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The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

DURHAM AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

May 9, 2023

A meeting of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, May 9, 2023 in Meeting Room 1-A, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 7:30 PM. Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.

1. Roll Call

Present: T. Barrie, Clarington, attended the meeting at 7:33 PM
Z. Cohoon, Member at Large, Chair
N. Guthrie, Ajax
B. Hulshof, Uxbridge
G. O'Connor, Member at Large, attended the meeting at 7:34 PM
D. Risebrough, Member at Large, Vice-Chair
H. Schillings, Member at Large
M. Shiers, Durham Region Federation of Agriculture
B. Smith, Uxbridge, Vice-Chair
M. Somerville, Member at Large
D. Stevenson, Oshawa
N. Swain, Scugog
G. Taylor, Pickering
T. Watpool, Brock, attended the meeting at 7:33 PM
W. Wotten*, Regional Councillor
*** denotes members of the Committee participating electronically**

Absent: R. Death, Whitby

Staff

Present: A. De Vos, Program Specialist, Department of Planning and Economic Development
S. Jibb, Manager, Agricultural & Rural Economic Development, Department of Planning and Economic Development
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
M. Scott, Project Planner, Department of Planning and Economic Development
K. Smith, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Election of Officers for 2023

K. Smith called for nominations for the position of Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Moved by D. Risebrough, Seconded by B. Smith,
That Zac Cohoon be nominated for the position of Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

K. Smith asked if there were any further nominations and if Z. Cohoon wished to stand. Z. Cohoon indicated he would stand.

Moved by N. Guthrie, Seconded by G. Taylor,
That nominations be closed.

CARRIED

Z. Cohoon was acclaimed as the Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

K. Smith called for nominations for the position of First Vice-Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Moved by B. Smith, Seconded by H. Schillings,
That Dave Risebrough be nominated for the position of First Vice-Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

K. Smith asked if there were any further nominations and if D. Risebrough wished to stand. D. Risebrough indicated he would stand.

Moved by Z. Cohoon, Seconded by N. Guthrie,
That nominations be closed.

CARRIED

D. Risebrough was acclaimed as the First Vice-Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

K. Smith called for nominations for the position of Second Vice-Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Moved by D. Risebrough, Seconded by G. Taylor,
That Bryan Smith be nominated for the position of Second Vice-Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

K. Smith asked if there were any further nominations and if B. Smith wished to stand. B. Smith indicated he would stand.

Moved by Z. Cohoon, Seconded by H. Schillings,
That nominations be closed.

CARRIED

B. Smith was acclaimed as the Second Vice-Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Z. Cohoon assumed the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

4. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by H. Schillings, Seconded by D. Risebrough,
That the minutes of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting held on Tuesday, April 11, 2023, be adopted.

CARRIED

5. Presentations

A) Lindsey Narraway, Supervisor, Animal Services, City of Pickering – Backyard Chickens in Pickering

Lindsey Narraway, Supervisor, Animal Services, City of Pickering, provided a presentation with regards to Backyard Chickens in Pickering.

L. Narraway advised that the Council of the City of Pickering adopted a resolution in February 2023 requesting staff to investigate urban farming, backyard chicken farms, and vertical farming. She stated that staff have prepared a report which will be considered at Pickering Council on June 5, 2023 with recommendations to not allow backyard chickens in the City of Pickering. She provided a brief overview of the points raised in the report to support their recommendation.

L. Narraway requested the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee's support of the City of Pickering's recommendation to not proceed with a backyard chicken pilot program.

Discussion ensued with regards to the number of egg farms in Durham Region; concerns for health, safety and bio security for those producing chickens; the impact if chickens are infected by avian influenza; providing a letter of support to City of Pickering; and, the possibility of a member of the Committee delegating to the City of Pickering with their concerns.

H. Schillings indicated he would submit a delegation request to the City of Pickering to speak on this topic.

Moved by D. Risebrough, Seconded by B. Smith,
That we recommend to the Planning and Economic Development Committee for approval and subsequent recommendation to Regional Council:

That the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee is in support of the City of Pickering's resolution to not proceed with a backyard chicken pilot program, and that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the area municipalities.

CARRIED

B) Michael Scott, Project Planner, Durham Region Planning and Economic Development Department – DAAC Welcome and Overview

Michael Scott, Project Planner, Durham Region Planning and Economic Development Department provided a PowerPoint presentation with regards to Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee Welcome and Overview.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Agenda
- Introductions
- Overview of DAAC
- Committee Structure
- DAAC Chair and Vice-Chair
- DAAC Terms of Reference
- DAAC Workplan
- Committee Staff
- Regional Planning Division Roles and Responsibilities
- Planning in Ontario
- Responsibilities of Regional Planning
- Current Initiatives
- 2023 Farm Tour
- 2023 Meeting Dates
- Other Matters

M. Scott welcomed members to the inaugural meeting of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee (DAAC) for 2023.

A. De Vos invited members of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee to introduce themselves and provide a brief overview of their background and their farm, business, or experience with agriculture.

Members of the committee were provided with the Growing Agri-Food Durham booklet and were encouraged to join the Farm Tour sub-committee.

Staff responded to questions with regards to the farm tour and who is invited to the farm tour each year.

6. Discussion Items

A) Rural and Agricultural Economic Development Update

S. Jibb provided the following update:

- The Durham Region development charge by-law is currently being reviewed and the comment period has closed. There have been staff level discussions regarding the potential for amendments to the agriculture uses and farm building definitions to support on-farm diversified uses..

