

## **The Regional Municipality of Durham**

### **MINUTES**

#### **DURHAM ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**January 19, 2023**

A regular meeting of the Durham Environment and Climate Advisory Committee was held on Thursday, January 19, 2023 in Council Chambers, Regional Municipality of Durham Headquarters, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby at 7:14 PM. Electronic participation was permitted for this meeting.

#### **1. Introduction of the new Planning and Economic Development Committee Representatives**

A. Luqman welcomed Councillor Shahid as the new representative from the Planning & Economic Development Committee for DECAC.

#### **2. Roll Call**

Present: G. Carpentier, Scugog, Chair  
O. Chaudhry, Pickering  
S. Clearwater, Whitby  
B. Foxton, Uxbridge  
G. Layton, Oshawa, Second Vice-Chair attended the meeting at 7:45 PM  
K. Lui, Member at Large  
K. Murray, Member at Large  
Councillor Shahid  
B. Shipp, Member at Large  
**\*all members of the committee participated electronically**

Absent: A. Abu-Rayash, Member at Large  
J. Cuthbertson, Clarington, First Vice-Chair  
R. Dickinson, Brock  
M. Nasir, Ajax  
S. Panchal, Youth Member  
D. Stathopoulos, Member at Large

#### **Staff**

Present: R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT  
A. Luqman, Senior Planner, Planning & Economic Development Department  
I. McVey, Manager of Sustainability, CAO's Office  
S. Ciani, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services

**3. Approval of Agenda**

Moved by K. Murray, Seconded by Councillor Shahid,  
That the agenda for the January 19, 2023 Durham Environment and  
Climate Advisory Committee (DECAC) meeting, be approved.  
CARRIED

**4. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**5. Adoption of Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Shahid, Seconded by O. Chaudhry,  
That the minutes of the Durham Environmental Advisory Committee  
meeting held on Thursday, November 17, 2022, be adopted.  
CARRIED

**6. Presentation**

A) SaveSoil (Presented by: Aseem Malhi, Mayooraan Velayuthampillai, Brajeet Bathal,  
and Cavita Sharma)

Aseem Malhi, Mayooraan Velayuthampillai, Brajeet Bathal, and Cavita Sharma  
appeared before the Committee to provide a PowerPoint presentation regarding  
SaveSoil.

Highlights from the presentation included:

- Why Soil?
- Why Now?
- Soil Degradation – A Global Issue
- Save Soil
- Supporters
- Living Soil
- Ramifications of Soil Degradation
  - Food Crisis
  - Water Scarcity
  - Loss of Biodiversity
  - Climate Change
  - Loss of Livelihood
  - Conflict and Migration
- We Should Act Now! 2050 Projections
- Increase Organic Content in Soil to a Minimum of 3-6%
- Sadhguru (Yogi and Visionary)
  - Presented a 3-Pronged Strategy to Safeguard Soil Health & to Support Farmers at COP15 - UNCCD

C. Sharma responded to questions from the Committee regarding what SaveSoil events are being planned for the future; how members of the Committee can participate or support the SaveSoil movement; and whether the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee (DAAC) and Environmental Defence Canada have been consulted.

Discussion ensued regarding the importance of making local connections so that members of the public can see specifically where they fit and how they can make a difference; and the importance of how soil is managed when lands are being developed, and the problem of moving potentially contaminated soil from construction sites onto agricultural land.

## **7. Items for Discussion**

### **A) Change to DECAC (Terms of Reference)**

A. Luqman advised that the Durham Environmental Advisory Committee (DEAC) has been formally renamed as the Durham Environment and Climate Advisory Committee (DECAC). She advised that last Fall was spent revising the terms of reference to incorporate the climate portfolio that was within the Durham Region Roundtable on Climate Change Committee (DRRCC) mandate, and the revisions were endorsed by Regional Council on December 21, 2022.

A. Luqman further advised that the DECAC with the new membership should be formed by May 2023.

### **B) Evolution of the Durham Region Roundtable on Climate Change (DRRCC) and Durham Environmental Advisory Committee (DEAC) (Report 2022-COW-28) – Ian McVey**

I. McVey advised that the former DRRCC is currently being set up as an independent entity at Ontario Tech University with a mandate to provide a broader set of accountability and transparency measures with respect to our progress towards a low carbon, net zero, and climate resilient Region. He advised that the composition for the DRRCC Leadership Committee will include 2 chairs (Regional Chair Henry and a representative from Ontario Tech University), 8 representatives from the local area municipalities (the mayor or designate), and 8-10 individuals representing other organizations and sectors in the community.

I. McVey advised that a report will be presented at the February Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting to appoint the local area municipal representatives. He advised that staff are working with Ontario Tech University through the Brilliant Energy Institute to develop a more comprehensive method of measuring greenhouse gas data, with the ability to separate it by sector and municipality in order to set priorities. He further advised that the first meeting of the DRRCC Leadership Committee will occur in April, with an in-person public forum to be hosted in the Fall at Ontario Tech University.

