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The Regional Municipality of Durham
Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee Minutes

Tuesday, October 14, 2025

A regular meeting of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, October 14, 2025 in the Pickering Meeting Room, Lower Level, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 7:30 PM

Z. Cohoon assumed the Chair.

1. Roll Call

Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.
* indicates individuals who participated electronically.

Members

Present: Z. Cohoon, Chair
B. Smith, Vice-Chair
N. Swain*, Vice-Chair
T. Barrie, Clarington
R. Death, Whitby
N. Guthrie, Ajax
G.L. O'Connor, Member at Large
D. Risebrough, Member at Large
H. Schillings, Member at Large
D. Stevenson, Oshawa
G. Taylor, Pickering
T. Watpool, Brock
W. Wotten*, Regional Councillor

Members

Absent: B. Hulshof, Uxbridge
J. McKay, Durham Farm Fresh
M. Shiers, Durham Region Federation of Agriculture
M. Somerville, Member at Large

Staff Present: R. Inacio, S. Jibb, M. Scott, K. Smith

2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

3. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by G.L. O'Connor, Seconded by T. Watpool,
That the minutes of the regular Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting held on Tuesday, September 9, 2025, be adopted.

Carried

4. Presentations

- A) Laura Moebs, Principal Planner, City of Oshawa
Re: Oshawa Official Plan Review
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Laura Moebs, Principal Planner, City of Oshawa, provided a PowerPoint presentation with regards to Imagine Oshawa: Official Plan Review.

Highlights of the presentation include:

- What is the Oshawa Official Plan?
- Ontario's Land Use Planning Framework
- Why Are We Updating the Official Plan?
- Official Plan Review Process
- Growth Management Study
 - Key Deliverables
- Themes for Review: Agriculture and the Rural System
- Consultation and Engagement
- Next Steps

L. Moebs responded to questions with regards to how agriculture is being implemented into the Oshawa Official Plan; where Oshawa plans to develop in the future; whether growth in the Oshawa plan review will be based off the one recently done by Durham Region; how the growth management study will be conducted; and how agriculture impact studies are implemented.

Committee members provided feedback regarding seasonal housing; development charges for agriculture lands; and concerns with consistency in policy across Durham Region.

M. Scott advised that the draft Oshawa Official Plan will be provided to Committee members and will ensure a follow up presentation is provided closer to the end of the Official Plan being completed.

- B) Valerie Hendry, Manager of Planning, and Vanessa Reusser, Principal Planner, Township of Scugog
Re: Draft On-Farm Diversified Use Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment
-

Valerie Hendry, Manager of Planning, and Vanessa Reusser, Principal Planner, Township of Scugog provided a PowerPoint presentation with regards to Official Plan Amendment (OPA) and Zoning By-law (ZBA) for Agriculture-Related Uses and On-Farm Diversified Uses.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Background
- Agriculture-Related Uses
- On-Farm Diversified Uses

- On-Farm Accommodation
- Event Venues
- Recap: On-farm Diversified Uses & Agricultural-Related Uses
- Home Industry
- Oak Ridges Moraine Area
- Site Plan Control
- Next Steps

V. Hendry and V. Reusser responded to questions with regards to whether the by-law amendments are in line with the WSP report previously provided; and when the Township of Uxbridge will be conducting their Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment.

Moved by D. Risebrough, Seconded by H. Schillings,

That the agenda be altered to consider Item 5. B) On-Farm Diversified Uses Project Farm Business Registration Number Discussion, next, and to allow Scugog staff to provide comments.

Carried

5. Discussion Items

B) On-Farm Diversified Uses Project Farm Business Registration Number Discussion

S. Jibb advised that within the North Durham Enabling Agriculture Related and On-Farm Diversified Uses (OFDU) project recommendations, there is a requirement for farms to have a valid farm business registration number for any on-farm diversified use applications. She noted they have received significant feedback from people within Durham Region and added the intent of the policy is to support farmers and protect farmland. The threshold to obtain a farm business registration number is to have \$7,000 gross on the farm, and if that is not attainable, farms can request an exemption from AgriCorp.

S. Jibb stated they are looking for support from Committee members on the requirement to obtain a farm business registration number as part of the On-Farm Diversified Uses project.

Scugog staff expressed concerns with identifying and defining a farm business and how to ensure proper On-Farm Diversified Uses are being implemented when the project is underway.

Discussion ensued with regards to the requirements to obtain a farm business registration number; how to identify or define a farm business; the intent of OFDUs being for farm businesses rather than landowners looking to start an unrelated business; and the need for OFDUs to support farm succession and help the next generation of farm families to earn a living.

Moved by D. Risebrough, Seconded by B. Smith,

That the Community Growth and Economic Development Committee be advised of the following motion from the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee:

That the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee supports the requirement that On-Farm Diversified Uses (OFDU) must be located on a farm with a valid Farm Business Registration Number that is applicable to the same property for which the OFDU is located or has a valid exemption from AgriCorp.

