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The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

DURHAM AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

September 10, 2024

A meeting of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, September 10, 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
N. Guthrie, Ajax
B. Hulshof*, Uxbridge
J. McKay, Durham Farm Fresh
D. Risebrough, Member at Large, Vice-Chair
H. Schillings, Member at Large
M. Shiers, Durham Region Federation of Agriculture
B. Smith*, Uxbridge, Vice-Chair
M. Somerville, Member at Large
D. Stevenson, Oshawa
N. Swain, Scugog
G. Taylor, Pickering
T. Watpool, Brock
W. Wotten*, Regional Councillor attended the meeting at 8:05 PM and left at 8:38 PM

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

Absent: G. O'Connor, Member at Large

Staff

Present: S. Ciani, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
J. Kelly, Manager, Policy and Special Studies, Department of Planning and Economic Development
M. Scott, Project Planner, Department of Planning and Economic Development
L. Talling, Acting Manager, Agricultural & Rural Economic Development, Department of Planning and Economic Development

*** denotes staff participating electronically**

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by M. Somerville, Seconded by G. Taylor,
That the minutes of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting
held on Tuesday, June 11, 2024, be adopted.

CARRIED

4. Presentations

A) Mary Anne Martin, Durham Food Policy Council – Durham Food System Strategy

This item was dealt with later in the meeting. See pages 4 and 5 of these minutes.

5. Discussion Items

A) Rural and Agricultural Economic Development Update

L. Talling provided the following updates:

- Over the summer, Port Royal Mills relocated to the Township of Scugog, with plans to open by the end of October 2024. Port Royal Mills specializes in custom multigrain blends and has plans to further expand into the United States (US) market. They are currently looking for local growers of red fife wheat specifically.
- With respect to Hamilton-Oshawa Port Authority (HOPA) – A. De Vos has been providing background data on Agri-business in the Region to support fertilizer expansion plans at the Oshawa Port. She advised the Committee that staff have provided annual fertilizer need estimates for Durham Region and pitched the business opportunity for HOPA to expand their fertilizer capacity at the Oshawa Port and has been connecting with the General Manager. Z. Cohoon added that the Port has built a new grain bin, and that they are going to expand their area in the next few years to add more fertilizer storage.
- Staff continue to promote the Apple Value Chain video campaign alongside Durham Farm Connections.

B) Brock Backyard Chickens

M. Scott advised that the Township of Brock sent him an email advising that they had received DAAC's previous motion with respect to backyard chickens and that staff had recently presented a report to Council, but Council chose to proceed in a different direction and allow backyard chickens in certain areas.

Discussion ensued regarding the Committee's position and the concerns that Z. Cohoon raised to Brock Council.

The Committee expressed their disappointment with the direction that Brock Council decided to take and suggested that their previous motion be re-sent to the Township of Brock to solidify their position regarding the backyard chickens issue.

C) Agricultural Advisory Committee Clarington - Update

T. Barrie advised that many concerns have been raised regarding the stop lights being built on regional roads, and that they are being built too close to the road so that a tractor with dual sets of wheels can't stay on their side of the center line without hitting the light post (ex. Enfield Road at the 8th Concession). He also advised that the lights at that location that run East/West stay green permanently, creating a safety hazard, and are only triggered if a car heading North/South is waiting.

T. Barrie stated that Tony Ricciardi, Manager of Infrastructure Planning & Services at the Municipality of Clarington spoke to the Committee regarding the 2024 rural capital projects that included new parks, new bridges, and more. He also advised that they discussed the definition of a farm building, and the banning of Rodenticide across the municipality.

D) Durham Farm Fresh Update

J. McKay advised that they are currently working on a new website and putting a budget together for that. In response to a question from the Committee he advised that this year's apple crop is very good, and that the United States (US) market controls Canadian prices for apples.

E) Greater Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance Update

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

M. Shiers advised that there was mainly housekeeping matters at the last Durham Region Federation of Agriculture meeting and that they were looking for help at the Touch-a-truck event.

G) On Farm Diversified Use/Agriculture Related Use Project Update

L. Talling advised that the project consultant, WSP, presented and facilitated a discussion at the Durham Region Federation of Agriculture (DRFA) meeting on June 18, 2024. The public was invited to attend and staff received good feedback. She also advised that there was also an online survey that was live until mid July, and it received 58 responses. She further advised that WSP have provided draft

recommendations from the gathered feedback that have been reviewed by Regional Economic Development and Planning staff and staff from the three north Durham Townships, and draft recommendations will be presented to the Committee shortly.

In response to a question from the Committee, L. Talling advised that some of the key themes were that the agriculture community is looking for consistency across the three Townships, and that the process can be confusing and costly.

H) Provincial Planning Statement Update

M. Scott advised that the Province released the final Provincial Planning Statement that is set to go into effect October 20, 2024, with two relevant changes to agriculture. The two changes were the definition to “On Farm Diversified Use”, and clarification of some permissions with respect to additional residential units on prime agricultural land.

I) 2024 Farm Tour

D. Risebrough advised that the 2024 Farm Tour has been relocated to the Scugog Community Recreation Center and that it will now be presented as an agricultural education day instead.

