



THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF PEEL:
PEEL AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY WORKING GROUP
PAAWG 2024-01 Meeting Minutes

The Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group (PAAWG) met on March 7, 2024, at 7:00p.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:

Karen Hutchinson, Vice-Chair, Caledon Countryside
Dwight Matson, Peel Federation of Agriculture
Britt McKee, EcoSource (partial meeting) 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
Pat Fortini, Regional Councillor, Region of Peel
Tom Dolson, Peel Federation of Agriculture (partial meeting)
Raphael Adegoye, Representative of the Agricultural Community

Members Absent:

Annette Groves, Mayor, Town of Caledon
Patrick Brown, Mayor, City of Brampton

Staff:

Learie Miller, Manager, Region of Peel
Melanie Williams, Principal Planner, Region of Peel
Aylise Cooke, Junior Planner, Region of Peel
Duncan Ivany, Co-ordinator, Agricultural Outreach, Credit Valley Conservation
Holly Shipclark, Senior Co-ordinator, Agricultural Outreach, Credit Valley Conservation
Fallon Hayes, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
Patrick Esson, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

Guests:

Rebecca Pearce Cameron, ALUS
Sandra Dolson, Economic Development Officer, Town of Caledon

1) Welcome and Opening Remarks

The Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group (PAAWG) was called to order at 7:04 pm by Learie Miller. Melanie Williams acted as Chair until the appointment of the PAAWG Chair and Vice-Chair. Attendance was called and quorum confirmed.

2) Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair

Melanie Williams, Region of Peel

Melanie Williams 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 Ed Russell

That Gary Mountain be appointed Chair of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group for the term ending November 21, 2024, or until a successor is appointed.

Carried PAAWG 2024-01

The floor was opened 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 Raphael Adegboye

That Karen Hutchinson be appointed Vice-Chair of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group for the term ending November 21, 2024, or until a successor is appointed.

Carried PAAWG 2024-02

Learie Miller concluded the election process with testimony of the wonderful work undertaken by PAAWG. He expressed gratitude for the continued participation and dedication of PAAWG members and the newly elected Chair and Vice-Chair.

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

3) Declarations of Conflict of Interest

None identified.

4) Review and Approval of March 7, 2024 Agenda

Moved by Karen Hutchinson

That the Agenda for the March 7, 2024, meeting of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group be approved as amended.

Carried PAAWG 2024-03

5) Review and Approval of Minutes from November 16, 2023 Meeting

Moved by Karen Hutchinson

That the Minutes of Meeting 2023-05 of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group, held on November 16, 2023, be approved.

Carried PAAWG 2024-02

6) Region of Peel and Provincial Updates

Melanie Williams, Region of Peel

Hazel McCallion Act (Peel Dissolution), 2023

The Province has announced its intent to introduce new legislation that, if passed, will refocus the mandate of the Transition Board to bring forward recommendations on optimizing the delivery of Region of Peel services including land use planning, servicing, roads and waste management.

Bill 150, Planning Statute Law Amendment Act, 2023

On October 23, 2023, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing announced that the Province would introduce legislation to revert some of the Provincial modifications made to Official Plans, including the Region of Peel's.

Bill 150, the Planning Statute Law Amendment Act, 2023 was passed in December 2023 which enacted the Official Plan Adjustments Act, 2023. Nine of the original 44 Provincial modifications made to the Regional Official Plan remain in effect.

Bill 162, proposed Get It Done Act, 2024 - Amending the Official Plan Adjustments Act, 2023

In February 2024, the Province brought forward the 'Amending the Official Plan Adjustments Act, 2023' as part of proposed Bill 150 *Get It Done Act*. If passed, this Bill would reinstate an additional 18 of the original Provincial modifications made to the Council endorsed Regional Official Plan, resulting in a total of 27 Provincial modifications.

Provincial Modification 36, which redesignated Prime Agricultural Area (PAA) to Rural Lands within the Greenbelt Plan area, was removed through Bill 150 and is not currently proposed in Bill 162. Unless Bill 162 is further amended to include this modification, the lands remains as the original PAA mapped area.

Ontario Regulation 41/24 Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits (under the Conservation Authorities Act)

This regulation comes into effect April 1, 2024, and revokes 36 existing Conservation Authority (CA) regulations for hazard lands and consolidates them into a single, Ontario wide regulation. This regulation enables CAs to regulate development in hazard lands such as flood plain, streams, wetlands, etc.

