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The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

DURHAM AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

September 12, 2023

A meeting of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, September 12, 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
Z. Cohoon, Member at Large, Chair
R. Death, Whitby
N. Guthrie, Ajax
B. Hulshof, Uxbridge
J. Neal, Regional Councillor Alternate
G. O'Connor, Member at Large
D. Risebrough, Member at Large
H. Schillings, Member at Large
M. Shiers, Durham Region Federation of Agriculture
D. Stevenson, Oshawa
N. Swain, Scugog
G. Taylor, Pickering
T. Watpool, Brock

Absent: B. Smith, Uxbridge, Vice-Chair
M. Somerville, Member at Large
W. Wotten, Regional Councillor

Staff

Present: A. Chung, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
A. De Vos, Program Specialist, Department of Planning and Economic Development
S. Jibb, Manager, Agricultural & Rural Economic Development, Department of Planning and Economic Development
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. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by N. Guthrie, Seconded by T. Watpool,
That the minutes of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting
held on Tuesday, June 12, 2023, be adopted.
CARRIED

4. Presentations

A) Shauna Muir, Supervisor, Public Affairs & Corporate Communications, City of Pickering – Pickering Corporate Strategic Plan

Shauna Muir, Supervisor, Public Affairs & Corporate Communications, City of Pickering, attending virtually, provided a PowerPoint presentation with regards to the Pickering Corporate Strategic Plan.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- What we'll be Covering
- What is a Corporate Strategic Plan?
- Project Activities to Date
- Has anyone taken the Community Survey?
- Goal Areas
 - Economic Growth & Opportunity
 - Community Safety & Well-Being
 - Environmental Leadership
 - Infrastructure Investment & Renewal
 - Good Governance
 - Strong Community Partnerships
- Do you have one big idea for Pickering's Strategic Plan?

S. Muir responded to questions with regards to whether the Mayor of Pickering can overrule any decisions made with the strategic plan; Pickering's plan regarding excess topsoil; the amount of land in Pickering that is rural versus urban; and whether Pickering has an agricultural plan in place.

Discussion ensued with regards to the importance of topsoil being properly managed throughout Durham Region.

5. Discussion Items

A) Rural and Agricultural Economic Development Update

S. Jibb provided the following update:

- There will be an update provided to the Planning & Economic Development Committee in October regarding the Growing Agri Food Durham Plan which has been implemented over the last year, and will provide an update to the Committee, Agricultural Advisory Committee

of Clarington, Durham Region Federation of Agriculture, Durham Farm Connections and Durham Farm Fresh to communicate what has been accomplished.

A. De Vos provided the following update:

- There will be a month-long promotional campaign with Durham Farm Fresh and Durham Tourism. The campaign will be called Gather on the Farm and it is being held in place of the traditional Gates Open event. The campaign will be centered around celebrating the 30th anniversary of Durham Farm Fresh, shopping at local farms and enjoying on-farm experiences in Durham Region.
- There will be an Apple Value Chain Video project kicking off next week and staff will be filming at Wilmot Orchards, Algoma Orchards, and Beaverton Independent Grocer. It is a promotional resource for the many assets in apple production in Durham Region and Agriculture awareness material.

B) Avian Influenza and Backyard Chickens

S. Jibb provided the following update:

- At the last Committee meeting, Brock was looking into a backyard chickens by-law and an update will be provided at the next meeting with the survey results and how they are planning to move forward with a potential by-law.
- The Town of Whitby is working on a climate change plan and is also looking at a backyard chickens by-law and may be of interest to discuss with staff members.
- The Poultry Industry Council and small flock operators are continuing to do webinars and share information as migration patterns for wild birds are starting again.

It was the consensus of the Committee to take Avian Influenza and Backyard Chickens off future agendas unless there is a substantial update.

C) Agriculture 101 Training

A. De Vos advised that a date to provide the Agriculture 101 Training pilot presentation to Scugog needs to be finalized.

