

The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

DURHAM ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

May 15, 2025

A regular meeting of the Durham Environment and Climate Advisory Committee was held on Thursday, May 15, 2025, in Council Chambers, Regional Municipality of Durham Headquarters, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby at 7:00 PM. Electronic participation was permitted for this meeting.

1. Roll Call

Present: J. Cuthbertson, Member at Large, Chair
B. Baszytk, Brock
G. Carpentier, Scugog, First Vice-Chair
O. Chaudhry, Pickering left the meeting at 8:20 PM
C. DeAbreu, Youth Member
K. Murray, Clarington, attended the meeting at 7:39 PM
M. Nasir, Ajax
D. Stathopoulos, Oshawa
***all members of the committee participated electronically**

Absent: P. Cohen, Post-Secondary Student
K. Lui, Member at Large, Second Vice-Chair
Councillor Shahid
B. Widner, Whitby

Staff

Present: A. Bathe, Senior Planner, Community Growth & Economic Development
S. Ciani, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
attended the meeting at 7:20 PM
S. Dessureault, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
left the meeting at 7:20 PM
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
M. Kawalec, Program Coordinator, Climate Change, Office of the CAO
Department
***all staff members participated electronically**

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved by M. Nasir, Seconded by D. Stathopoulos,
That the agenda for the May 15, 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 B. Basztyk, Seconded by G. Carpentier,
That the minutes of the Durham Environment and Climate Advisory
Committee meeting held on Thursday, March 20, 2025, be adopted.
CARRIED

5. New Member Introduction

A) Chazz DeAbreu, Youth Member

A. Bathe welcomed Chazz DeAbreu to the Committee as the Youth Member Representative.

C. DeAbreu introduced himself to the Committee and provided a brief background on his motivation for joining the Committee.

6. Presentations

A) Roy Mosher, Restoration Coordinator, Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority Presenting on the 2025 Heber Downs Tree Planting Program

Roy Mosher, Restoration Coordinator, Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority (CLOCA), provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the 2025 Heber Downs Tree Planting Program.

Highlights from the presentation included:

- Heber Down – Geological History
- Concept and Signage
- Natural Regeneration
- Forest Succession
 - Stages of Primary Succession
- Plan Development
- Partnerships

R. Mosher responded to questions from the Committee regarding what forest succession is driven by; and whether there was an opportunity to move towards using wood chips in the soil that would result in an increase in the fungal population and make the ground more habitable.

B) Ingrid Janssen, Little Forests Durham, Presenting on the 2025 Uxbridge and Whitby Tree Planting Program

Ingrid Janssen, Little Forests Durham, provided a PowerPoint presentation on the 2025 Uxbridge and Whitby Tree Planting Program.

Highlights from the presentation included:

- What is a Little Forest?
- Dr. Akira Miyawaki – Japanese Botanist
- Miyawaki Method – Steps & Growth
- Little Forests Durham
- Uxbridge Little Forest
 - Preparation – July 6, 2024
 - Planting Day – November 2, 2024
- What is Happening Here?
- Projects for 2025

I. Janssen responded to questions from the Committee regarding whether nut trees are included in the little forests; how many community members have shown an interest in the Township of Uxbridge and the Town of Whitby Tree Planting Program; whether schools and school boards have been contacted to judge potential interest in participating in the program; and whether certain species are moving North as a result of climate change.

K. Murray, D. Stathopoulos, and C. DeAbreu expressed an interest in assisting I. Janssen with the program.

C) Will Chapple, Forestry and Landowner Services, Kawartha Conservation Authority Presenting on the 2025 Scugog Fall Tree Planting Program

Will Chapple, Forestry and Landowner Services, Kawartha Conservation Authority, provided a PowerPoint presentation on the 2025 Scugog Fall Tree Planting Program.

