

If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact 1-800-372-1102 ext. 2097.

The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

DURHAM AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

May 14, 2024

A meeting of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, May 14, 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
R. Death*, Whitby, attended the meeting at 7:33 PM
N. Guthrie, Ajax
B. Hulshof, Uxbridge
J. McKay*, Durham Farm Fresh
G. O'Connor, Member at Large
D. Risebrough, Member at Large, Vice-Chair
H. Schillings, Member at Large
M. Shiers, Durham Region Federation of Agriculture
B. Smith, Uxbridge, Vice-Chair
D. Stevenson, Oshawa
G. Taylor, Pickering
T. Watpool, Brock

*** denotes members of the Committee participating electronically**

Absent: M. Somerville, Member at Large
N. Swain, Scugog
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
I. McVey, Manager of Sustainability, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
M. Scott, Project Planner, Department of Planning and Economic Development
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 B. Smith, Seconded by T. Barrie,

That the minutes of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting held on Tuesday, April 9, 2024, be adopted.

CARRIED

4. **Presentations**

A) Mark Tranter, Director, and Chris Finlay, CFO, CANUX, re: Independent Private Schools and the Township of Uxbridge

Mark Tranter, Director, and Chris Finlay, CFO, CANUX, provided a PowerPoint presentation with regards to Independent Private Schools and the Township of Uxbridge.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- CANUX – Community Partnership Project
- Interactive Map
- Value Proposition
 - Community & Tourism: School of our future
 - Financial: New and expanded business
 - Environment: Climate Action – Green Technology
 - Agriculture: Agri-food
 - Education & Future
- The Uxbridge Partnership
 - Shared-use Sports Facility
 - Independent Private School
 - Agriculture Learning Centre
- Support: What we Need
- Next Steps: Moving Forward

M. Tranter advised that they are looking to Committee members for support with the proposal from farmers in Durham Region and to provide scholarship opportunities for athletes.

M. Tranter responded to questions with regards to the proportions of the greenhouse facilities in comparison to the athletic facilities on the proposal; where the proposed facility will be located; whether the presentation has been provided to the Townships of Uxbridge, Scugog and Brock; the size of the land required for the proposal; and whether the proposed facility will take away from municipal facilities offering the same programs.

G.L. O'Connor suggested that the presenters reach out to the President of Durham College regarding this proposal.

B) Mary Anne Martin, Durham Food Policy Council, re: Durham Food System Report Card

Mary Anne Martin and Mary Drummond, Durham Food Policy Council, provided a PowerPoint presentation with regards to Durham Food System Report Card.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Durham Food Policy Council (DFPC) Mission
- DFPC Food System Work
- Food System Planning and Food Sovereignty
- Food System Report Cards
- Methodology
- Data Inclusion Criteria
- Structure of Findings
- What we Found
- Where do we go from here?

M.A. Martin advised that the Durham Food Policy Council is requesting feedback from Committee members to provide data and actions that need to be taken to provide a stronger and healthier food system for Durham Region.

M.A. Martin responded to questions with regards to Durham Food Policy Council's vision in terms of the strategy; and whether food bank usage is being monitored.

Discussion ensued with regards to ensuring livestock is included in the agricultural system for Durham Region; opportunity for more local markets and local food processing; the importance of food literacy for residents; the types of farms that are dwindling in Durham Region; the difficulty of sustaining a farm in Durham Region; and housing issues for offshore workers.

C) Ian McVey, Manager of Sustainability, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, Region of Durham, re: Agriculture and Sustainability

Ian McVey, Manger of Sustainability, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, Region of Durham, provided a PowerPoint presentation with regards to Agriculture and Sustainability.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Durham's Commitment to Climate and Sustainability
- Climate Events:
 - Canadian Context
 - Durham Region Impacts

- Climate in Durham Region: Trends and Projections
- Risks/Impacts to Food and Agriculture
- Food and Agriculture Risk Levels
- Apples and Climate Risk
- Responses to the Climate Crisis
- Durham Region Emissions – 2022 Data
- Durham Greener Homes
- Adaptation Initiatives – Natural Environment
- What are the key barriers to implement of on-farm Environmental Best Management Practices?
- Some Examples from Nearby Jurisdictions

I. McVey asked Committee members for feedback on whether the ALUS (Alternative Land Use Services) Program is something Durham Region should consider looking into.