Discussion ensued with regards to potential dates for the presentation; whether the presentation has been adjusted to reflect statistics for Scugog; who will be providing the presentation on the pilot; who will be providing the presentations to the other Durham Region local municipalities; and the best time for Committee members to provide the presentations. Presentations will be delivered this winter to local municipalities.

D) 2023 Farm Tour Sub-Committee Report

D. Risebrough advised the Farm Tour will take place on Thursday, September 21, 2023; there are 131 people currently registered; and Committee members are needed the day before and on the day of the event to assist with set up and take down. D. Risebrough provided an overview of the events for the day to Committee members.

6. Information Items

A) Office of the Auditor General of Ontario – Special Report on Changes to the Greenbelt

Office of the Auditor General of Ontario – Special Report on Changes to the Greenbelt was provided as a link to the Agenda and received.

M. Scott advised that the report provides an overview of how lands are potentially going to be changed from Greenbelt to residential development. He noted that Item 6.B) below has similar information and explained how the three Durham properties were selected to be removed from the Greenbelt.

B) Office of the Integrity Commissioner – re: The Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Member of Provincial Parliament for Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes

Office of the Integrity Commissioner – re: The Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Member of Provincial Parliament for Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes was provided as a link to the Agenda and received.

C) Information Report #2023-INFO-64 – Proposed Provincial Planning Statement Update

Information Report #2023-INFO-64 of the Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development – Proposed Provincial Planning Statement was provided as a link to the Agenda and received.

M. Scott advised that Regional comments on the Proposed Provincial Planning Statement was provided to the Province on the deadline of August 4, 2023. The Province indicated publicly that they will be stepping back on the lot creation process on Farm lots. He will advise the Committee when they receive a draft or final version from the Province and will conduct an analysis.

D) Uxbridge Proposed Urban Provincial Park

M. Scott advised that the Uxbridge Proposed Urban Provincial Park information was circulated to Committee members in the summer and that it is still early in the planning process.

Discussion ensued with regards to the lands being included in the proposed Urban Provincial Park; and who currently owns the proposed lands.

E) Report #2023-EDT-10 – Precision Agriculture Field Day

Report #2023-EDT-10 of the Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development – Precision Agriculture Field Day was provided as a link to the Agenda and received.

F) Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) Provincial Planning Statement Submission

Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) Provincial Planning Statement Submission was provided as Attachment #2 to the Agenda and received.

Discussion ensued with regards to circulating the Ontario Federation of Agriculture's Provincial Planning Statement Submission to the new Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and MPPs; having farmers and landowners that farm in the Greenbelt at review meetings; and ways to show the Committee's support to the Provincial Planning Statement Submission from OFA.

Moved by D. Risebrough, Seconded by G.L. O'Connor,
That the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee supports and endorses the A Place to Grow and Provincial Planning Statement Submission from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA).

CARRIED

7. Other Business

A) Building Permit for Seasonal Workers

Councillor Neal raised a concern received from an Oshawa resident regarding obtaining a building permit on a farm for seasonal workers. Discussion ensued with regards to the guidelines for seasonal workers and seeking guidance from other municipalities.

B) Durham Farm Connections Celebrate Agriculture Gala

N. Swain advised that the Durham Farm Connections Celebrate Agriculture Gala is looking for nominations for Farm Family of the Year; Spirit of Agriculture and Leadership Award and the deadline to nominate a recipient is September 20, 2023.

C) Bill 23 Update

M. Scott advised that due to Bill 23, the responsibilities of the Durham Region Land Division Committee are being delegated to the lower tier municipalities. He also advised that Report #2023-P-22 of the Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development on this matter is being presented to Regional Council on September 27, 2023 for approval.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee will be held on Tuesday, October 10, 2023 starting at 7:30 PM.

9. Adjournment

Moved by N. Swain, Seconded by G. Taylor,
That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 9:01 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Z.Cphoon, Chair

K. Smith, Committee Clerk