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The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

DURHAM REGION ROUNDTABLE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

April 22, 2022

A regular meeting of the Durham Region Roundtable on Climate Change was held on Friday, April 22, 2022 in the Council Chambers, Regional Municipality of Durham Headquarters, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby at 10:01 AM. Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.

1. Roll Call

Present: D. Hoornweg, Citizen Member, Chair
E. Baxter-Trahair, CAO
P. Cohen, Youth Citizen Member
Councillor Crawford, Works Committee attended the meeting at 10:03 AM
C. Desbiens, Citizen Member
Regional Chair Henry
T. Hall, Citizen Member, attended the meeting at 10:06 AM
Councillor Highet, Planning & Economic Development Committee, attended the meeting at 10:36 AM
J. Kinniburgh, Citizen Member
Councillor Leahy, Finance & Administration Committee
G. MacPherson, Citizen Member
C. Mee, Citizen Member
R. Plaza, Citizen Member
K. Shadwick, Citizen Member
M. Vroegh, Citizen Member, Vice-Chair
*all members of the committee participated electronically

Absent: Councillor Chapman, Health and Social Services Committee
K. Senyk, Citizen Member
J. Taylor, Citizen Member

Staff

Present: S. Austin, Director of Strategic Initiatives, Office of the CAO
A. Bathe, Senior Planner, Planning and Economic Development Department
C. Goodchild, Manager, Policy Planning & Special Studies, Planning and Economic Development Department
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
M. Kawalec, Climate Change Coordinator, Office of the CAO
I. McVey, Manager of Sustainability, Office of the CAO
J. Sochacki, Superintendent, Facilities Maintenance, Works Department
T. Fraser, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
N. Prasad, Assistant Secretary to Council, Corporate Services – Legislative Services

2. Declarations of Interest

E. Baxter-Trahair made a declaration of interest under the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, later in the meeting, with respect to Item 6. A), DRRCC Land Needs Assessment Subcommittee – Advice and Recommendations for Regional Council, as it pertains to Part A) of the motion. She indicated that she is currently working with Planning Division staff on the report for presentation to the Planning & Economic Development Committee.

3. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by Councillor Leahy, Seconded by J. Kinniburgh,
That the minutes of the Durham Region Roundtable on Climate Change
meeting held on Friday, March 18, 2022, be adopted.
CARRIED

4. Delegations

A) Leigh Paulseth, Ajax Resident, re: Climate Action and Protection of Natural Assets in the Context of the Envision Durham Land Needs Scenarios

L. Paulseth, participating electronically, appeared with respect to the Municipal Comprehensive Review and the Alternative Land Need Scenarios. She advised that she is trained as a conservation biologist and works in science communication. She also advised that she is a member of Environmental Action Now – Ajax Pickering and a resident of the Town of Ajax.

L. Paulseth asked the DRRCC to adopt the recommendation of the DRRCC Land Needs Assessment Subcommittee for no urban boundary expansion within the Region of Durham. She requested that the DRRCC adopt Scenario 5 for Community Area Land and reject both scenarios proposed for Employment Area Land.

L. Paulseth provided a quote from the Carruthers Creek Watershed Plan. She advised that she is worried about allowing more development in the headwaters of the Carruthers Creek and that causing a detrimental effect to the ecosystem services within the headwaters, downstream flooding, and raising the cost of living for residents in Ajax and Durham. She also stated that the Carruthers Creek is essentially at the point where it is barely functioning as an ecosystem, and we need to fight to keep new development within the watershed at a minimum.

L. Paulseth referenced Environment Canada's report "How Much Habitat is Enough" and she stated that the Carruthers Creek watershed is 7% wetlands and 25% forest cover and needs to be 10% wetlands and 50% forest cover.

L. Paulseth referenced the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2022 report and she stated that they talk about the impacts of human practices on the vulnerability of ecosystems and that we have all the tools, knowledge and expertise that we need to solve the climate crisis.

