



**THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF PEEL:
PEEL AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY WORKING GROUP**

PAAWG 2023-04 Meeting Minutes

The Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group (PAAWG) met on August 17, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held at the Peel Conference Centre located at 10 Peel Centre Drive, Suite B, Brampton, Ontario. The meeting was also available through virtual participation via Microsoft Teams.

Members Present:

Raphael Adegboye, Representative of the Agricultural Community
Tom Dolson, Peel Federation of Agriculture
Karen Hutchinson, Vice-Chair, Caledon Countryside Alliance
Dwight Matson, Peel Federation of Agriculture
Britt McKee, EcoSource
Ed Russell, Peel Soil and Crop Improvement Association
Mark Vanderwees, Citizen-at-Large
Brian Wannamaker, Citizen-at-Large

Members Absent:

Gary Mountain, Chair, Peel Soil and Crop Improvement Association
Patrick Brown, Mayor, City of Brampton
Pat Fortini, Regional Councillor, Region of Peel
Annette Groves, Mayor, Town of Caledon
Manjari Mehta, Citizen-at-Large

Staff:

Mark Head, Manager, Planning and Development Services, Region of Peel
Aylise Cooke, Junior Planner, Region of Peel
Melanie Williams, Principal Planner, Region of Peel
Duncan Ivany, Co-ordinator, Agricultural Outreach, Credit Valley Conservation
Holly Shipclark, Senior Co-ordinator, Agricultural Outreach, Credit Valley Conservation
Mary Anne Young, Project Manager, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
Fallon Hayes, Project Coordinator, Rural Clean Water Program, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

Guests:

None

1) Welcome and Opening Remarks

The Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group (PAAWG) was called to order at 7:08 pm by Karen Hutchinson, Acting Chair, who called attendance.

Karen Hutchinson welcomed Aylise Cooke, Junior Planner, Region of Peel, and Fallon Hayes, Rural Clean Water Program Co-ordinator, Toronto and Region Conservation.

2) Declarations of Conflict of Interest

None identified.

3) Review and Approval of August 17, 2023 Agenda

Moved by Raphael Adegboye.

That the Agenda for the August 17, 2023, meeting of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group be approved.

Carried PAAWG 2023-29

4) Review and Approval of Minutes of May 18, 2023 Meeting

One amendment was requested to the attendance record.

Moved by Britt McKee

That the Minutes of Meeting 2023-03 of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group, held on May 18, 2023, be approved as amended.

Carried PAAWG 2023-30

5) Update on Bill 97, Helping Homeowners, Protecting Tenants Act, and proposed Provincial Planning Statement (ERO 019-6813)

Mark Head and Melanie Williams, Region of Peel

An update on the merging of the Provincial Policy Statement with the Growth Plan to create a proposed new Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) and how this impacted agriculture and natural heritage policy was discussed. PAAWG members were updated that Bill 97 received assent in June.

Natural Heritage policies and definitions that will comprise the proposed PPS have been released. The proposed policies and definitions remain the same as in the Provincial Policy Statement, but do not include the policies present in the Growth Plan. Staff have provided comment to the Province that encourage the natural heritage policies found in the Growth Plan be carried over into the proposed PPS. Staff will continue to keep PAAWG members informed on how these policy changes impact natural heritage, agriculture and any corresponding changes made to the Greenbelt Plan.

Questions/Discussion:

No comments.

6) Credit Valley Conservation Nutrient Plan Project

Holly Shipclark, Credit Valley Conservation

In 2021, PAAWG approved a Peel Rural Water Quality (PRWQP) project to improve crop nutrient planning through detailed soil surveying and field mapping to improve fertilizer application and crop uptake, decreasing loss and runoff, and improving the environment. PAAWG requested that the outcomes of the project be presented after a two-three years of crop nutrient plan implementation. This 1,4000 cash crop farm had significantly variable yields due to soil types and crop removal of the fertilizer, resulting in significant over-application in some zones, and under application in others. The crop nutrient plan provided information on soil type, topography, soil depth, degradation to provide site specific field information so the farmer can apply more efficient variable rates across the fields. Variable rate of nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, fungicide for soybean (white mold) were mapped across the field.

The environmental benefits of this project were a decrease in fertilizer application and other inputs, improved nutrient use efficiency and improved carbon sequestration through optimized crop growth, minimizing tillage. Modelling work is being done to further understand the fate of nutrients (N and P) in both scenarios.

Questions/Discussion:

PAAWG members wanted to know if distribution of fertilizer was limited by the agricultural equipment. There was discussion on how the application could mirror the maps derived from testing. Questions were raised regarding who is doing this variable rate work locally.

Tom Dolson identified that nitrogen is expensive and offers significant environmental concerns regarding runoff so further investigation into variable rate of nitrogen could be of interest. PAAWG members discussed that the project was cost-share funded through the Nutrient Management Plan category. If the outcomes of this pilot was of interest to PAAWG, it could become part of the PRWQP Guideline review for future consideration as an eligible project.

7) Peel Rural Water Quality Program and ALUS Peel Pilot

Holly Shipclark and Duncan Ivany, Credit Valley Conservation

a) Financial Update

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The 2023 PRWQP and ALUS Peel Pilot budgets for project establishment is \$119,469. To date, the total approved for project establishment grants is \$93,192.42.

To date, the total value of approved ALUS Peel Pilot annual payments is \$54,237.65. Of this, \$15,592.50 is pending confirmed funding by ALUS. ALUS is working to secure this funding.

