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The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

DURHAM AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

December 12, 2023

A meeting of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, December 12, 2023 in Meeting Room 1-A, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 7:30 PM. Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.

1. Roll Call

Present: T. Barrie, Clarington
Z. Cohoon, Member at Large, Chair
R. Death, Whitby
N. Guthrie, Ajax
B. Hulshof, Uxbridge
D. Risebrough, Member at Large, Vice-Chair
M. Shiers, Durham Region Federation of Agriculture
B. Smith, Uxbridge, Vice-Chair
M. Somerville*, Member at Large
D. Stevenson, Oshawa
N. Swain, Scugog, attended the meeting at 7:39 PM
G. Taylor, Pickering
T. Watpool, Brock
*** denotes members of the Committee participating electronically**

Absent: G. O'Connor, Member at Large
H. Schillings, Member at Large
W. Wotten, Regional Councillor

Staff

Present: A. De Vos, Program Specialist, Department of Planning and Economic Development
S. Jibb, Manager, Agricultural & Rural Economic Development, Department of Planning and Economic Development
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
M. Scott, Project Planner, Department of Planning and Economic Development
K. Smith*, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
*** denotes staff participating electronically**

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by T. Barrie, Seconded by B. Smith,
That the minutes of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting
held on Tuesday, November 14, 2023, be adopted.
CARRIED

4. Presentations

A) Martin Straathof, Executive Director, Ontario Farmland Trust – Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve Easements

Martin Straathof, Executive Director, Ontario Farmland Trust, provided a PowerPoint presentation with regards to Ontario Farmland Trust and the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Ontario Farmland Trust (OFT)
- Our Main Activities
- OFT Team
- Education & Outreach – Annual Farmland Forum and Webinar
- Farmland Protection – Conservation Easement Agreements
- Farmland Easement Agreements
- Using Farmland Conservation Easements
- Farrow Family Farms – Bruce County, 2021
- OFT and Durham Region
- Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve (DRAP)
- OFT's Proposal for DRAP
- OFT as a Resource

M. Straathof responded to questions with regards to how the easement holders can transfer the easements to another person; who holds the conservation easements; whether the easements were in place when the land was purchased; how to get approval to put a road through an area that has an easement on the land; what is done when development surrounds a land trust and makes it impossible for a farm to operate; the legality of an easement and how the conditions in the agreement are enforced; and the history of Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve and how the easements were removed and reinstated.

General discussion ensued with regards to endorsement from the Committee with respect to the role that Ontario Farmland Trust plays in the conservation and protection of agricultural lands.

M. Scott advised that the correspondence from Ontario Farmland Trust regarding Response to Proposed Act regarding the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve was included on the November 17, 2023 Council Information Package.

B) Jeremy Dunn, Commercial Vice President, Hamilton Oshawa Port Authority (HOPA) – Oshawa Port Update

Jeremy Dunn, Commercial Vice President, Hamilton Oshawa Port Authority, participating electronically, provided a PowerPoint presentation with regards to Oshawa Port Update.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Who We Are – Managing Working Waterfront on the Canadian Great Lakes
- Hamilton Oshawa Port Authority (HOPA) Ports – Our Vision
- Upcoming Projects – Port of Oshawa
- Major Projects – Port of Oshawa Export Development
- Port of Oshawa – East Wharf Surfacing & Stormwater Management
- Port of Oshawa – Improving Export Capability for Durham’s Agricultural Community
- Grain Terminal – FWS Industrial Products Canada Ltd.
- Project Schedule
- Port of Oshawa – New Grain Terminal

J. Dunn responded to questions with regards to where the scales will be located after the renovation of the Port of Oshawa; whether the Port of Oshawa will be open during construction; how project delays will be handled; whether the current operator will be changing; who will be the merchandiser for the grain system; whether the construction will be able to handle truck traffic; and whether the probing station is being moved during construction.

5. Discussion Items

A) Agricultural 101 Training

A. De Vos advised that Z. Cohoon and N. Swain provided the Agricultural 101 Training presentation to Scugog on December 4, 2023. She further advised that the date for Oshawa needs to be finalized, and that a volunteer is needed to deliver the presentation to Pickering. Presentations for the remaining municipalities are in the process of being scheduled.

B) Rural and Agricultural Economic Development Update

S. Jibb advised that they are continuing to deliver the annual reports on the Growing Agri Food Durham plan. They have presented to the Federation of Agriculture, and still need to present to Durham Farm Connections, Clarington Agriculture Committee and Durham Farm Fresh.

A. De Vos advised that they will be filming at Gordon Food Service in Ajax for the Apple Value Chain video project and the Precision Ag Field Day will be running in 2024 at Tom and Sally Barrie’s.

M. Sommerville requested an update on the zoning by-law project. S. Jibb advised that they are continuing to work with Scugog, Uxbridge and Brock and the goal is to have similar zoning by-laws across the municipalities that will permit agriculture related and on-farm diversified uses. She stated that the terms of reference and project work plan was recently finalized and at the end of January they will be undergoing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to retain a consultant to undertake the work.