L. Paulseth concluded by stating that everything is interconnected and that means every decision we make can be an opportunity to make positive change rather than keep the status quo.

L. Paulseth responded to questions from the Committee.

B) Helen Brenner, Pickering Resident, re: Our Future Depends on It – A Strong Case for a “No Urban Boundary Expansion”

H. Brenner, participating electronically, appeared with respect to the Municipal Comprehensive Review.

H. Brenner stated that there has never been a time when land use decisions have been as critical as today. She also stated that on April 4th, the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warned that inaction of governments around the globe to meet Green House Gas reduction targets now means acceleration is necessary to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

H. Brenner further stated that today municipalities across the Greater Golden Horseshoe are making critical decisions that could lock in 156,000 acres for development over the next 30 years. She also stated that in Durham, the fate of about 17,000 acres sits in the hands of Regional Government and at risk are watersheds, Class I agricultural land and natural heritage systems. She added that we must give pause and plan for the expected growth in a sustainable way.

H. Brenner commended the DRRCC Land Needs Assessment Subcommittee Advice and Recommendations Report. She stated that the report includes planning principles that will allow the Region to welcome the next 30 years' worth of newcomers within our existing urban boundaries. She also stated that by building inwards first and planning for gentle density within the built-up area and maximizing density of designated growth areas, we can accelerate housing affordability with a diverse blend of smaller yet attractive missing middle housing forms. She further stated that taking this approach will result in excess community area land within the existing designated greenfield that could be reallocated to the employment area land. She also stated that it will be important to significantly increase the employment area land densities by requiring land efficient building forms. She added that through gentle intensification we can transition to complete communities.

H. Brenner requested that the DRRCC adopt Scenario 5 for Community Area Land and reject the proposed Employment Area urban boundary expansion scenarios and instead propose a modified Scenario 5 that accommodates the expected community and employment growth targets within the existing urban boundary.

H. Brenner concluded by stating that there is over 10,000 acres of land already designated for growth in Durham Region and she referenced the Durham Region Climate Change Emergency Declaration.

H. Brenner responded to questions from the Committee.

5. Presentations

A) Draft Regional Natural Heritage System – Amanda Bathe, Senior Planner, Durham Region

Amanda Bathe, Senior Planner, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Draft Regional Natural Heritage System.

Highlights from the presentation included:

- Presentation Overview
- Current Approach
- Provincial Policy Requirements
- Why Are Natural Heritage Systems Important?
- Approach to Identifying the Draft Regional Natural Heritage System
- Enhancement Opportunity Areas
- Implementation
- Feedback

A. Bathe responded to questions with respect to whether a summary report on the draft Regional Natural Heritage System is available; the possibility of including a summary of statistics on maps; notifying landowners in Enhancement Opportunity Areas; and whether the website will include links to other resources and services.

B) Durham TREES – Rural Private Land Tree Planting Program – Pam Lancaster – Conservation Lands Coordinator, Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority

Pam Lancaster, Conservation Lands Coordinator, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding Durham TREES.

Highlights from the presentation included:

- Durham TREES – 2022 Launch
- Durham T.R.E.E.S.
- Tree Targets

- Program Rollout
- Durhamtrees.org
- How Does it Work?
- TREES Private Land Stewardship Program
- Newspaper Ad
- Social Media Posts
- Mailer
- Collaboration and Partnership

P. Lancaster responded to questions with respect to whether the Durham TREES graphics are available for individuals to post and promote the program.

C) Climate and Sustainability Program Update – Ian McVey, Manager of Sustainability, Durham Region

Ian McVey, Manager of Sustainability, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding a Climate and Sustainability Program Update.

I. McVey provided updates on the following projects:

- Durham Greener Homes Update
- Deep Energy Retrofit Incentives
- Durham Greener Homes
- Durham Community Energy Plan – Governance Task Force Update
- Proposed DCEP Governance Needs

I. McVey responded to questions with respect to whether there will be an update on the Durham Community Climate Adaptation Plan prior to the summer break.