Questions/Discussion:

Concern was raised of ensuring that farmers who were approved for projects and annual payments were familiar with the differences between the guaranteed PRWQP funding and the ALUS Peel Pilot funding that is allotted based availability. Conservation Authority staff confirmed that clarity and conformation of the two kinds of funding is an important part of this process, and the applicant is informed multiple times during the process how funding allotment is distributed.

b) Farm Tour Update

Mary Anne Young, Toronto and Region Conservation
Holly Shipclark, Credit Valley Conservation

Conservation Authority staff provided an update that the joint PRWQP and ALUS Peel Pilot farm tour is scheduled for September 13, 2023. The tour will highlight farms that have enrolled in both initiatives to foster discussion on the potential of these projects on other farms in Peel.

The farm tour is a free, public event. Registration and brief agenda can be found [here](#). The farm tour is by bus and includes Mount Wolfe Farm, Applegarth Farm and Albion Hills Community Farm. PAAWG was encouraged to register and share the invitation with their organizations.

Questions/Discussion:

Clarification sought that the bus left from Albion Hills Conservation Area.

c) Project Applications

I. 08-CVC-23 Cover Crops (PRWQP)

The application 08-CVC-23 proposes to support cover cropping on a 98-acre farm parcel that borders a highly vulnerable aquifer. This project helps the establishment and overwintering of cover crops, contributing to the reduction of erosion, enhancement of area conditions, and reduced risks related to wind erosion. It also increases natural cover which helps to protect the highly vulnerable aquifer within the farm area. The project includes \$100/ acre up to 50 acres for a total PRWQP grant of \$5,000.

Questions/Discussion:

PAAWG members discussed the relationship of highly vulnerable aquifers to source water protection and the ways in which aquifers are identified, approved

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and displayed on mapping software. PAAWG members wanted to know what non-agricultural source materials were applied on the property. Conservation Authority staff clarified that it is a poultry biosolid. Moved by Ed Russel

That application 08-CVC-23 be approved and that Peel Rural Water Quality Program funding be provided in the amount of \$5,000 under the category "Cover Crops".

Carried PAAWG 2023-31

II. 09-CVC-23 Tree Planting (PRWQP and ALUS Peel Pilot)

The application 09-CVC-23 proposes to plant 550 native trees and shrubs on a 60 acre, mixed farm that is located entirely on a highly vulnerable aquifer. Significant Credit River Watershed Natural Heritage System features have been identified on site (woodlands, wetland, valleylands and watercourse).

Questions/Discussion:

PAAWG members questioned the cost sharing budget of this proposal. Conservation Authority staff confirmed that the tree planting category is 100% funded by PRWQP and ALUS Peel Pilot grants. Region staff also clarified that the contribution of land that could be used for farming was also a contribution by the landowner. PAAWG members expressed concern of the cost-share contribution of land, if the land being restored has already been retired.

Moved by Ed Russel

That application 09-CVC-23 be approved and that Peel Rural Water Quality Program funding be provided in the amount of \$5,680.00 under the category "Tree Planting".

Carried PAAWG 2023-32

Moved by Tom Dolson

That application 09-CVC-23 be approved for ALUS Peel Pilot annual payment funding in the total amount of \$51.00 a year for 5 years, for a total of \$255.00 subject to ALUS Canada confirming availability of the necessary funds, the project is eligible for funding in accordance with the terms and conditions of the funding.

Carried PAAWG 2023-33

III. 10-CVC-23 Natural Area Enhancement and Creation (PRWQP and ALUS Peel Pilot)

The application 10-CVC-23 proposes to establish forest cover across 0.4 acres to create and enhance a natural area. The block and hedgerow plantings will be

completed with 595 potted native trees, and shrubs. This project helps to contribute to the increase of forest cover and enhance area conditions. It also increases natural cover, habitat and mitigate and adapt climate change.

Questions/Discussion:

None

Moved by Britt McKee

That application 10-CVC-23 be approved and that Peel Rural Water Quality Program funding be provided in the amount of \$985.00 under the category "Natural Area and Enhancement Creation".

Carried PAAWG 2023-34

Moved by Tom Dolson

That application 10-CVC-23 be approved for ALUS Peel Pilot annual payment funding in the total amount of \$10.50 a year for 5 years, for a total of \$ 52.50 subject to ALUS Canada confirming availability of the necessary funds, the project is eligible for funding in accordance with the terms and conditions of the funding.

Carried PAAWG 2023-35

8) Communication and For Information Items

*Melanie Williams, Region of Peel
Holly Shipclark, Credit Valley Conservation*

The following correspondence were received:

- a) Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association [2023 Species at Risk Farm Incentive Program](#)
- b) Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association [Ontario Agricultural Sustainability Initiative](#)
- c) Durham Agricultural Advisory Council Farm Tour Invitation
- d) Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association [Honeybee Health Initiatives](#), intake opens on September 15th

9) Round Table and Other Business

Any future topics of interest, please let the team know. Potential future items could include a presentation from Town of Caledon staff on the Town's proposed Official Plan agricultural policies.

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The PRWQ Guideline Review survey has been circulated to PAAWG members and others. The survey will close in the fall, and PAAWG members were encouraged to participate.

10) Adjournment

Moved by Ed Russel

That the August 17, 2023, meeting of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group be adjourned.

Carried PAAWG 2023-36

The meeting adjourned at 8:36pm. The next PAAWG meeting will be held will be held in-person at the Peel Conference and online via Microsoft Teams on November 16, 2023, at 7:00pm.