The regulation also refines where development is prohibited, updates the definition of 'watercourse' and adjusts the scope of development restrictions around wetlands. It also defines low risk activities that will now be exempt from a Conservation Authority permit including:

- Agricultural in-field erosion control structures
- Installation, maintenance, or repair of tile drains
- Installation, maintenance, or repair of a pond for watering livestock

Questions/Discussion:

None

7) PAAWG Work Plan 2024

Melanie Williams, Region of Peel

The 2024 Work Plan was brought forward for PAAWG review and comment. It was noted the work plan is subject to modification to reflect changes to implement direction of the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022*, and *Hazel McCallion Act, 2023*. The work plan will be provided to Regional Council in the annual PAAWG report.

Questions/Discussion:

None.

8) 20th Anniversary of the Peel Rural Water Quality Program

Holly Shipclark, Credit Valley Conservation

The Peel Rural Water Quality Program (PRWQP) is approaching its 20th anniversary. Program staff discussed with PAAWG opportunities to enhance the annual farm tour to mark the program's achievements over the past 20 years and recognize the new ALUS Peel Pilot partnership.

Questions/Discussions

PAAWG discussed possible formats and themes for the event that highlight the ecological goods and services that the farms provide through the projects implement by the PRWQP (e.g., stormwater management, improving water quality throughout the entire watershed, etc.). PAAWG discussed potential partners and media opportunities for the event, inviting all past program participants and ways to celebrate projects from across the PRWQP program categories with before/after of projects completed by the program. A steering committee of PAAWG, Region and CA staff will be formed with the goal of a fall 2024 farm tour.

PAAWG discussed the role that Peel farms have had in managing stormwater through programs such as the PRWQP. Concern was expressed about municipal stormwater management charges that are being reviewed across the Golden Horseshoe. PAAWG requested an update on the City of Brampton's review of agricultural credits under its stormwater management charges. Councillor Fortini spoke to the ongoing work being undertaken by City of Brampton staff and will bring an update to PAAWG at a future meeting.

9) Peel Rural Water Quality Program Guidelines

Holly Shipclark, Credit Valley Conservation

At the November 2023 PAAWG meeting, PAAWG provided direction to program staff on the draft PRWQP Guidelines, as part of the 5 year strategic review.

Implementing PAAWG's feedback, three significant changes were made.

Cover Crops: Enhanced Existing Category

Program staff recommend a pilot that would offer a smaller grant for an additional 250 acres, to reduce the risk for participants to trial various cover crops and cover cropping methods. The pilot would end December 31, 2026.

- Current Cost Share Rate and Cap: \$100/Acre up to 50 acres

- Proposed Cost Share Rate and Cap: \$100/Acre for the first 50 Acres, \$40/Acre for acres 50-300 per farm business *maximum cover crop grant per year is for 50 acres

Questions/Discussion:

PAAWG members discussed the need for this category as cover crops sometimes require a multi-year approach to ensure the right cover crop for the land. If there is a failure the first year, it may disincentivize it as a long-term practice. This pilot will allow for further experimentation with different species without added risk to the participant. PAAWG directed program staff to reach out to past PRWQP participants to see if they continued with the cover cropping practice after the grant, and to measure the project outcomes.

New Category – Crop Nutrient Planning

Purpose: To encourage the most effective use of available nutrient resources and protect groundwater and surface water on cropping operations without livestock housing.

Proposed Eligible Projects, Funding and Caps:

- A written crop nutrient plan covering at least one full crop rotation and a minimum of three years that describes the timing, source, placement, and rates of all applied nutrients.
- First time applications for Crop Nutrient Plans: 70% up to \$3,000.
- Second and subsequent application for Crop Nutrient Plans, on the same property: 35% up to \$1,500.

Forest Plantation Management

Purpose: To promote good forestry practices to maintain healthy, sustainable forests, that improve landscape resilience to climate change and prevent soil erosion, mitigate flooding, and reduce contamination of local waterways.

Proposed Eligible Projects, Funding Caps and Rates:

- Preparation of a Forest Management Plan: 30% up to \$500
- Inventory, Silviculture Prescriptions, Marking, Tendering and Thinning for improved forest health: 50% up to \$6,000

Questions/Discussion:

PAAWG inquired to the differences in the definition of woodland and plantation between the Regional Official Plan, municipal Official Plans and municipal Tree Cutting By-laws. There was concern that the differences in the definition could

cause confusion in applying for this project category. For the purposes of interpreting the PRWQP Guidelines, the Forest Plantation Management category will be revised to include the Regional Official Plan definitions. At this time, the program category will focus on plantations as more review is required before being able to expand the category to other woodlands. The project category also outlines the applicable Provincial, Regional and municipal policies under the eligibility requirements.

Program staff confirmed that this category would only be available to participants that meet the PRWQP eligibility guidelines. The CAs do have a similar forest management program for non-farm rural landowners.

Moved by Tom Dolson

That the proposed Peel Rural Water Quality Program 2024 Guidelines Forest Plantation Management Category be revised to add the Regional Official Plan definition of plantation to support the understanding of the Forest Plantation Management Category; and,

That the Peel Rural Water Quality Program 2024 Guidelines be endorsed and go forward to Region of Peel Regional Council.

