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The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

DURHAM ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

March 20, 2025

A regular meeting of the Durham Environment and Climate Advisory Committee was held on Thursday, March 20, 2025 in Council Chambers, Regional Municipality of Durham Headquarters, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby at 7:06 PM. Electronic participation was permitted for this meeting.

1. Roll Call

Present: J. Cuthbertson, Member at Large, Chair
B. Basztyk, Brock
O. Chaudhry, Pickering attended the meeting at 7:24 PM
P. Cohen, Post-Secondary Student attended the meeting at 7:20 PM
B. Foxton, Uxbridge
K. Lui, Member at Large
K. Murray, Clarington, Second Vice-Chair
M. Nasir, Ajax
Councillor Shahid attended the meeting at 7:41 PM
D. Stathopoulos, Oshawa
***all members of the committee participated electronically**

Absent: G. Carpentier, Scugog, First Vice-Chair
B. Widner, Whitby

Staff

Present: A. Bathe, Senior Planner, Community Growth & Economic Development
Department
S. Ciani, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
S. Logan, Policy Advisory, Climate Change, Office of the CAO
S. Vamathevan, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
***all staff members participated electronically**

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved by K. Murray, Seconded by B. Basztyk,
That the agenda for the March 20, 2025 Durham Environment and
Climate Advisory Committee (DECAC) meeting, be approved.
CARRIED

3. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

4. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by K. Lui, Seconded by M. Nasir,
That the minutes of the Durham Environment and Climate Advisory
Committee meeting held on Thursday, February 20, 2025, be adopted.
CARRIED

5. Delegations

A) Oswald Sharpe, Reducing Carbon Pollution

Oswald Sharpe appeared before the Committee with respect to reducing carbon pollution.

O. Sharpe suggested that in order to help reduce carbon pollution and use less fuel, that garbage trucks should stop as few times as possible. O. Sharpe suggested that for residents located in an area that share a boulevard, that they all place their garbage together (ex. One large community bin on the boulevard) to decrease the amount of stops for the driver. They suggested that this would also help to decrease the amount of illegal dumping in the Region.

6. Presentations

A) Fallon Hayes, Project Coordinator, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, Presenting on the Rural Clean Water Program

Fallon Hayes, Project Coordinator, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Rural Clean Water Program (RCWP).

Highlights from the presentation included:

- Table of Contents
- 36 Conservation Authorities in Ontario
- What is a Watershed?
- Rural Clean Water Program Origin Story
- How can Agriculture Effect Water Quality?
- What is the Rural Clean Water Program (RCWP)?
- Full List of RCWP Cost-Share Funding Categories
 - Peel Region Farms
 - York Region Farms
- Funding Categories Corresponding Benefits
- Past Project Examples
- Natural Area Creation Project Example: Wetland
- Project Goals and Benefits
- We Have Completed Over 300 RCWP Projects to Protect our Watersheds!
- Summary of Some of our Accomplishments

F. Hayes responded to questions from the Committee regarding whether there have been any problems identified with any of the RCWP projects; whether chemical testing of well water has been considered due to the infiltration of pesticides into the groundwater (chemical contamination) around the wells that supply water to families and animals; whether there are pre/post measurements taken on water quality to measure the impact of each project; and whether TRCA works to identify potential hotspots that would benefit from the RCWP.

A. Bathe advised that Durham staff are actively working with TRCA staff to bring a similar program to Durham rural landowners.

B) Shannon Logan, Policy Advisor, Region of Durham, Presenting on Proposed Enhancements to the Durham Greener Homes Program

Shannon Logan, Policy Advisor, Region of Durham provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the proposed enhancements to the Durham Greener Homes Program.

Highlights from the presentation included:

- Presentation Outline
- Durham Greener Homes (DGH)
 - DGH Performance to Date
 - Energy Coaching is Highly Successful
 - New Virtual Home Energy Audit Tool
 - Carbon Emissions in Durham Region
 - Durham's Low Carbon Pathway – Key Strategies
 - Extreme Weather – Unprecedented Cost Pressures on Home and Building Owners
 - Extreme Weather Impacts in Durham Region
 - Opportunity to Leverage New Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Funding
 - Opportunity to Leverage Municipal Lending
- Proposed Climate Resilience (“Weather Ready”) Services
 - Helping Residents get “Weather Ready”
 - Proposed Program
 - Multi-Hazard Home Resilience Assessment
 - Targeted Approach to Reducing Financial Barrier
 - Working List of Possible Rebates/Incentives
 - Communication and Community Engagement
 - Industry Collaboration
- Proposed Municipality to Homeowner Financing Program
 - Durham Greener Homes Loan Features
 - Loan to Support Full Range of Climate Action
- Next Steps

S. Logan responded to questions from the Committee regarding details of the Virtual Home Energy Assessment Tool; whether there are plans for designing more efficient new-build homes in the future; who provides the financing for the DGHP and whether the program is Durham led; and when the anticipated start date of the program would be.