Highlights from the presentation included:

- Durham East Cross Forest Conservation Area – Hero Forest
- Durham East Cross Forest Conservation Area
- Landscape Ontario Chapter Challenge
- Urban Forest Guide
- The Big Backyard Forest
 - Species Lists
- The Sense-ational Forest
 - Species List
- Site Plan
- Talking Forest App

- Project Timeline

Discussion ensued regarding whether spreading woodchips down in the soil and leaving them for a couple years to prepare the ground for planting, instead of the laborious lasagna method (layering cardboard down), would be more beneficial.

7. Items for Action/Discussion

A) DECAC Webinar Series Update (A. Bathe)

A. Bathe advised that after a discussion with J. Cuthbertson, the best plan regarding the webinar series would be to use the next few months to create a more concrete plan of what the webinars would discuss and schedule them around the entire gardening process (ie. prepping and planting in the late Fall and maintaining through the Winter and Spring).

B) Pollinator Seed Distribution Update (A. Bathe)

A. Bathe advised that instead of the pollinator seeds being distributed at the Compost Giveaway Days she reached out to the education community within the Region of Durham to see if there was interest there to distribute pollinator seed packets.

A. Bathe advised that she created an online form that allowed teachers to indicate how many packets that they would like to receive, and that all of the seed packets were claimed (2,700 seed packets in total).

C) DECAC Membership Update (A. Bathe)

A. Bathe advised that Bruce Foxton has resigned from the Committee and that the recruitment process will begin next week to fill the position. She advised that the Region has recently completed an audit of its policies regarding social media posts and as a result, has scaled back on what is pushed out through the Region's social media channels. She requested help from the Committee members to promote the vacancy.

D) 2025 DECAC Awards Update (A. Bathe)

A. Bathe advised that nominations for the DECAC awards will be open until the end of June. She advised that as a result of the change in the Region's social media policies the Region would not be promoting the awards the same way as in the past.

A. Bathe advised that she would be reaching out to the conservation authorities and school boards directly to share the information. She also advised that a Council information report was written and shared with Regional Council announcing that the nominations were open. She further advised that a public service announcement (PSA) was shared before the Region's policy changed.

M. Kawalec advised that she could share the information with the corporate communications staff at the local area municipalities as well as through the climate change staff. She also advised that it could be shared through the Region's climate change blog.

8. For Information

- A) Proposed interim changes to the Endangered Species Act, 2007 and a proposal for the Species Conservation Act, 2025 - Environmental Registry of Ontario Posting #025-0380
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A copy of the proposed interim changes to the Endangered Species Act, 2007 and a proposal for the Species Conservation Act, 2025 - Environmental Registry of Ontario Posting #025-0380 was received.

- B) Information Report #2025-INFO-32: Nomination Period for the 2025 DECAC Environmental Achievement Awards
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A copy of Information Report #2025-INFO-32 of the Commissioner of Community Growth & Economic Development was received.

- C) Information Report #2025-A-3: Corporate Decarbonization Financing Strategy
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A copy of Information Report #2025-A-3 of the Chief Administrative Officer was received.

- D) Commissioner's Report #2025-COW-19: Courtice District Energy System Update
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A copy of Commissioner's Report #2025-COW-19 of the Chief Administrative Officer was received.

- E) Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes (Link to March Minutes) (Link to April Minutes)
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A copy of the March 18, 2025, Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee (DAAC) meeting minutes and the April 8, 2025, Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting minutes was received.

- F) Durham Active Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes (Link to March Minutes)
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A copy of the March 6, 2025, Durham Active Transportation Committee (DATC) meeting minutes was received.

Moved by K. Murray, Seconded by G. Carpentier,
That Information Items 8. A) to 8. F) inclusive, be received for
information.

CARRIED

9. Other Business

There was no other business to be considered.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of the Durham Environment and Climate Advisory Committee will be held on Thursday, June 19, 2025, starting at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby.

11. Adjournment

Moved by D. Stathopoulos, Seconded by K. Murray,
That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:24 PM

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

S. Ciani, Committee Clerk