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## The Regional Municipality of Durham

### MINUTES

#### DURHAM AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

March 19, 2024

A meeting of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, March 19, 2024 in Meeting Room 1-B, 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  
N. Guthrie, Ajax  
B. Hulshof, Uxbridge  
H. Schillings, Member at Large  
B. Smith, Uxbridge, Vice-Chair  
M. Somerville, Member at Large, attended the meeting at 7:32 PM  
N. Swain, Scugog  
G. Taylor, Pickering  
T. Watpool, Brock

Absent: R. Death, Whitby  
J. McKay, Durham Farm Fresh  
G. O'Connor, Member at Large  
D. Risebrough, Member at Large, Vice-Chair  
M. Shiers, Durham Region Federation of Agriculture  
D. Stevenson, Oshawa  
W. Wotten, Regional Councillor

#### Staff

Present: A. De Vos, Program Specialist, Department of Planning and Economic Development  
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT  
M. Scott, Project Planner, Department of Planning and Economic Development  
A. Smith, Manager, Corporate Initiatives, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer  
K. Smith, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services  
L. Talling, Acting Manager, Agricultural & Rural Economic Development, Department of Planning and Economic Development

**2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. Adoption of Minutes**

Moved by T. Watpool, Seconded by H. Schillings,  
That the minutes of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting  
held on Tuesday, February 13, 2024, be adopted.

CARRIED

**4. Presentations**

A) Andrea Smith, Manager, Corporate Initiatives, Region of Durham, re: Region of Durham Strategic Plan

Andrea Smith, Manager, Corporate Initiatives, Region of Durham, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding Durham Region's 2025 Strategic Plan.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Purpose
- Approach to Strategy Development
- Timeline
- Engagement Activities
- Your Voice Matters

A. Smith welcomed members of the Committee to visit the Region's website to provide input regarding the 2025 Strategic Plan.

A. Smith responded to a question with regards to the proposed length of the new Strategic Plan.

**5. Discussion Items**

A) Agriculture 101 Training

A. De Vos advised that the final Agriculture 101 Training presentation will be delivered to the City of Oshawa on Monday, March 25, 2024.

Discussion ensued with regards to previous presentations delivered; the length of time allotted for presentations; ways to better improve the presentations for the future; and providing a broader Regional perspective on agriculture in future presentations.

B) Rural and Agricultural Economic Development Update

L. Talling provided the following update:

- The North Durham Agriculture-Related and On-Farm Diversified Uses (OFDU) policy and development application process is currently choosing a consultant and will begin working with them on the project plan once selected.
- Durham Region is partnering with Durham Farm Fresh for the Gather at the Farm campaign in October to promote agriculture tourism and farms that have culinary operations.

A. De Vos provided the following update:

- The Agriculture Tour for municipal planners, economic developers and building staff is taking place in Uxbridge on Wednesday, March 27, 2024 at Mustards Dairy Farm and Soybean Roaster, St. Lawrence Grains & Farm Supply, and Slabtown Cider. The tour is designed to identify different businesses across agriculture systems; how they play a role in the community; to help provide consistency across municipalities; and encouraging collaboration across Durham by sharing resources and best practices.
- The Precision Ag Field Day will be hosted by Tom and Sally Barrie at the end of May with over 100 students attending and will highlight the diversity of career opportunities and how technology is incorporated into agriculture.

L. Talling and A. De Vos responded to questions with regards to how the collaboration with the three northern municipalities is going on the North Durham Agriculture-Related and On-Farm Diversified Uses (OFDU) project; the decision not to continue with the Gates Open event; when the new campaign Gather at the Farm will be running and engaging local area municipal Tourism Advisory Committees; and whether there will be any schools that offer agriculture programs in attendance at the Precision Ag Field Day.

Discussion ensued with regards to potential challenges with the three northern municipalities developing the same policies and by-laws on the North Durham Agriculture-Related and On-Farm Diversified Uses (OFDU) project.

C) Agricultural Advisory Committee Clarington Update

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T. Barrie stated that at the March 14, 2024 meeting of the Clarington Agriculture Advisory Committee, there was a presentation from Michael Longarini to promote the six-week Four Farms Market Garden Training being offered in Bowmanville, Newcastle and Port Hope. He further stated that there was discussion regarding the newly installed lights at Enfield Road and 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Concession. He advised that the Gala is being held on October 25, 2024 at Royal Ashburn Golf Club.

D) Durham Farm Fresh Update

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J. McKay was not in attendance to provide the Durham Farm Fresh Update.

E) Greater Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance Update

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M. Scott advised that there is no Greater Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance update at this time.

F) Durham Region Federation of Agriculture Update

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M. Shiers was not in attendance to provide the Durham Region Federation of Agriculture Update.

