



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

**PAAWG 2023-03 Meeting Minutes**

The Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group (PAAWG) met on May 18, 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:**

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

**Members Absent:**

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Patrick Brown, Mayor, City of Brampton  
Tom Dolson, Peel Federation of Agriculture  
Annette Groves, Mayor, Town of Caledon  
Pat Fortini, Regional Councillor, Region of Peel

**Staff:**

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Mark Head, Manager, Planning & Development Services, Region of Peel  
Mackenzie Baird, Co-op Student, Region of Peel  
Ricardo Razao, Principal Planner, Region of Peel  
Yathartha Singh, Intermediate Planner, Region of Peel  
Melanie Williams, Principal Planner, Region of Peel  
Lisa Brusse, Manager, Landowner Engagement and Stewardship, Credit Valley Conservation  
Duncan Ivany, Co-ordinator, Agricultural Outreach, Credit Valley Conservation  
Holly Shipclark, Senior Co-ordinator, Agricultural Outreach, Credit Valley Conservation  
Patrick Esson, Senior Project Manager, Toronto & Region Conservation

**Guests:**

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Ben Roberts, Economic Development Officer, Town of Caledon  
Megan Sipos, Manager, Greenbelt Foundation

### 1) Welcome and Opening Remarks

The Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group (PAAWG) was called to order at 7:03pm by Gary Mountain, who called attendance.

### 2) Declarations of Conflict of Interest

None identified.

### 3) Review and Approval of May 18, 2023 Agenda

The agenda was amended to add under 'Communications and For Information', Bill 112, *The Hazel McCallion Act* (Peel Dissolution). Agenda item #5 was amended to update the guest speaker to Megan Sipos, Greenbelt Foundation.

Moved by Karen Hutchinson

*That the Agenda for the May 18, 2023, meeting of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group be approved.*

Carried PAAWG 2023-26

### 4) Review and Approval of Minutes of March 23, 2023 Meeting

Moved by Karen Hutchinson

*That the Minutes of Meeting 2023-02 of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group, held on March 23, 2023, be approved.*

Carried PAAWG 2023-27

### 5) Greenbelt Foundation Soil and Health Benchmarking Study

*Megan Sipos, Greenbelt Foundation*

The Greenbelt Foundation's project is a benchmarking study with the purpose of providing information on the current soil health of agricultural lands in or adjacent to the Greenbelt. Peel is one of three Region's selected for the first year of the study. The project was introduced to provide opportunities for farmers to participate, including in Peel, to understand soil health of their farms and associated areas. Participation in the program is voluntary. Participating farmers will receive detailed reports about their soil's health with locally relevant context/comparisons, helping develop the understanding of soil health in Ontario. The program has received funding by the Weston Family Foundation. Soil testing in Peel is expected to take place June-July 2023.

**Questions/Discussion:**

PAAWG and Greenbelt Foundation staff discussed the participation opportunities, requirements and eligibility criterion for participating farmlands in Peel. PAAWG members were encouraged to communicate the study information and contact details to their organizations and Peel farmers.

**6) Peel 2023 Employment Survey**

*Ricardo Razao, Region of Peel*

The 2023 Region of Peel/Town of Caledon employment survey is conducted by Peel in collaboration with the Town of Caledon. The survey collects and analyzes employment data to monitor economic trends, service requirements and informs policy changes across different programs. The 2023 employment survey will be conducted in-person for farms that have publicly accessible farm or agri-related businesses. Primary producers will be contacted by mail with email and telephone follow-ups. The survey contains general questions about the farm business which are kept anonymous but are used to aggregate data. PAAWG was asked to encourage Peel farmers to participate in the survey.

The Town of Caledon's Economic Development Office will be presenting the survey at the next Peel Federation of Agriculture meeting agenda, with request to support notification of the survey to their membership.

**Questions/Discussion:**

None.

**7) Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP) Class 19**

*Raphael Adegboye, PAAWG Member*

Raphael Adegboye, presented an overview of his experience in the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP). AALP is an 18 month experiential executive leadership program designed to provide exposure to a range of agricultural sectors, and governance that effects the agricultural industry. The program encompasses seminars, study tours and a capstone project. The program administered by the Rural Ontario Institute and accepts applications for each class through a competitive application process.

**Questions/Discussion:**

None.

