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THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF PEEL
PEEL AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY WORKING GROUP

MINUTES
PAAWG 2019-01

The Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group (PAAWG) met on March 21, 2019, at 7:00 p.m. in the Peel Centre Conference Room, Regional Administrative Headquarters, 10 Peel Centre Drive, Suite A, Brampton.

Members Present: Nando Ianicca, Region of Peel Chair
Gary Mountain, Chair, Peel Soil and Crop Improvement Association
Karen Hutchinson, Caledon Countryside Alliance
Manjari Mehta, Citizen-at-Large
Paul Risebrough, Citizen-at-Large
Merissa Nudelman, Ecosource
Jennifer Innis, Regional Councillor
Michael Palleschi, Regional Councillor
Brian Wannamaker, Citizen-at-Large
Kristen Carberry, Peel Federation of Agriculture

Members Absent: Ed Russell, Peel Soil and Crop Improvement Association
Tom Dolson, Peel Federation of Agriculture
Stephen Dasko, Regional Councillor

Staff: Nadine Abrams, Rural Clean Water Program Coordinator, Toronto and Region Conservation
Mark Eastman, Senior Coordinator, Agricultural Outreach, Credit Valley Conservation
Jordan Graham, Program Coordinator, Agricultural Outreach, Credit Valley Conservation
Mark Head, Manager, Region of Peel
Ricardo Razao, Junior Planner, Region of Peel
Don Campbell, Principal Planner, Region of Peel

Guest: Julia Ali, Peel Public Health
Natalie Lapos, Peel Public Health
Emily St. Aubin, Peel Public Health

1) Welcome and Opening Remarks

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Mark Head.

A motion was put forward by Mark Head to reorganize the agenda so that the first item is the Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair.

2) Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Mark Head acting as election chair, called the election to order and opened the floor to nominations for the position of Chair.

Nomination of Gary Mountain for Chair was made. No other nominations were brought forward. Gary Mountain agreed to stand for nomination.

Moved by Councillor Innis,
Second by Regional Chair Ianicca;

That Gary Mountain be appointed Chair of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group for the term ending October 24, 2022, or until a successor is appointed by Regional Council.

Carried PAAWG 2019-01

Mark Head then opened the floor to nominations for the position of Vice-Chair.

Nomination of Karen Hutchinson for Vice-Chair was made. No other nominations were brought forward. Karen Hutchinson agreed to stand for nomination.

Moved by Councillor Palleschi,
Second by Councillor Innis;

That Karen Hutchinson be appointed Vice-Chair of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group for the term ending October 24, 2022, or until a successor is appointed by Regional Council.

Carried PAAWG 2019-02

The meeting was then turned over to Gary Mountain as Chair to approve the agenda.

3) Approval of 2018-04 Agenda

Moved by Karen Hutchinson;

That the agenda for the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group meeting held on March 21, 2019, be approved as amended.

Carried PAAWG 2019-03

4) Approval of 2018-04 Meeting Minutes

Moved by Councillor Innis;

That the Minutes from the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group meeting 2018-04, held on November 22, 2018, be approved.

Carried PAAWG 2019-04

5) Declarations of Conflict of Interest

Mark Head, Region of Peel

Mr. Head provided details on the new conflict of interest requirements that were approved by Regional Council on February 28, 2019, in a report titled “Legislative Requirements – Declaration of Conflict of Interest”. Under the new requirements, any Member at any Council, Committee, Advisory Body or Board that may have a conflict of interest are obligated to disclose their conflict of interest through a Disclosure of Interest Form as required by the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act. Disclosure forms will be made available at every meeting and posted online when a conflict of interest arises.

Councillor Palleschi added that a conflict of interest is determined if a member has a pecuniary interest in a matter or item being considered by the Working Group (e.g. has an opportunity or a family member has an opportunity to financially gain from a decision made by the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group).

Mr. Head asked if any Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group members had any conflicts of interest? No members indicated any conflicts of interest.

6) Presentation – Orientation and Overview of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group

Mark Head, Region of Peel

Mr. Head provided a brief presentation and overview of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group purpose, terms of reference, meeting procedures, operations and work plan for the 2018-2022 Term of Council. Members asked general questions on the presentation material and were directed to the PAAWG website for additional information and provided staff email contact information if they had any further questions or clarification.