G) Stormwater Management Fees

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M. Scott provided the following update:

- The stormwater management involves controlling the quality and quantity of runoff that results from rainfall and snowmelt to address issues such as flooding, erosion, water quality, and extreme weather events.
- Municipalities are responsible for managing stormwater within its jurisdiction and the stormwater management system includes manholes, catch basins, storm sewers, ditches, oil and grit separators, stormwater management ponds, overland flow routes, watercourses and more.
- The stormwater management fees are being captured under Ontario Regulation 577/17: Asset Management Planning for Municipal Infrastructure to identify the costs and charge out accordingly.
- It is optional for municipalities to implement the stormwater management fees and was identified in the Durham Climate Change Adaptation Plan as an urban flooding mitigation tool.
- There are various models on how the stormwater management fees are implemented such as by square footage, percentage of current value assessment, sliding scales, separating agriculture properties, and offering credits.

Discussion ensued with regards to eliminating the stormwater management fees on farm buildings in the Town of Ajax; how runoff works on agriculture properties; the potential of stormwater management fees being implemented in other municipalities in Durham Region; and putting forth a motion to Regional Council regarding DAAC's position on this topic.

M. Scott responded to a question with regards to being charged the stormwater management fee if there is a stormwater management system built into the building during construction.

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

Whereas Stormwater Management fees are intended for urban infrastructure needs and flood prevention, the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee (DAAC) believes that bona fide farmers on agricultural properties should be exempt from paying Stormwater Management fees in the Region of Durham.

CARRIED

H) 2024 Farm Tour

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Z. Cohoon provided the following update:

- The 2024 Farm Tour will be taking place at Twin Erin Farms on September 26, 2024. He asked M. Sommerville if Two Blokes Cider would be interested in hosting a portion of the farm tour as well, and how to get in touch with Nonquon Conservation Area to be included. He stated that there will be invitations going out to Regional transporters to bring trucks and equipment to the farm as a station will be set up regarding transportation issues in Durham Region.
- A subcommittee meeting will be scheduled in early May and there will be an on-site meeting at the farms to review the set up.

M. Scott advised that the “save the dates” for the farm tour will need to be sent out as soon as possible and will begin preparation to send them out. He also advised that Mary Evans has agreed to provide catering for the event

**6. Information Items**

- A) OPA 2023-001 Decision Report – Clark Consulting Services, on behalf of Bethesda Ridge Farms, to permit the severance of a farm dwelling rendered surplus as a result of the consolidation of non-abutting farm properties in the Municipality of Clarington
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Early Release Report #2024-P-\*\* of the Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development – Decision Meeting Report: Application to Amend the Durham Regional Official Plan, submitted by Clark Consulting Services, on behalf of Bethesda Ridge Farm, to permit the severance of a farm dwelling rendered surplus as a result of the consolidation of non-abutting farm properties in the Municipality of Clarington, File: OPA 2023-001 (Regional Official Plan Amendment #197) was provided as a link to the Agenda and received.

B) Council of the Municipality of Clarington – Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee, regarding Durham Agriculture and the Challenges in Clarington

Correspondence from the Council of the Municipality of Clarington with regards to Durham Agriculture and the Challenges in Clarington was provided as Attachment #3 to the Agenda and received.

C) Council of the Region of Durham – Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee Resolution re: Backyard Chickens within Urban and Rural Settlement Areas

Correspondence from the Council of the Region of Durham with regards to Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee's Resolution re: Backyard Chickens within Urban and Rural Settlement Areas was provided as Attachment #4 to the Agenda and received.

D) Durham Region Federation of Agriculture Letter to Mayor Collier – Stormwater Fees on Agricultural Properties in the Town of Ajax

Correspondence from the Durham Region Federation of Agriculture to Mayor Shaun Collier, Town of Ajax with regards to Stormwater Fees on Agricultural Properties in the Town of Ajax was provided as Attachment #5 to the Agenda and received.

E) Herralea Farms Letter to Mayor Barton – Natural Gas Expansion in Uxbridge

Correspondence from Herralea Farms to Mayor Dave Barton, Township of Uxbridge, with regards to Natural Gas Expansion in Uxbridge was provided as Attachment #6 to the Agenda and received.

Discussion ensued with regards to upfront costs for installation; being charged a \$0.27 premium on the usage of gas; and having to hire an approved contractor for the installation of the gas line.

**7. Other Business**

A) High School Co-op Placements

H. Schillings raised a concern with the hours of the co-op placements for high school students and the need for it to be longer than two hours.

Discussion ensued with regards to allowing co-op placements throughout the summer months to allow for a full day of work; potential co-op opportunities for high school students; having difficulty finding co-op placements from the school board; and having representatives from the school boards attend the Precision Ag Field Day.

B) Future Presentation by the Director of Sustainability, re: Climate Adaption and Agriculture

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M. Scott advised that I. McVey, Director of Sustainability, will be providing a presentation regarding Climate Adaptation and Agriculture at the May 14, 2024 Committee meeting.

**8. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee will be held on Tuesday, April 9, 2024 starting at 7:30 PM.

**9. Adjournment**

Moved by N. Guthrie, Seconded by H. Schillings,  
That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:54 PM

Respectfully submitted,

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Z. Cohoon, Chair

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K. Smith, Committee Clerk