D. Risebrough advised that the schedule for the day will appear roughly as follows:

- 10:30 AM – Registration
- 11:30 AM – Lunch with a presentation by OMAFRA
- 12:30 PM – Break out sessions with Matt Porter, Trent University; Jordan McKay, Durham Farm Fresh; Matt Somerville, and a presentation and display of agriculture transportation equipment
- 2:30-3:00 PM – Conclusion

D. Risebrough further advised that members will be needed from 8:00 AM to help set-up the room for the day.

At this time Mary Anne Martin attended the meeting.

4. Presentations

A) Mary Anne Martin, Durham Food Policy Council – Durham Food System Strategy

Mary Anne Martin, Durham Food Policy Council, appeared before the Committee with respect to the Durham Food System Strategy.

M-A. Martin reminded the Committee that the Durham Food System Report Card brings together existing food measure systems, identifies benchmarks, identifies gaps, and acts as a resource. She advised that they are hoping they can use the report card as a jumping off point for a food system strategy. The food system

strategy would be about actions that go beyond a simple to-do list and works to build knowledge and skills to help address food insecurity, affordability, farm security, protection of farmland, protecting farm workers, educating and encouraging people to join the farm sector, encouraging land trust, reducing food waste, strengthening relationships with the indigenous community, encouraging citizen engagement, and more.

M-A. Martin stated they want to identify approaches, actions, and performances measures, and then support the development of more public facing communications, materials, and activities to share regarding the food system strategy.

M-A. Martin stated that once the strategy was in place, they would then want to develop an implementation plan. She advised that the Durham Food Policy Council is currently looking for support for the idea of the food system strategy and asked if anyone wanted to be part of that conversation. M. Somerville and D. Stevenson stated that they would like to follow-up with M-A. Martin after the meeting to be a part of future conversations.

M-A. Martin responded to questions from the Committee regarding whether there is any funding for this project and who they will be requesting funds from; if the Durham Food Policy Council is working with Feed the Need Durham; and whether a business plan and prospectus has been developed.

The Committee stated that it would be difficult to provide over-arching support without a business plan first, but that they can see some benefits from an educational standpoint with respect to knowing where food comes from.

6. Information Items

A) Consideration of Transition of Land Use Planning Matters to Facilitate the Introduction of a New Policy Statement Issued Under the Planning Act

A link to ERO #019-9065: The consideration of transition of land use planning matters to facilitate the introduction of a new policy statement issued under the Planning Act, was provided as Attachment #2 to the agenda and received.

B) 2024 Provincial Planning Statement

A copy of the 2024 Provincial Planning Statement was provided as Attachment #3 to the agenda and received.

C) #2024-INFO-51 – New Provincial Planning Statement, 2024

A copy of Information Report #2024-INFO-51 of the Commissioner of Planning & Economic Development was provided as Attachment #4 to the agenda and received.

D) #2024-P-14 – Overview of Carbon Offset Opportunities for the Agriculture Sector in Durham Region

A copy of Commissioner's Report #2024-P-14 of the Commissioner of Planning & Economic Development was provided as Attachment #5 to the agenda and received.

7. Other Business

A) Concerns regarding the Width of Culverts During Road Upgrades

H. Schillings raised concerns regarding road upgrades in and around culverts and the need for making wider farm driveways. He stated that farm equipment/trucks are not able to make the right turns without crossing the centre line, which is very dangerous with a speed limit of 80 km/h on roads.

H. Schillings expressed his frustration that during the planning phases, regional staff do not meet with DAAC members to discuss necessary widths/recommendations required for farm equipment to enter farm driveways.

M. Scott advised that Works staff are tentatively booked to attend the October DAAC meeting and will follow up to confirm their attendance.

B) Agricultural Gala Nominations

N. Swain advised that the Celebrate Agriculture Gala taking place at the end of October is looking for nominations for the following awards: Farm Family award, Spirit of Agriculture award, and the Leadership award. N. Swain requested that the Committee forward any recommendations to her and she can also help get a nomination package together for them.

C) Migrant Workers Housing – Withholding Permits to Complete Work on Trailers

J. McKay raised a concern from farms in the Municipality of Clarington regarding migrant worker housing and the concern with respect to acquiring permits to allow trailers to be placed on the farms for the migrant workers.

J. McKay advised that recently the fire department completed a blitz of some Clarington farms and provided a number of recommendations to the owners that includes a 30 minute fire wall barrier surrounding all of the bedrooms in the migrant workers housing. He stated that the work the fire department is recommending requires building permits, but the Municipality of Clarington won't issue permits because trailers being placed on farm property goes against the zoning by-laws.

J. McKay further advised that a representative from Witzkes Greenhouses will be delegating to Clarington Council on behalf of Witzkes Greenhouses, Watson Farms and Algoma Orchards with respect to this issue.

D) Durham's Regional Official Plan

M. Scott advised that Durham's Regional Official Plan has been approved by the province which includes updated agricultural policies.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee will be held on Tuesday, October 8, 2024 starting at 7:30 PM.

9. Adjournment

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

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Z. Cohoon, Chair

S. Ciani, Committee Clerk