C) Agricultural Advisory Committee Clarington Update

T. Barrie advised that the next meeting will take place on December 14, 2023 and they will be discussing the lack of trimming trees and fixing ditches with the Works department.

D) Durham Farm Fresh Update

J. McKay advised that Durham Farm Fresh did not obtain quorum at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on November 30, 2023 and will be rescheduling the meeting in the new year.

E) Greater Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance Update

M. Scott advised that the group is working on an urban agriculture paper with the Barrett Centre and will likely give a presentation to the Committee in the Spring 2024.

F) Durham Region Federation of Agriculture Update

M. Shiers provided the following update:

- The Ontario Federation of Agriculture was going to provide a presentation at the last meeting, however due to technical difficulties it was not able to happen. S. Jibb and A. De Vos provided an update on behalf of Durham Region.
- Correspondence from Ontario Farmland Trust as discussed earlier in the meeting was on the agenda and there were reports from delegates regarding the Ontario Federation of Agriculture's Annual General Meeting.
- The next meeting is being held at the Scugog Library on December 19, 2023 with a social event beginning at 6:30 PM and the meeting beginning at 8:30 PM.

G) Harmony Road Compost Facility

Harmony Road Compost Facility – Regional Biomass Treatment Centre was provided as Attachment #2 to the Agenda and received.

M. Scott stated that the centre did not require any approvals from the Region of Durham.

M. Scott responded to questions with regards to who purchased the biomass treatment centre; and whether the compost is coming from Durham Region or other municipalities.

Discussion ensued with regards to who will be doing the clean up from the past company; what is being brought to the compost site; and the cost associated with dumping compost.

H) Independent Electricity Systems Operator (IESO) Battery Storage Sites

Correspondence from Jonathan Clifford, Business Development Manager, WPD Canada Corporation, re: Independent Electricity Systems Operator (IESO) Battery Storage Sites was provided as a link to the Agenda and received.

M. Scott provided an update on the proposed battery storage sites in Durham Region. He stated the Clarington site on Langmaid Road will likely not be going forward, the Trillium Energy Storage site in Cherrywood in Pickering will be going forward, the ABO Wind site in Beaverton is currently on hold, and the WPD Canada site in Beaverton is moving forward.

M. Scott further advised that municipal sign-off for a battery storage site is required. The applications to the IESO are due later this week with the required supply studies. He also noted that there have been concerns in the community with the proposed battery storage sites.

Discussion ensued with regards to concerns with placing battery storage sites on the shores of agriculture lands and sensitive waterways; the Committee not being in favour of this type of development on agricultural land in the Region of Durham; and concerns with implementing battery storage sites with rare power outages in Ontario.

Moved by B. Smith, Seconded by D. Risebrough,
That we recommend to the Planning and Economic Development
Committee for approval and subsequent recommendation to Regional
Council:

That Council be advised of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee not being in support of battery storage sites being located on, or adjacent to, agricultural land in Durham Region.

CARRIED

6. Information Items

A) Roundabout Construction – Brock Road & Goodwood Road, Uxbridge

Correspondence from Christopher Kho, Deputy Project Manager, Parsons Inc., re: Notice of Study Commencement Letter – Brock Road (Regional Road 1) and

Goodwood Road (Regional Road 21) Roundabout Construction, Township of Uxbridge was provided as Attachment #4 to the Agenda and received.

M. Scott requested feedback from Committee members in response to the letter. Committee members requested that either mounting curbs be larger or rolling curbs be used, and that the shoulders be paved.

Discussion ensued with regards to shrubs and bushes in the centre of roundabouts; and lane width in roundabouts.

7. Other Business

A) Warming Centre in LLC

M. Scott advised Committee members that the LL-C at Regional Headquarters is now being used as a warming centre and recommended that the North entrance doors be used to enter the facility.

B) Waste Transfer Station Limits

Discussion ensued with regards to whether there limits on the amount of oil and tires that can be dropped off at the Port Perry transfer station; whether there is any way to increase the drop off limits for agriculture workers; whether there is a designated day for agriculture workers to drop off materials; and other ways to dispose of oil.

C) Ontario Farmland Trust

D. Stevenson questioned what the Committee's action plan was for the Ontario Farmland Trust and whether the Committee will be making a statement on the matter.

M. Scott advised that he will circulate the presentation and additional materials in order for Committee members to conduct research regarding the topic prior to making a statement on behalf of the Committee.

Discussion ensued with regards to the tax benefit of having an agriculture easement; urban sprawl along Lake Ontario; and creating a sub-committee to conduct research and prepare a statement, if required.

D) Township of Scugog Agriculture Roundtable

N. Swain advised that the Scugog Agriculture Roundtable will be taking place on January 18, 2024 at 10:00 AM in the Scugog Council Chambers, and that invitations will be sent out this week. She advised Committee members to provide questions in advance of the meeting in order to have appropriate staff available to answer.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee will be held on Tuesday, January 16, 2024 starting at 7:30 PM.

9. Adjournment

Moved by D. Stevenson, Seconded by M. Sheirs,
That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Z.Cphoon, Chair

K. Smith, Committee Clerk