I. McVey responded to questions with regards to the validity of the future climate projection data presented and where it was obtained; what percentage of forest there is in Ontario compared to Canada; and the percentage of carbon gas emissions from certain emitters.

Comments were raised with regards to average temperature data, and that the temperature data from Pearson airport has not changed in decades; the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere; the average yield of crops in Durham Region over the last decade; the need for unbiased research on climate emergency data; trees being planted on Class 1 and 2 farm land; tile drainage issues that farmers must deal with; educating the public on how to be sustainable; the opportunities or farmers to use topsoil removed from construction sites as clean fill as a sustainability measure; and soil regulations across the lower tier municipalities in Durham Region.

Comments were also raised regarding whether a Climate Emergency was occurring in Durham; climate change science and information being a biased view; climate change is a long-term change and not occurring in the short term; climate change is a strategy to transfer wealth within a community; and that the Sustainability Office should be recognizing both sides of the climate change debate.

In response to a concern raised that the Sustainability Office is directly responsible to the ratepayers of Durham, I. McVey advised that their job is to implement the direction of Regional Council. He suggested providing further information regarding agriculture rebate and incentive programs at a future meeting.

5. Discussion Items

A) Rural and Agricultural Economic Development Update

L. Talling provided the following update:

- The North Durham Agriculture-Related and On-Farm Diversified Uses (OFDU) project agreement with the consultant has been finalized and is in the technical review phase. There is a meeting with the working group on Thursday, May 16, 2024 that will include discussion of Agriculture-Related and OFDU issues identified by Regional and Township staff.
- There will be a presentation at the June 11, 2024 DAAC Meeting on the project for consultation and an opportunity to voice concerns.

A. De Vos provided the following update:

- The Precision Ag Field Day is on May 28, 2024.
- The Agri-Food Gateway Program has launched with eight companies participating in the program. One of the goals of the program is to have one company commercialize an agri-tech solution within a year of completing the program.
- Looking for input from Committee Members to attract an abattoir to Durham Region and finding a suitable site location.

A. De Vos responded to questions with regards to finding a site that can be properly zoned for an abattoir, and the requirements needed for the land to be suitable.

Discussion ensued with regards to using a site with a previously run abattoir in order to avoid having to re-zone the land; the possibility of contacting an operating business in southwest Ontario to see if they are interested in expanding their business; and, employment lands available in the northern municipalities.

B) Agricultural Advisory Committee Clarington Update

T. Barrie stated that at the May 9, 2024 meeting of the Clarington Agriculture Advisory Committee there was a presentation from Martin Straathof from Ontario Farmland Trust regarding the number of protected properties in Ontario. He also advised that the Celebrate Agriculture Gala is being held on October 25, 2024 at the Royal Ashburn Golf Club.

C) Durham Farm Fresh Update

J. McKay advised that Rob Alexander, Chair of Durham Farm Fresh is stepping down from the role and a new Chair will be appointed in the coming months; at the Provincial level, Bill 40: Moving Ontarians Safely Act, is currently in the second reading; asparagus is ready to harvest; strawberry patches will have fruit within 10 days; and farmer's markets have started to open.

D) Greater Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance Update

M. Scott advised that at the last meeting of the Greater Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance there was discussion around stormwater management fees and how the different municipalities are handling it.

E) Durham Region Federation of Agriculture Update

M. Shiers advised that at the last meeting of the Durham Region Federation of Agriculture there was also discussion on stormwater management fees.

F) Provincial Planning & Regional Official Plan Update

M. Scott advised that Durham Region received draft comments back from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on the Regional Official Plan. He stated that there were minimal changes to the agriculture policies.

M. Scott responded to questions with regards to whether the urban boundary expansion have been approved.

In terms of other provincial planning changes, M. Scott further advised that a new Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) will replace the current growth plan and Provincial Policy Statement. The new PPS will implement a new policy to permit two additional residential units on a farm, however they cannot be severed off; the addition of a definition for urban agriculture and agricultural impact assessments; in terms of farmland preservation, the policies around urban boundary expansion have been changed to allow for individual municipalities to handle their own urban boundary expansions;

Discussion ensued with regards to building multiple houses on a farm; and providing servicing in urban boundary expansions.