C) Spring Pollinator Seed Distribution Project

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A. Luqman inquired whether the Committee was interested in participating in a Spring pollinator seed distribution again this year. She advised that roughly 1,200 seed pollinator packets were distributed at Regional waste day events in May and June of last year.

Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of distributing food seed packets along with the pollinator seed packets in response to the current food crisis; reaching out to local Durham nurseries for possible donations of seeds; and if the Committee chose to distribute food seeds, whether native food seeds could be acquired.

Further discussion ensued regarding potential distribution of non-native food seeds, and if the Committee should provide additional education and information to the public on the reasons why non-native seeds were chosen.

It was the consensus of the Committee to distribute pollinator seed packets again this year. A. Luqman advised that she would start the procurement process with respect to the seeds/materials and asked that those interested in volunteering send her an email.

D) Update on Trailhead Parking in Regional Forests

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G. Carpentier expressed his continued concerns regarding inadequate public consultation and transparency within the pilot project, and whether there is sufficient representation from local nature committees in the discussion.

A. Luqman advised that she reached out to internal staff and was informed that closer to the end of the pilot (end of Summer or early Fall of 2023), the landowners would review all of the feedback they had received, and the information would be used to inform the next steps. She advised that they will also be looking at input from the Durham Mountain Biking Association, the Oak Ridges Trail Association, the Expert Horseman's Association, and the Green Durham Association.

A. Luqman asked that G. Carpentier email her a list of the local nature organizations that should be included in the consultation process in order to forward it to the appropriate staff for consideration.

**8. For Information**

A) Commissioner's Report #2023-P-3: 2022 Annual Reports of the Durham Active Transportation Committee, Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee and Durham Environmental Advisory Committee

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A copy of Report #2023-P-3 of the Commissioner of Planning & Economic Development was received.

- B) Investing in the Future of Ontario's Greenbelt: A Conservation Finance Blueprint for Southern Ontario, Smart Prosperity Institute, December 2022
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A copy of Investing in the Future of Ontario's Greenbelt: A Conservation Finance Blueprint for Southern Ontario, Smart Prosperity Institute, December 2022 was received.

Concerns were raised regarding the report's findings that "without further investment, the conservation finance gap in Ontario is estimated to grow to \$13.5 billion by 2030"; and that, "investing in the conservation and restoration of near-urban ecosystems, carries an even higher potential for generating substantial economic returns, while improving community resilience".

**The conclusion, however, was that since "direct investing in natural assets is a relatively new concept in Canada", ... "connecting investment in nature to discreet, measurable economic value remains a challenge at the project level which can increase the uncertainty and risk of pursuing conservation finance risks". Another "challenge when seeking to advance conservation finance" is that parks, conservation areas and other natural areas will be expected to generate significant revenues from fees, levies and permits for accessing these areas." (Referenced on Page 21). Therefore, this is not being considered as an option to raise funds to finance conservation projects at this time (Referenced on Page 69).**

- C) LEAF 2022 Annual Report
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A copy of the LEAF 2022 Annual Report was received.

- D) LEAF Backyard Tree Planting Program Year 3 Interim Report, July-December 2022
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A copy of the LEAF Backyard Tree Planting Program Year 3 Interim Report, July-December 2022 Works was received.

Staff responded to questions from the Committee regarding the length of the LEAF Backyard Tree Planting Program; where the funding for the program comes from; and what trees or shrubs were chosen most often by homeowners.

A concern was raised regarding whether the specific addresses of where the trees or shrubs were planted needed to be identified in the report. I. McVey advised that he would forward that concern to LEAF for consideration.

- E) Commissioner's Report #2022-COW-30: Update on the Approval of the Lakeshore East GO Extension to Bowmanville
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A copy of Report #2022-COW-30 of the Commissioner of Planning & Economic Development was received.

- F) Commissioner's Report #2022-COW-31: Durham Region's Response to the Provincial Consultation on Proposed Amendments to the Greenbelt Plan, ERO postings #019-6216 and #019-6238

A copy of Report #2022-COW-31 of the Chief Administrative Officer was received.

- G) Commissioner's Report #2022-P-20: Planning and Economic Development Department Achievements, 2018-2022

A copy of Report #2022-P-20 of the Commissioner of Planning & Economic Development was received.

- H) Information Report #2022-INFO-95: Durham Meadoway Visioning Study

A copy of Report #2022-INFO-95 of the Commissioner of Planning & Economic Development was received.

- I) Minutes of the December 6, 2022, Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee (DAAC) meeting

A copy of the December 6, 2022, Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting minutes was received.

G. Carpentier advised that Z. Cohoon, Chair, DAAC, presented the DAAC 2022 Annual Report to the Planning & Economic Development Committee on January 10, 2023, but due to technological issues, DEAC's 2022 Annual Report delegation was deferred until the February 7, 2023 Planning & Economic Development Committee.

Moved by Councillor Shahid, Seconded by S. Clearwater,  
That Information Items 8. A) to I) 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 Thursday, February 16, 2023, 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 8:26 PM

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G. Carpentier, Chair, Durham Environment and  
Climate Advisory Committee

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S. Ciani, Committee Clerk