7) Presentation – Orientation and Overview of the Peel Rural Water Quality Program

Mark Eastman and Jordan Graham, Credit Valley Conservation and Nadine Abrams, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

Mr. Eastman and Ms. Abrams provided a presentation on the Peel Rural Water Quality Program which included a background on the Program, the roles and responsibilities of the Region, Conservation Authority Staff and the Working Group, a detailed walkthrough of all 17 categories, and two mock Peel Rural Water Quality Program applications to familiarize the Working Group with the review process.

PAAWG inquired whether applicants have appeal rights in the event their application is turned down. Generally, applications that are turned down do not meet the Guideline requirements and can be deferred or have conditions of approval. Alternatively, the project can be entirely revised and brought back at a subsequent meeting date. PAAWG asked how many applications have been approved since the start of the program and how many have been turned down? To date, only two applications have been turned down. The review process is very detailed, and we work closely with landowners to ensure the proposed project meets the Guideline requirements.

In 2018, the Program approved 15 projects providing approximately \$104,817 in grants. Between 2004 and 2018, the Program has paid/allocated a total of \$847,872 in funding towards 174 agri-environmental projects. These funds have leveraged an additional \$3,413,480 to contribute to the completion of projects valued at \$4,261,352. Project funding updates are provided to Regional Council on a yearly basis. PAAWG inquired whether there are other programs similar to the PRWQP in other municipalities. Grand River Conservation Authority has a very similar program that was started in 1999 and continues to be very successful. The strength and success of these programs lie in the relationship they create between the farming community, municipal and conservation authority staff, and various stakeholder organizations.

8) Urban Agricultural Policy and Program Initiatives

Mark Head, Region of Peel

Mark Head reiterated the PAAWG Work Plan initiatives related to urban agriculture that were summarized in the overview presentation on PAAWG and that Regional Planning and Public Health staff were interested in engaging PAAWG on the topic and whether members had any specific advice or interest in continued involvement in urban agriculture. He indicated this was an emerging area of policy and program interest at a regional and local municipal level and indicated the presentation by Public Health was an opportunity to hear about Public Health related interests in urban agriculture.

9) Health Benefits of Urban Agriculture

Julia Ali, Region of Peel

Natalie Lapos, Region of Peel

Ms. Lapos provided some background on the research Peel's Public Health Division has undertaken on the benefits and risks of urban agriculture. The research question for the study is "What are the benefits, risks and unintended consequences of urban agriculture?"

During the literature review, the Public Health librarian identified over 800 studies that may be relevant to the research report. This list was narrowed down to four studies based on the quality of the studies published and the relevance of the study to the research question. These four studies include: The Impact of Urban Gardens on Adequate and Healthy Food by Garcia, The Intersection of Planning, Urban Agriculture and Food Justice by Horst, Edible Green Infrastructure by Russo and

Review of the Nutritional Implications of Farmers' Markets and Community Gardens by McCormack.

The health benefits of urban agriculture noted in these studies included: increase in access to healthy foods, vegetable and fruit consumption, and physical activity. The studies also established that urban agriculture improved mental health and the quality of life and general well-being. The potential health risk was that urban agriculture might have negative health implications if vegetables are grown in soil with high lead concentrations.

The research findings include recommendations to incorporate urban agriculture into land use planning policies in the Regional Official Plan as part of the Peel 2041 update and explore opportunities to advance urban agriculture policy and/or program initiatives with the local municipalities. Other recommendations include increasing awareness on the health benefits and risks associated with urban agriculture and determining program opportunities with municipal and non-governmental faith groups and community groups such as Ecosource.

Regarding potential health risks of farming in contaminated soils, PAAWG inquired about methods aside from soil testing that would ensure a community garden is safe to grow produce. Raised garden beds were mentioned as a possible solution that could be considered in areas where native soil quality was a concern.

10) Communication and Information Items

Mark Head, Region of Peel

Ricardo Razao, Region of Peel

The following communication items were presented to PAAWG members for receipt:

- PAAWG Draft Work Plan 2018 – 2022
- Canadian Agricultural Partnership Funding Program

11) Confirmation of Meeting Dates for 2019

The proposed meeting dates for 2019 are:

- April 25, 2019
- May 23, 2019
- August 22, 2019
- November 21, 2019

That the 2019 meeting dates for the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group be approved.

Moved by Paul Risebrough;

Carried PAAWG 2019-05

Adjourn Meeting / Next Meeting

Moved by Karen Hutchinson;

That March 21, 2019, Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group meeting be adjourned.

Carried PAAWG 2019-06

The meeting stood adjourned at 9:05 p.m. The next Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group meeting will take place on April 25, 2019.