

# Lee Recycling Committee

## Activities to Support a Smooth Transition to the Plastics Reduction Bylaws\*

October 2016



- **General**
  - Create and update web/print content covering all areas cited below
  - Coordinate closely with the Chamber of Commerce and outlet mall management – to reach residents and visitors (possible special effort for lodging and food establishments frequented by tourists)
  - Hold public/business meetings to identify/address implementation issues
  - Identify issues others have seen that are independent of the regulations and incorporate them in the plan: one of the biggest problems others have encountered is achieving widespread use of reusable bags – we will need to implement multiple strategies to get there.
  - Provide ongoing support to Tri-Town re identifying alternatives – perhaps pool resources with others
    - Polystyrene: Somerville, Hamilton, Marblehead, Brookline, **Toxics Use Reduction Institute (TURI)** at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell
    - **Biodegradable Products Institute**
    - Bags: **TURI**
  - Collaborate with other organizations and the media (print, online, radio, tv) to get the word out – repeatedly
    - Chamber of Commerce
    - Outlet Mall
    - Food Pantry
    - Council on Aging
    - Identify others
  - Encourage non-Committee members – including under-represented groups -- to get involved and show their support – activities, letters to the editor, etc.
    - Latino community
    - CIP students
    - Identify others

*\*This is a dynamic list. We encourage suggestions for improving the listed activities and adding new ones. We also welcome volunteers to participate in this effort.*

## Transition Activities (continued)

- Use direct mail to reach as many citizens and businesses as possible – including through utility bill enclosures
- Facilitate ways for citizens and businesses to compost
- **Public education/encouragement /support**
  - Encourage and support the widespread use of reusable bags and other containers:
    - Educate the public about and encourage the use of reusable rather than disposable or paper bags and other containers.
    - Educate consumers about the ability to bring reusable containers to multiple establishments
    - Encourage customers to bring their own bags and containers (for liquids and solid food)
    - Publicize the app to remind people to bring their bags
    - Distribute high-quality reusable bags through the Lee Food Bank and the Council on Aging to people who can least afford them, and sell the bags below cost to the general public
      - Grants – standard and possibly seek additional
      - Tri-Town funds
      - Hold bag making and repairing events
      - Hold an event/drive for people with extra reusable bags to donate them
      - Bag share (Northampton operation)
      - Other????
    - Work with banks and others that give away bags to be consistent with the specs – including the label.
    - Educate the public re food, etc. safety of bags and other drink and food containers
      - Warn consumers re health risks of all polystyrene and information on how to minimize them (e.g., don't cook/heat food in these or other plastic containers or put any hot drinks or food in them)
      - Educate the public about the risks of cross contamination and how to prevent it.
        - Be careful to separate raw foods (meat, fish, poultry) from other food products.
        - Avoid using reusable food bags for other purposes such as carrying books or gym clothes.
        - Don't leave raw meat or produce in hot cars because the higher temperature promotes growth of bacteria, which can contaminate any bags.
      - Advise customers to regularly wash/sanitize reusable bags
  - Educate the public re practical alternatives to thin-film shopping bags for household uses (document in process)
  - Educate the public about how to best dispose of alternative bags and containers.

## Transition Activities (continued)

- Educate public that all film bags made from petrochemicals can be recycled, including “zip-lock” type
- **Establishment education**
  - Educate non-traditional entities that fall under the regulations, including farmers’ markets; school and church groups; non-profits, providing info re alternatives, etc.
  - Educate businesses re alternatives to thin-film shopping bags and polystyrene drink and food containers
  - Warn re the importance of security to avoid the loss of hand-carried shopping baskets
  - Educate re should not use bulk/produce-type bags in lieu of thin-film shopping bags at check-out
- **Establishment support**
  - Promote and possibly facilitate bulk purchasing by businesses
  - Identify businesses that have successfully made the transition and have them serve as resources for others
- **Establishment encouragement**
  - Increase collection bins for recyclable plastic bags (those not regulated) – and facilitate the process for businesses
  - Encourage businesses to purchase prepared foods in more stable plastic containers with recycle codes
  - Implement greener gateway initiative for businesses – broad scope