we already did on [GreenSalem.com/Compost](http://GreenSalem.com/Compost).

Nancy added that the pick up would go back to weekly and folks will be happy about that. Flora added that we should also encourage the sharing of a toter by 2 households as that would cut the cost in half. Julie explained how she bundles her kitchen compost into small paper bags and that Connor prefers small paper bags & keeping it dryer. Nancy said that this winter, she left her toter unlock or open to let it dry out.

### **Butt Bin recycling:**

Carol reported that all bins have been redistributed. She would like to get DPW to set up a routine maintenance. City will be able to buy more bins to put outside downtown. The new bins will be better designed. They will be able to buy about 100 more bins. Next meeting will be on Feb 23rd. There was a question of whether wall mountable means pole mountable as well? The group will discuss offline.

Myrna wants to know how often the bins are being used or how often they get filled up. They need that data so they can re-deploy bins if necessary. The team lamented that the effort has only garnered just under \$10.

**Strategic Planning:** No one met.

**March 19 Book Swap:** Eva, Susan & Flora will not be here.

**May Drop and Swap:** Julie thinks we can cross promote differently. Nancy asked if we could change the name. Swap & Drop or Drop & Swap. Correction: May 7<sup>th</sup> is the event date. Carol asked if Collaboration with CDC just meant promotion. Nancy said they would add more volunteers that we always need more of.

### **Community outreach**

Julie was glad Christian Hasselhoff was at NIAC as we always need Salem Volunteers. Julie would like someone from ward 6, North Salem/Dearborn St. to be on the committee as they're not represented. A suggestion was made to have a volunteer/members recruitment table in conjunction with events like Farmer's market.

Liz spoke about Salem Sustainable You, initiative to repair things. Can we try to do it on a very small scale? Eva knows someone that restores décor/furniture. Liz mentioned that there is a place in the Cummings center that repairs small appliances. Nancy knows a Paula Fibs that flips old furniture. She restore/paint & sell furniture. Liz & Eva will talk off line.

## **Correspondences:**

**Dropbox** - Julie: prefer to increase size of Dropbox rather than switch to a new platform. Nancy thinks we should be more judicious about what pictures to put in so we don't use up our storage with low quality photos.

**Monthly Facebook-** Nancy reported that we have 1310 Likes, She put up 3 events and people are so familiar with them now that they click "Interested" right away.

**Constant Contact newsletter-** Julie asked for topics for stories and ways to increase distribution on behalf of Susan. Susan will try to get something out next week. Julie will be away Jan 30th for 2.5-3 weeks.

**GreenSalem** - Connor, the intern, did a tremendous job streamlining the site content with input from the website team. He can also help us all the way thru summer. But while he's at school, we should title our requests with Urgent-update within 24 hrs or Action: update within 1 week. Nancy was happy that he helped create a newsletter signup button on Facebook.

**Monthly Blog-** Beth was concerned about producing a monthly blog. Julie suggested that she alternate with Eva, and assume about 2 blogs per quarter instead of monthly. Polystyrene would be a great topic. People are still confused about Polystyrene. Eva asked what the blog word count is. About 500-800 characters maximum.

## **Themes for 2016-**

- Compost transition into paid subscription: emphasis convenience and low cost.
- Flora proposed [The Hidden Environmental Cost of Almost Everything You Do Online](#) as a theme for one month.
- Liz suggested the environmental cost of shipping things to a store vs. delivery right to door. Hidden cost of the online age.

## **Mandatory Recycling update**

David Holland-MREC met with Julie last week. Jeff Cohen On book till Feb for questions/training. David is half time in field, half time on phone/emails. The City saved \$1200 in the first 2 months of using the new toters. Trash went down and recycling went up. If trash is not in orange bags, WM will not pick up. David, new MREC will eventually audit trash & recycling to make sure no TV or bad stuff in toters. The good news is that people getting used to it. Complaint died down. Council on Aging had some challenging participants, but Julie uses Nancy's 90 year old parents as example. She told them about the underutilized free service: David Holland will come and look at stuff and evaluate it with people who have questions about how to recycle. Toter exceptions are made for medical reasons. Only about 4 adults have had an exception made for them. Liz brought up that David was at the South Salem Neighborhood Association, but questions were more about compost. Seems the anxiety about the new WM toter

system is over. July commented that the decision to switch to WM was made in May – and implemented in Nov. making this a quick transition. It was forced on us by Northside carting and turned out to be a blessing in disguise. Julie has not gotten any angry calls of late, a good barometer for how the transition is working out.

For really bad snow storms, WM might just cancel the day rather than shift everybody over to the next day like Northside Carting did. Shifting confused everybody whereas canceling one day, they will just have to deal with those routes.

### **Other General Committee Announcements**

Salem Sound Coast Watch: “Kelp Forests in Our Back Yard” lecture, Marblehead library Wednesday Jan 27 at 7pm.

MassDOT will be holding a public meeting as part of the Route 107 Corridor Study process, on January 27, 6pm, at Salem High School.

Missed event yesterday: Green burials

Next meeting: March 1<sup>st</sup> Julie will call into the meeting.

Need press release for Book Swap. David Holland, MREC will be there to answer questions or work. We need to announce FOAM collection early so people can start saving. Julie will make some signs about the FOAM event to post at the Book Swap.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Flora Tonthat