A. De Vos provided the following update:

- The development charges are expected to increase by 80%.
- There is a webinar being delivered by the Ontario Farmland Trust on May 17, 2023 at 12:00 PM and they will be outlining the Provincial policies being proposed and the impacts to agriculture.
- Local Food Week is taking place the week of June 5th and will highlight the Village of Newcastle as the apple capital of Canada.

Discussion ensued with regards to when the development charges by-law is being presented to Council; the charge for development charges on agricultural buildings; non-residential development charges between Durham Region and area municipalities; the closing date for comments on the development charges by-law; providing a delegation to Regional Council; and concerns about the definition of on-farm diversified uses.

Moved by D. Risebrough, Seconded by G.L. O'Connor,
That the following be referred to staff for consideration during the preparation of the final report on the Development Charges By-law:

That the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee is requesting that on-farm diversified uses be considered under the agricultural exemption in the development charges by law.

CARRIED

B) Avian Influenza and Backyard Chickens

S. Jibb advised there is no further avian influenza and backyard chickens update at this time.

C) DAAC Workplan and Terms of Reference 2023

M. Scott and S. Jibb provided a brief overview of the changes implemented in the 2023 Workplan.

Committee members suggested providing a yearly update on the Growing North Durham Plan; changing the wording in the workplan of "Commercial Fill" to state "Commercial fill, excess topsoil and excess soil"; and removing COVID-19 impacts and recovery from the workplan.

M. Scott responded to a question with regards to whether the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve falls under the jurisdiction of Durham Region.

Moved by B. Smith, Seconded by H. Schillings,
That we recommend to the Planning and Economic Development
Committee for approval and subsequent recommendation to Regional
Council:

That the Draft 2023 Workplan of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee, as
amended, be adopted.

CARRIED

Further discussion ensued with regards to the composition of the Committee and
adding one member representing Durham Farm Fresh. Discussion also ensued
with respect to adding a youth member to the Committee.

Moved by B. Smith, Seconded by G.L. O'Connor,
That we recommend to the Planning and Economic Development
Committee for approval and subsequent recommendation to Regional
Council:

That the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee Terms of Reference be
amended under Composition to add one (1) member representing Durham Farm
Fresh who is a bona fide farmer directly involved in the agricultural industry.

CARRIED

D) Bill 97 – Helping Homebuyers, Protecting Tenants Act, 2023 – Provincial Policy
Statement and A Place to Grow Review

Information Report #2023-INFO-29 of the Commissioner of Planning and
Economic Development – Provincial Consultation on Bill 97 – The Helping
Homebuyers, Protecting Tenants Act, 2023, and the Proposal Provincial Planning
Statement, ERO Postings #019-6821, #019-6822, #019-6813 was provided as
Attachment #2 to the Agenda and received.

M. Scott advised that the following changes are being proposed under Bill 97:

- That Minister's Zoning Orders are changing to allow the Minister the ability to exempt subject lands from complying with Provincial policy and Official Plans.
- That boundary expansions are no longer required to be considered through a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR).
- The new Provincial Policy Statement has eliminated the requirement of alternative evaluations for both settlement area expansions and mineral aggregate extraction rehabilitation.
- That Agriculture System mapping is no longer a requirement, but rather encouraged.
- That planning authorities "should consider" whether the applicable lands comprise specialty crop areas.

- That rural lots, outside the Greenbelt Plan Area will be changing to allow for two new residential units subordinate to principal dwelling and three residential lots from the existing agricultural parcel.
- That the 2023 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) is proposing to remove the current PPS direction for the promotion of recreation, tourism, and other economic opportunities on rural lands.

Discussion ensued with regards to the number of severances allowed on non-abutting farmlands; services being provided to rural areas; when the comment period for Bill 97 ends; and preparing a motion to oppose the approval of Bill 97.

Moved by M. Somerville, Seconded by D. Risebrough,
That we recommend to the Planning and Economic Development
Committee for approval and subsequent recommendation to Regional
Council:

That the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee strongly opposes Bill 97 as it does not consider the impact of severances on Minimum Distance Separations in relation to animal operations; and it encourages farmland fragmentation which will negatively impact long-term farm environmental and economic sustainability.

CARRIED

E) 2023 Farm Tour Sub-Committee Report

D. Risebrough provided a brief overview of the events for the 2023 farm tour for the new Committee members. He advised that an on-site visit needs to be arranged prior to the next meeting date.

It was the consensus of the Committee that N. Swain be added to the Farm Tour Sub-Committee.

7. Information Items

A) Notice of Special Meeting of Durham Regional Council for Final Draft Regional Official Plan

Advertisement for Notice of Special Meeting of Durham Regional Council for the recommended final draft Durham Regional Official Plan was provided as Attachment #3 to the Agenda and received.

M. Scott advised that the final draft Regional Official Plan will be presented to Regional Council at the Special Meeting of Regional Council on May 17, 2023 and that once it is approved it will be provided to the Province for approval. He further advised there were minor changes to the agricultural rural system chapter, modified farm definitions, and lot sizing requirements.

M. Scott responded to a question with regards to the policy for on-farm diversified uses on agricultural lands.

8. Other Business

A) Livestock Identification and Traceability

Z. Cohoon raised concerns with regards to proposed changes to Part XV of the Health of Animals Regulations and the changes with respect to who is registering the livestock. He advised that the comment period is open until June 16, 2023.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee will be held on Tuesday, June 13, 2023 starting at 7:30 PM.

10. Adjournment

Moved by M. Somerville, Seconded by B. Hulshof,
That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 9:49 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Z. Cohoon, Chair

K. Smith, Committee Clerk