Carried Unanimously on the following Recorded Vote:

Yes: T. Barrie
R. Death
N. Guthrie
G.L. O'Connor
D. Risebrough
H. Schillings
B. Smith
D. Stevenson
N. Swain
G. Taylor
T. Watpool
Councillor Wotten
Z. Cohoon, Chair

No: None

Members

Absent: B. Hulshof
J. McKay
M. Shiers
M. Sommerville

Declaration

of Interest: None

A) Rural and Agricultural Economic Development Update

S. Jibb provided the following update:

- The Township of Brock is having a public meeting on October 27, 2025 on the Enabling Agricultural Related Uses & On Farm Diversified Uses in North Durham project.
- A report and staff presentation on the Enabling Agricultural Related Uses & On Farm Diversified Uses in North Durham project will be provided at the November 4, 2025 Community Growth and Economic Development Committee.
- The Gather at the Farm campaign is running for the month of October.
- There is a Farm Succession & Continuity Planning Workshop taking place on November 19, 2025 (hosted by 33 Seven); Diversify your

Farm's Future taking place on November 18, 2025 (hosted by the Municipality of Clarington); and Farm Credit Canada – Young Farmers Summit taking place on November 28, 2025.

C) Agricultural Advisory Committee Clarington Update

T. Barrie provided the following update on the October 9, 2025 meeting of the Clarington Agriculture Advisory Committee:

- There was a presentation from Ken Thajer of Ganaraska Conservation Authority regarding the regulations involved in meeting with the conservation authority for getting a plan for tile drainage.
- There was an update to farm buildings in the Ontario Building Code and provided a brief overview of the requirements for the G1-G4 categories.
- There was discussion on the Agriculture Advisory Committee farm tour at Bethesda Ridge Farm which had a good turnout.
- There was discussion on Senator Robert Black's soil study and a motion was sent to Clarington Council on Recommendation Items 4 and 9 within the report.
- There was discussion on developers stripping topsoil off land and the weeds taking over the lands.

D) Durham Farm Fresh Update

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

E) Greater Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance Update

M. Scott advised that he provided a presentation to the Greater Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance on September 22, 2025 regarding the On-Farm Diversified Uses project and received questions on the mix of Regional and Local planners and the Farm Business Registration Numbers.

F) Durham Region Federation of Agriculture Update

M. Shiers was not in attendance to provide the Durham Federation of Agriculture update. S. Jibb advised the Durham Federation of Agriculture Annual General Meeting (AGM) is on October 21, 2025 at 7:00 PM at the Greenbank United Church.

G) Agriculture Mental Health Training

M. Scott advised that the Agriculture Mental Health Training will be scheduled in early 2026 for Committee members.

H) 2024 Farm Tour

M. Scott provided the survey results to Committee members and advised the tour was well received by participants and internal staff. Committee members suggested sending the feedback to Kubota.

I) 2026 Municipal Outreach and Annual Report

M. Scott advised that the 2026 Municipal Outreach and Annual Report will be conducted in the same manner as last year and will begin in January 2026. M. Scott further advised he would provide Committee members with the presentation dates and is looking for volunteers for each of the eight municipalities.

J) 2026 Workplan and Terms of Reference

A copy of the draft 2026 Workplan and Terms of Reference was provided to Committee members prior to the meeting. M. Scott provided a brief overview of the changes implemented in the 2026 Workplan.

Moved by H. Schillings, Seconded by D. Stevenson,
That we recommend to the Community Growth and Economic
Development Committee for approval and subsequent recommendation
to Regional Council:

That the Draft 2026 Workplan of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee be adopted.

Carried

Moved by D. Risebrough, Seconded by G.L. O'Connor,
That we recommend to the Community Growth and Economic
Development Committee for approval and subsequent recommendation
to Regional Council:

That the Draft Terms of Reference of the Durham Agricultural Advisory
Committee be adopted.

Carried

6. Information Items

A) #2025-INFO-72 – Durham Agriculture Advisory Committee 2025 Farm Tour

A copy of Information Report #2025-INFO-72 of the Commissioner of Community Growth & Economic Development was provided as Attachment #2 to the agenda and received.

Moved by G.L. O'Connor, Seconded by D. Stevenson,
That Information Report #2025-INFO-72: Durham Agriculture Advisory
Committee 2025 Farm Tour, be received for information.

Carried

7. Other Business

There was no other business to be considered.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting will be held on Monday, November 10, 2025 at 7:00 PM.

9. Adjournment

Moved by H. Schillings, Seconded by B. Smith,
That the meeting be adjourned.

Carried

The meeting adjourned at 8:57 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Z. Cohoon
Chair

K. Smith
Committee Clerk