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Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

DURHAM REGION ROUNDTABLE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

January 17, 2020

A regular meeting of the Durham Region Roundtable on Climate Change was held on Friday, January 17, 2020 in Room LL-C, Regional Municipality of Durham Headquarters, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby at 1:02 PM.

Present: D. Hoornweg, Citizen Member, Chair
M. Vroegh, Citizen Member, Vice-Chair
E. Baxter-Trahair, Chief Administrative Officer
Councillor Chapman, Health and Social Services Committee
Councillor Crawford, Works Committee attended the meeting at 2:19 PM
T. Hall, Citizen Member
Councillor Highet, Planning & Economic Development Committee
J. Kinniburgh, Citizen Member
G. MacPherson, Citizen Member
C. Mee, Citizen Member
K. Senyk, Citizen Member
K. Shadwick, Citizen Member

Absent: B. Cochrane, Citizen Member
C. Desbiens, Citizen Member
Regional Chair Henry
J. Koke, Citizen Member
Councillor Leahy, Finance & Administration Committee
R. Plaza, Citizen Member

Also

Present: Councillor Kerr

Staff

Present: S. Austin, Director of Corporate Policy and Strategic Initiatives
C. Bandel, Deputy Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services attended for part of the meeting
C. Drimmie, Manager, Corporate Services, Office of the CAO attended for part of the meeting
I. McVey, Manager of Sustainability, Office of the CAO
G. Muller, Director of Planning, Planning & Economic Development
S. Penak, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
R. Walton, Regional Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services attended for part of the meeting

1. Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair

Election of the DRRCC Chair

S. Austin, Director of Corporate Policy and Strategic Initiatives, called for nominations for the position of Chair of the Durham Region Roundtable on Climate Change Committee.

Moved by M. Vroegh, Seconded by K. Shadwick,
That D. Hoornweg be nominated for the position of Chair of the
Durham Region Roundtable on Climate Change Committee.

Moved by K. Shadwick, Seconded by Councillor Chapman,
That nominations be closed.

CARRIED

S. Austin asked if D. Hoornweg wished to stand. D. Hoornweg indicated he wished to stand.

D. Hoornweg was acclaimed to the position of Chair.

Election of the DRRCC Vice-Chair

S. Austin, Director of Corporate Policy and Strategic Initiatives, called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Durham Region Roundtable on Climate Change Committee.

Moved by D. Hoornweg, Seconded by K. Shadwick,
That M. Vroegh be nominated for the position of Vice-Chair of the
Durham Region Roundtable on Climate Change Committee.

Moved by K. Shadwick, Seconded by Councillor Chapman,
That nominations be closed.

CARRIED

S. Austin asked if M. Vroegh wished to stand. M. Vroegh indicated he wished to stand.

M. Vroegh was acclaimed to the position of Vice-Chair.

D. Hoornweg assumed the position of Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by J. Kinniburgh, Seconded by Councillor Highet,
That the minutes of the regular Durham Region Roundtable on
Climate Change meeting held on November 15, 2019, be adopted.
CARRIED

4. Delegations

A) Brigette Sopher, on behalf of Land over Landings, re: Draft Durham Region Climate Change Emergency Declaration [Item 6. A)]

Brigette Sopher, on behalf of Land over Landings, appeared before the Committee regarding the Draft Durham Region Climate Change Emergency Declaration.

B. Sopher stated that herself along with other members of Land over Landings were in attendance today to affirm their support for the declaration and to commend the Region for joining the hundreds of other Canadian jurisdictions officially recognizing that we are facing a climate emergency.

B. Sopher also stated that an aerotropolis and climate-change mitigation are mutually exclusive. She stated that an aerotropolis in North Pickering would destroy a natural asset that could and should be a big part of the Region's mitigation and resiliency plans.

B. Sopher concluded that this climate change emergency declaration is a solid step towards helping Durham residents make a successful transition to a modern, low carbon economy.

B) Adeline Cohen, and Brian Kelly, on behalf of Fridays for Future Whitby, re: Draft Durham Region Climate Change Emergency Declaration [Item 6. A)]

Adeline Cohen, and Brian Kelly, on behalf of Fridays for Future Whitby, appeared before the Committee regarding the Draft Durham Region Climate Change Emergency Declaration.