Moved by Councillor Shahid, Seconded by K. Murray,
That we recommend to the Committee of the Whole:

That the Durham Environment and Climate Advisory Committee (DECAC) supports the proposed enhancements to the Durham Greener Homes Program (DGHP).

CARRIED

7. Items for Discussion

A) DECAC 2025 Webinar Series

J. Cuthbertson suggested that DECAC host another webinar series this year as was done previously during COVID on a variety of green topics, as the series was well received and well attended.

Discussion ensued on a variety of topics such as a sustainable perennial nursery owner, sustainable gardening at home, and youth activists such as Climate Justice Durham.

A. Bathe advised that staff would create a shared document for committee members to input potential webinar topics and contact information if available.

B) Pollinator Seed Distribution Volunteers Reminder

A. Bathe advised that volunteers will be needed for distributing the pollinator seeds at this year's Compost Giveaway Events.

A. Bathe advised a shared document would be created for committee members to sign up for each of the giveaway events.

C) 2025 DECAC Awards Update

A. Bathe advised that they are currently working with corporate communications to create a social media plan for the DECAC awards. She advised that a date has not been determined by Ontario Tech University yet but that it will take place in the Fall. She added that a fully online form has also been developed where nominators can attach any relevant information to the application.

A. Bathe advised that staff would inform the Committee once the nomination form was live, and it is anticipated to be ready by April 1, 2025.

A. Bathe responded to a question from the Committee regarding whether a link to the past winners could be included on the nomination form. She also advised that she would forward information on the nomination process to Councillor Shahid to include on their monthly newsletter.

8. For Information

A) Commissioner Report #2025-CG-4: Smart Mobility Durham 2024 Annual Report and 2025 Workplan

A copy of Report #2025-CG-4 of the Commissioner of Community Growth & Economic Development was received.

J. Cuthbertson raised a concern regarding the amount of congestion and idling of cars that takes place at Holy Trinity High School in Courtice during drop-off and pick-up hours, and noted there could be a good opportunity to reduce carbon emissions and increase safety in that area by implementing a roundabout as a potential solution. Councillor Shahid offered to forward the concern to R. Jagannathan, Commissioner of Works for consideration.

A. Bathe shared that the Transportation Planning Department has a program titled, "Active and Sustainable School Travel Program", where staff observe and assess concerns raised by residents, in person. She noted that the principal of the school needs to be on board with participating and signing up for the program. A. Bathe advised that she would follow up with the program lead regarding this concern as well.

B) Commissioner Report #2025-WR-2: Update on the Automated Cart-Based Garbage Collection Pilot Project and Future Waste Collection Contract Delivery

A copy of Report #2025-WR-2 of the Commissioner of Works was received.

C) Congratulations to DECAC Member Bill Basztyk for Receiving the King Charles III Coronation Medal for Economic Development Activities and Diplomatic Service, Including Bioscience and Environmental Activities

Congratulations was given to Bill Basztyk, DECAC member, for receiving the King Charles III Coronation Medal for Economic Development Activities and Diplomatic Service, including Bioscience and Environmental Activities.

D) DECAC Seed Giveaway Projects makes the Durham College Chronicle: Link to Article

A copy of the "DECAC Seed Giveaway Projects" Article in the Durham College Chronicle was received.

E) Ontario Professional Planners Institute: Climate Change Adaptation Practice Guide

A copy of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute: Climate Change Adaptation Practice Guide was received.

F) Engagement Opportunity: Whitby Urban Forest Management Plan

A copy of the Engagement Opportunity: Whitby Urban Forest Management Plan was received.

A. Bathe advised that the Town of Whitby is currently working through the development of a Whitby Urban Forest Management Plan and they have been invited to present at a future DECAC meeting. She further advised that Town of Whitby staff have reached out to inform DECAC of the opportunity to participate in consultations for Phase 2 of the plan.

A. Bathe advised that the expected date for the posting of Phase 2 is May 12, 2025, and that a link will be provided to the Committee once available. She advised that there will be a fully virtual external parties/stakeholders workshop held on May 28, 2025, from 2:00 – 4:00 PM, and a hybrid community information session held on May 28, 2025, from 6:00 – 9:00 PM in the Town of Whitby's Council Chambers.

Moved by Councillor Shahid, Seconded by P. Cohen,
That Information Items 8. A) to F) inclusive, be received for information.
CARRIED

9. Other Business

There was no other business considered.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of the Durham Environment and Climate Advisory Committee will be held on April 10, 2025, starting at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby.

11. Adjournment

Moved by Councillor Shahid, Seconded by O. Chaudhry,
That the meeting be adjourned.
CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 9:03 PM

J. Cuthbertson, Chair, Durham Environment
and Climate Advisory Committee

S. Ciani, Committee Clerk