M. Scott advised that once comments have been completed and provided the MMAH, he will circulate it to Committee members.

G) ROPA 2024-001 – Application to Amend the Durham Regional Official Plan, submitted by Lafarge Canada Inc. to permit the expansion of Aggregate Resource Extraction Area #30 in the Township of Uxbridge

M. Scott advised that an application to amend the Durham Regional Official Plan, submitted by Lafarge Canada Inc. to permit an expansion to Aggregate Resource

Extraction Area #30 in the Township of Uxbridge, File: OPA 2024-001, was received.

M. Scott provided a brief overview of the application and discussion ensued regarding the subject site.

Moved by H. Schillings, Seconded by B. Smith,
That the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee is in support of the application to amend the Durham Regional Official Plan to permit the expansion of aggregate resource extraction area #30 in the Township of Uxbridge.

CARRIED

H) 2024 Farm Tour

D. Risebrough advised that there was a subcommittee meeting held on May 2, 2024 to review the invitation list and the next step is to provide the “save the date” to additional people added to the list. Pictures for the invitations need to be done within the next 10 days to capture the apple blossoms. There will be another subcommittee meeting prior to the next DAAC meeting to discuss the format and schedule of the day and make the final decision on a keynote speaker.

Discussion ensued with regards to whether people movers were required for the farm tour and potentially renting the old trolley streetcar for that purpose.

6. Information Items

A) OMAFRA Consultation: Rural Economic Development Strategy

M. Scott advised that OMAFRA is seeking input from people across Ontario to inform the creation of a rural economic development strategy to help improve economic opportunities, create jobs and support economic growth. The Consultation: Rural Economic Development Strategy was provided as a link to the agenda and received.

B) Durham Food Policy Council – The Durham Food System Report Card 2024

The Durham Food System Report Card 2024 by Durham Food Policy Council was provided as a link to the agenda and received.

C) Correspondence – Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee Resolution re: Stormwater Management Fees

Correspondence from the Regional Municipality of Durham with regards to Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee Resolution re: Stormwater Management Fees was provided as Attachment #5 to the agenda and received.

D) OFA Memo – Stormwater Management Fees

Memorandum from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) with regards to Stormwater Management Fees was provided as Attachment #6 to the agenda and received.

E) Regional Official Plan Amendment #197 – Notice That Decision of Regional Council is Final

Notice That Decision of Regional Council is Final with respect to Amendment #197 to the Durham Regional Official Plan, File: OPA 2023-001, was provided as Attachment #7 to the agenda and received.

F) Notice of Adoption of Regional Official Plan Amendment #198

Notice of Adoption with respect to Amendment #198 to the Durham Regional Official Plan, File: OPA 2023-002, was provided as Attachment #8 to the agenda and received.

G) Review of Proposed Policies Adapted from A Place to Grow and Provincial Policy Statement to Form a New Provincial Planning Policy Instrument

Review of proposed policies adapted from A Place to Grow and Provincial Policy Statement to form a new provincial planning policy instrument was provided as a link to the agenda and received.

H) Review of Proposed Policies for a New Provincial Planning Policy Instrument

Review of proposed policies for a new provincial planning policy instrument was provided as a link to the agenda and received.

I) Proposed Provincial Planning Statement

The Proposed Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, Environmental Registry of Ontario Posting #019-8462 from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing was provided as a link to the agenda and received.

J) Bill 195, the Proposed Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024 – Housing Initiatives

Bill 195, the Proposed Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024 – Housing Initiatives was provided as a link to the agenda and received.

K) Correspondence – Township of Brock – DAAC Resolution – Backyard Chickens within Urban and Rural Settlement Areas

Correspondence from the Town of Brock with regards to DAAC Resolution – Backyard Chickens within Urban and Rural Settlement Areas was provided as Attachment #13 to the agenda and received.

7. Other Business

There was no other business to be considered.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee will be held on Tuesday, June 11, 2024 starting at 7:30 PM.

9. Adjournment

Moved by D. Risebrough, Seconded by M. Shiers,
That the meeting be adjourned.
CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 9:34 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Z. Cohoon, Chair

K. Smith, Committee Clerk