A. Cohen appeared before the Committee in support of the declaration, and to convince the Committee that it should be their number one priority. She explained what is happening in Jakarta and stated that there is one more decade before it's too late. She added that Durham Region needs to declare a climate emergency and come up with a plan.

B. Kelly also appeared before the Committee in support of the declaration. He stated that Regional Council adopted mitigation targets for the Durham Region community back in 2010.

B. Kelly offered the following recommendations which he stated were consistent with current science:

- 2025 Short Term Target -25% reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions,
- 2030 Mid Term Target -50% reduction of GHGs,
- Targets should be on a new base year of 2020,
- Need to create a new greenhouse gas inventory for 2020 and complete them more rapidly; and
- Each decade from now until 2050 GHG emissions need to be halved.

B. Kelly advised that during budget deliberations, a new climate lens should be applied to everything, including the new Regional Official Plan.

5. **Presentations**

There were no presentations to be heard.

6. **Items for Action and Discussion**

A) Draft Durham Region Climate Change Emergency Declaration

I. McVey advised that he reviewed many other declarations of climate emergency throughout the Region and hopes that this draft climate change emergency declaration applies more specificity around what the priorities are and how they will be capitalized throughout the budget process.

Detailed discussion ensued regarding the importance of identifying how climate change can be embedded throughout all Regional business; the content and scope of the declaration; challenges that may arise; the need for a comprehensive set of emission inventories; prioritizing implementation over time spent re-working plans; and including reference to the updated Regional Official Plan in the declaration.

Staff responded to questions from the Committee regarding corporate emission levels versus Durham Region emissions as a whole; how the Region will be dealt with as a whole; what is being worked on “today”; and what achievements have been made to date within the Region.

S. Austin advised that due to the urgency of this issue, staff will be consulting with the Chair of the Finance & Administration Committee with respect to calling a special meeting of the Finance & Administration Committee, to consider the declaration before the January 29, 2020 Regional Council meeting. Details will be sent out once the meeting details are confirmed.

Moved by C. Mee, Seconded by J. Kinniburgh,
That the Durham Region Roundtable on Climate Change Committee (DRRCC) recommends to the Finance and Administration Committee for approval and subsequent recommendation to Regional Council:

WHEREAS in 2009 Durham Regional Council unanimously adopted the position that “Scientific evidence overwhelmingly supports the conclusion that human activities are fundamentally altering the conditions for life on earth. Climate change and associated global warming is recognized as a severe threat to global systems with the potential for catastrophic outcomes”; and

WHEREAS in the more than ten years since adopting that position, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions at the national and global level have continued to increase, such that the international community is on the brink of missing the opportunity to limit global warming to levels needed to maintain a climate system that is able to sustain human civilization; and

WHEREAS communities in Durham Region are already experiencing the impacts of climate change, including but not limited to: flooding, emergence of invasive species, increased number of high heat days, and the rise of vector borne diseases. Future climate projections for Durham Region indicate that these impacts will become more intense and severe over the coming decades; and

WHEREAS municipal governments have a crucial role to play in responding to the threat of climate change through policies, programs and capital investments that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build adaptive capacity to extreme weather events; and

WHEREAS Durham Region has developed community climate action plans - in partnership with local area municipalities and other key stakeholders - to guide the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient Region while realizing significant economic benefits including household cost savings and job creation; and

WHEREAS Durham Region can join the Government of Canada and more than 400 Canadian municipalities (including several local area municipalities in Durham, the City of Toronto, and other Ontario upper-tier municipalities such as Peel Region, Halton Region, Waterloo Region, Essex County, and Prince Edward County) that have declared climate emergencies and are implementing programs to drastically reduce their communities’ contributions to global carbon emissions; and

WHEREAS the Durham Community Energy Plan articulated the opportunity for climate action to stimulate economic growth in the Region and create job opportunities in the emerging low-carbon economy;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT the Regional Municipality of Durham declare a climate emergency for the purposes of naming, framing, and deepening our commitment to

protecting our economy, our ecosystems and our communities from climate change;