**8) Natural Habitat Creation on Agricultural Lands**

*Mark Head, Region of Peel*

At the March 23, 2023, PAAWG meeting, PAAWG requested further information on whether natural heritage policy protection applies to natural heritage features

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(e.g., woodland, wetland) on agricultural lands that have been voluntarily restored if a farmer wishes to later re-establish the agricultural use and remove the feature. Mark reviewed the different land use policies and planning considerations that would apply to natural heritage feature protection and when the re-establishment of previously permitted agricultural uses within a restored feature, could be permitted or prohibited. Generally, if a restored feature has sufficiently established over time and meets the criteria for protection (e.g., the feature is considered significant in accordance with policy), and the planning policies providing for protection of the feature are fully implemented in a municipal official plan and zoning by-law with mapping that identifies the feature, the natural heritage protection policies would apply to any future change of use, including re-establishment of an agricultural use. The re-establishment of an agricultural use, including normal farm practices, would not be permitted in that circumstance. If an agricultural use was continued and not discontinued within the feature (e.g. grazing livestock within a restored grassland) the use would typically be recognized and permitted to continue as an existing agricultural use.

**Questions/Discussion:**

None.

**9) 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*

[Bill 97, Helping Homebuyers, Protecting Tenants Act, 2023](#) was introduced in the Legislature on April 6, 2023, along with the government's Helping Homebuyers, Protecting Tenants Plan. The proposed Plan represents the next phase of the provincial government's Housing Supply Action Plan (the "Plan") and Bill 23 to meet the goal of building 1.5 million new homes by 2030.

The [proposed Provincial Planning Statement](#) merges the Provincial Policy Statement and Growth Plan into a new province-wide housing focused planning policy instrument that has the purpose of removing or streamlining policies to facilitate the development of housing and ensure that growth is supported with the appropriate infrastructure. With an expected implementation timeline of fall 2023, the proposed changes represent fundamental changes in how growth planning is carried out in the Province and a significant streamlining of the province-led land use planning framework in Ontario.

**Questions/Discussion:**

PAAWG members discussed possible implications of the proposed Bill and proposed PPS agricultural policies for additional farm housing and rural residential severances, on Peel's agriculture and natural heritage systems. Members also discussed possible avenues to raise questions and address concerns on Bill 97.

## 10) Peel Rural Water Quality Program 5 Year Guideline Review

*Holly Shipclark, Credit Valley Conservation  
Patrick Esson, Toronto & Region Conservation*

The 5 year review of the Peel Rural Water Quality Program (PRWQP) guidelines will be undertaken in 2023. The scope of the guideline review includes eligible project types, grant cap and rate, project specific guidelines and eligibility requirements, and program eligibility requirements. The guideline review process is expected to involve PAAWG, Peel's agricultural organizations and PRWQP past participants. The recommended Guideline changes are to be presented at the November PAAWG meeting for PAAWG's endorsement and to the Regional Council for adoption in early 2024, depending on further direction of the implementation of Bill 112.

### **Questions/Discussion:**

PAAWG members discussed moving forward with the Guideline review to further update and improve the PRWQP so that it continues to benefit and support Peel's agricultural community needs and with the view that updated guidelines could support a transition of the PRWQP following implementation of Bill 112.

## 11) Peel Rural Water Quality Program and ALUS Peel Pilot

*Holly Shipclark, Credit Valley Conservation*

### **a) Financial Update**

Since 2004, implemented Peel Rural Water Quality Program (PRWQP) projects are valued at over \$4.3 million. These have been funded by different sources including over \$1.1 million from PRWQP, and over 50% of the cost covered by the landowners. The 2023 PRWQP and ALUS Peel Pilot budgets for project establishment is \$105,891, with pending additional funds from ALUS for ALUS Peel Pilot projects approved but pending payment. 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, \$33,660.14 is pending confirmed funding by ALUS. ALUS is working to secure this funding.

### **Questions/Discussion:**

None.

## 12) Communication and For Information Items

*Mark Head and Melanie Williams, Region of Peel*

The following correspondence were received:

a) [Bill 112, The Hazel McCallion Act \(Peel Dissolution\)](#)

On May 18, 2023, the Province released Bill 112, *The Hazel McCallion Act* (Peel Dissolution). The Province is proposing to transition the Region into three separate Cities/Municipalities by January 1, 2025. Regional staff will provide future updates to PAAWG on future direction.

b) [Grown in Peel Local Food Guide 2023](#)

The 2023 Grown in Peel Local Food Guide was released May 1, 2023. The updated, online map has 37 farm and farmers' market listings. This is the highest number of listings since the initiative launched in 2005.

c) [Golden Horseshoe Food & Farming Alliance Spring 2023 Newsletter](#)

## 13) Adjournment

Moved by Ed Russel

*That the May 18, 2023, meeting of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group be adjourned.*

Carried PAAWG 2023-28

The meeting adjourned at 9:15pm. The next PAAWG meeting will be held will be held in-person at the Peel Conference and online via Microsoft Teams on August 17, 2023, at 7:00pm.