It was suggested that material to promote the Durham Greener Homes program be distributed to Durham School Boards for distribution in their weekly system memos and through the School Community Councils and Catholic School Councils.

6. Items for Information and Discussion

A) DRRCC Land Needs Assessment Subcommittee – Advice and Recommendations for Regional Council

A copy of DRRCC Land Needs Assessment Subcommittee Advice and Recommendations was provided as Attachment #2 to the agenda. I. McVey provided a draft resolution for consideration.

Discussion ensued with respect to the DRRCC Land Needs Assessment Subcommittee Advice and Recommendations and the proposed resolution for adoption by the DRRCC.

Staff responded to questions with respect to next steps and the process for submitting the DRRCC resolution for consideration.

E. Baxter-Trahair made a declaration of interest under the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act with respect to Item 6. A), DRRCC Land Needs Assessment Subcommittee – Advice and Recommendations for Regional Council, as it pertains to Part A) of the motion. She indicated that she is currently working with Planning Division staff on the report for presentation to the Planning & Economic Development Committee.

Moved by C. Mee, Seconded by G. MacPherson,

- A) That the DRRCC recommends that the Region adopt Scenario 5 under the Land Needs Assessment; and
- B) That the advice and recommendations from the DRRCC Land Needs Assessment sub-committee with respect to the Alternative Land Need Scenarios Assessment Summary Report be forwarded to the Planning Division for consideration.

CARRIED LATER IN THE MEETING
(See Following Motion)

Moved by Councillor Leahy, Seconded by D. Hoornweg,
That the main motion of C. Mee and G. MacPherson be divided in order to allow voting on Part A) separately from the remainder.

CARRIED

Part A) was then put to a vote and CARRIED. E. Baxter-Trahair declared a conflict of interest on this item and did not vote on this item.

Part B) was then put to a vote and CARRIED.

- B) Town of Ajax – re: Endorse no Urban Expansion for Community Area in Durham – March 30, 2022
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A copy of the resolution passed by the Town of Ajax Council on March 28, 2022, was provided as Attachment #3 to the agenda.

- C) Recruitment underway for a Policy Advisor – Sustainability within the Office of the CAO
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A copy of the job posting for the Policy Advisor – Sustainability was provided to the Committee members prior to the meeting.

I. McVey advised that the Region is recruiting for a Policy Advisor and he asked DRRCC members to share the posting.

D) Master Class: Efficiency System Operator – Taking Steps to Acquire and Enable Resources to Meet Ontario’s Growing Electricity Needs

A copy of the Master Class: Efficiency Retrofits for Multi-Family Housing Virtual Workshop registration was provided as Attachment #4 to the agenda.

E) Independent Electricity System Operator – Taking Steps to Acquire and Enable Resources to Meet Ontario’s Growing Electricity Needs

A link to the discussion session from the Independent Electricity System Operator - Taking Steps to Acquire and Enable Resources to Meet Ontario’s Growing Electricity Needs was provided to the Committee members prior to the meeting.

F) Rebecca Rooney – re: DRRCC Land Needs Assessment Subcommittee – Advice and Recommendations for Regional Council, Attachment #2

A copy of correspondence from Rebecca Rooney was provided as Attachment #5 to the agenda.

7. Other Business

A) Volunteer Appreciation Week

I. McVey advised that it is Volunteer Appreciation Week and he thanked members of the DRRCC for their contributions.

8. Date of Next Meeting

I. McVey advised that he has received a number of regrets for the May DRRCC meeting and that there are currently no agenda items. It was the consensus of the Committee that the May 20, 2022, meeting be cancelled.

The next regular meeting of the Durham Region Roundtable on Climate Change will be held on Friday, June 17, 2022, starting at 10:00 AM in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby.

9. Adjournment

Moved by Councillor Highet, Seconded by Councillor Leahy,
That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 11:37 AM

Respectfully submitted,

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

T. Fraser, Committee Clerk