THAT in response to this emergency declaration, the need to reduce overall emissions from Durham Region, as well as to continue to prepare for Durham Region's future climate, are deemed to be high priorities when considering budget direction and in all decisions of Regional Council;

THAT Region staff be directed to review current corporate plans related to climate change, and develop an overarching Corporate Climate Change Master Plan that:

- (1) establishes near-term (2025), mid-term (2030) and long-term (2050) Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions reduction targets for the municipal corporation that position the Region as a leader in the community-wide effort to reduce GHG emissions;
- (2) identifies near-term corporate climate action priorities for the next 5 years (2020-2025) and requirements to support implementation; and
- (3) identifies how climate change considerations will be embedded across all elements of Region business;

THAT staff be directed to review the low carbon pathway in the recently approved Durham Community Energy Plan and:

- (1) establish near-term (2025) and mid-term (2030) community GHG emissions reduction targets; and
- (2) report on a near-term (2025) implementation plan, including concrete actions and resource implications (staff and financial), as well as necessary roles for various levels of government, individual residents, and the business community, to achieve stated GHG emissions reduction targets;

THAT staff be directed to report back on a plan for the recently established Climate Change Mitigation and Environment Reserve Fund to meet identified corporate and community-facing implementation priorities;

THAT environmental sustainability and climate change be recognized as a strategic priority in the Regional Strategic Plan for the remaining Term of Council, in the updated Regional Official Plan; and

THAT staff be directed to work with senior levels of government to accelerate ambition and action to meet the urgency of climate change and provide resources for municipalities and the public to reduce emissions and build resiliency to climate impacts.

CARRIED

B) Draft Letter from the DRRCC to the Members of Parliament Representing
Durham Region Ridings

Discussion ensued regarding making a request to share information between all levels of government; and the need to note that Durham's population is set to double by 2040.

Staff advised that they have planned to notify the media once Regional Council has approved this resolution.

Moved by K. Senyk, Seconded by M. Vroegh,
That the Durham Region Roundtable on Climate Change
Committee (DRRCC) recommends to the Finance and
Administration Committee for approval and subsequent
recommendation to Regional Council:

That Regional Chair Henry send the letter with respect to working together to ensure we can meet our collective goals for climate action, as approved by the DRRCC at their meeting on January 17, 2020 to the Members of Parliament representing Durham Region ridings, on behalf of the DRRCC.

CARRIED

C) Proposed Revisions to the DRRCC Terms of Reference and the DRRCC
Workplan Discussion

Detailed discussion ensued regarding the proposed revisions to the DRRCC Terms of Reference that included: increasing the membership; removing the DRRCC Workplan; and returning to a bi-monthly meeting schedule. It was the consensus of the Committee to remain at a monthly meeting schedule.

Further discussion ensued regarding membership composition; information sharing regarding happenings around Durham Region; establishing a subcommittee; importance of inviting Members of Parliament and Members of Provincial Parliament to the DRRCC meetings; and whether the staff working group can provide regular updates to the DRRCC.

Moved by T. Hall, Seconded by K. Shadwick,
That the Durham Region Roundtable on Climate Change
Committee (DRRCC) recommends to the Finance and
Administration Committee for approval and subsequent
recommendation to Regional Council:

That the DRRCC Terms of Reference, as amended, be approved.

CARRIED

D) 2020 DRRCC Meeting Schedule

Discussion ensued regarding changing the current meeting day of the DRRCC from the 3rd Friday of the month. Staff advised that they will need to go back in order to determine what other days/times would be available. Once that is determined, I. McVey will send out a doodle poll to the Committee members.

Moved by Councillor Chapman, Seconded by Councillor Crawford,
That consideration of the 2020 DRRCC meeting schedule, be
deferred until the February 21, 2020 DRRCC meeting.

CARRIED

7. Other Business

There was no other business to be heard.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of the Durham Region Roundtable on Climate Change will be held on Friday, February 21, 2020 starting at 1:00 PM in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby.

9. Adjournment

Moved by Councillor Chapman, Seconded by M. Vroegh,
That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM.

D. Hoornweg, Chair, Durham Region
Roundtable on Climate Change

S. Penak, Committee Clerk