



**CITY OF NEWTON
SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS
MANAGEMENT COMMISSION**

1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton Centre, MA 02459-1449
Ruthanne Fuller, Mayor

Members: Steven Ferrey, Alan Gordon, Sunwoo Kahng (Chair), Meryl Kessler (Vice Chair), John Lewis, Robin Maltz, Marian Rambelle, Karen Slote, Miles Smith, Carl Valente (Secretary)

Ex-Officio Member: Jim McGonagle, DPW Commissioner

Advisory: Waneta Trabert, DPW Sustainable Materials Management Division Director

March 16, 2023

Newton City Council
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton Centre, MA 02459-1449

RE: Support for Passage of the Expanded Sustainable Packaging Ordinance & Private Hauler Ordinance

Dear Councilors,

First, the Newton Sustainable Materials Management Commission (SMMC) would like to thank the Newton City Council for committing to a zero waste future for Newton. With ordinances already in place, plastic bags, foam polystyrene products, and nip bottles have been greatly reduced in our waste stream and in our streets. Building upon the clear success of these waste reduction ordinances, the Commission urges you to pass the proposed expanded sustainable packaging ordinance and the proposed private hauler ordinance. These two ordinances will bring the City closer to achieving the waste reduction set by the City Council's May 2022 resolution establishing zero waste goals for the Newton.

Expanded Sustainable Packaging Ordinance

The expanded sustainable packaging ordinance will eliminate from our waste stream many single use plastic items that cannot be reused, composted or recycled, much of which has proliferated with the increased popularity of restaurant take out. Take out will remain an important revenue stream for local restaurants, but it is possible to do it in a more environmentally responsible way. Last year, at a meeting of concerned residents convened by Councilor Vicki Danberg, Ayr Muir, CEO of Clover Labs, spoke about his efforts to keep his business as environmentally sustainable as possible. He said the best thing the City could do to help his efforts was to "level the playing field" by requiring that all businesses do their share for the environment. The expanded sustainable packaging ordinance would equalize the practice for all and support businesses like Clover Labs, Judith's Kitchen, Grape Leaf Mediterranean Grill, Johnny's

Luncheonette and others who are leading the movement to run their businesses while staying environmentally responsible.

Recycling Mandate and Private Hauler Ordinance

The private hauler ordinance will finally bring Newton businesses in compliance with the 1990 MassDEP ban on disposal of recyclable materials in the trash (<https://www.mass.gov/guides/massdep-waste-disposal-bans#-waste-ban-regulations-&-policies->) and bring city policy in line with state law. Requiring that waste hauling contractors bundle recycling service automatically with waste hauling for their clients is the simplest way to achieve this. According to an informal survey conducted by Councilor Alison Leary and volunteers in 2019, about 30-40% of Newton businesses maintain recycling dumpsters by their storefronts. It's time to bring the remaining businesses into compliance.

The SMMC urges the City Council to adopt the two proposed ordinances without delay. I thank your for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sunwoo Kahng". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sunwoo" and the last name "Kahng" clearly distinguishable.

Sunwoo Kahng
Chair, Newton Sustainable Materials Management Commission