Carried PAAWG 2024-03

10) Peel Rural Water Quality Program and ALUS Peel Pilot 2023 Memorandum

Duncan Ivany, Credit Valley Conservation

In 2023, the PRWQP completed its 19th program year. Eleven PRWQP projects were approved at a grant amount of \$97,984. This brings the total farm projects approved between 2014-2023 to 236 projects. A total of 90 farms in Peel have been engaged in the PRWQP with \$1.4 million in funds provided through the program, leveraging an additional \$3.8 million in partner and landowner contributions for a project value of \$5.1 million.

The ALUS Peel Pilot delivered its second year of its three-year pilot with nine approved projects, leading to 55.6 acres (22.5 ha) approved for annual payments. This brings the two-year total to 74.6 acres (30.5 ha) enrolled. The ALUS Peel Pilot also contributed \$27,200 towards establishing these projects.

11) Peel Rural Quality Program and ALUS Peel Pilot

Holly Shipclark, Credit Valley Conservation

a) Financial Report

The 2024 PRWQP program year has a budget of \$70,000. With additional contributions through other funding partnerships for specific projects, this budget

has been augmented to \$95,253. Pending the approval of the March 7, 2024, projects, as presented, the total remaining balance is \$67,467.

ALUS National is committed to funding 35 acres (14 ha) for the third year of the ALUS Peel Pilot. Pending the approval of the applications 01 & 02-TRCA-24, the 2024 ALUS Peel Pilot contribution for annual payments for new projects is \$3,757.50 (pending).

Questions/Discussion:

None.

b) Project Applications

*Duncan Ivany, Credit Valley Conservation
Fallon Hayes, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority*

I. 01-CVC-24 Cover Crops (PRWQP)

The application 01-CVC-24 proposes to support the establishment of a cover crop on a 105-acre farm parcel situated within a highly vulnerable aquifer.

Moved by Karen Hutchinson

That application 01-CVC-24 be approved and that Peel Rural Water Quality Program funding be provided in the amount of \$ 400 under the category "Cover Crops".

Carried PAAWG 2024-04

II. 02-CVC-24 Nutrient Management Strategy and Plan (PRWQP)

The application 02-CVC-24 proposes to support the retention of a Nutrient Management Consultant to prepare a new Nutrient Management Strategy to guide the application of nutrients to the land and Nutrient Management Plan to determine type and sizing for a future manure storage structure that meets the increased need.

Moved by Raphael Adegboye

That application 02-CVC-24 be approved and that Peel Rural Water Quality Program funding be provided in the amount of \$ 2,133 under the category "Nutrient management Strategy and Plan".

Carried PAAWG 2024-05

III. 01-TRCA-24 Natural Area Creation and Enhancement (PRWQP & ALUS)

The application 01-TRCA-24 proposes to plant 4.79 acres of grassed slopes on an 81-acre property with 41 leased acres in crops. The property is located on a Significant Groundwater Recharge Area and Highly Vulnerable Aquifer. The project is supported by the Region.

Moved by Mark Vanderwees

That application 01-TRCA-24 be approved and that Peel Rural Water Quality Program funding be provided in the amount of \$18,061.50 under the category "Natural Area and Enhancement Creation" upon meeting the conditions of proof of an updated, approved Canada-Ontario Environmental Farm Plan for the subject lands and that the registered owner of the property sign and submit an Undertaking Agreement for the establishment of the projects on their property.

Carried PAAWG 2024-06

Moved by Raphael Adegboye

That application 01-TRCA-24, be approved for ALUS Peel Pilot annual payment funding in the total of 718.50 a year for 5 years, for a total of \$3,592.50 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 2024-07

IV. 02-TRCA-24 Tree Planting (PRWQP & ALUS)

The application 02-TRCA-24 is proposing to establish 0.22 acres of windbreaks on the same property as the 01-TRCA-24 application.

Moved by Manjari Mehta

That application 02-TRCA-24 be approved and that Peel Rural Water Quality Program funding be provided in the amount of \$7,191.76 under the category "Tree Planting" upon meeting the conditions of proof of an updated, approved Canada-Ontario Environmental Farm Plan for the subject lands and

that the registered owner of the property sign and submit an Undertaking Agreement for the establishment of the projects on their property.

Carried PAAWG 2024-08

Moved by Raphael Adegboye

That application 02-TRCA-24, 02-TRCA-24 be approved for ALUS Peel Pilot annual payment funding in the total amount of \$ 33 a year for 5 years, for a total of \$ 165 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 2024-09

Questions/Discussion:

None.

12) Communication and For Information Items

Aylise Cooke, Region of Peel

The following correspondence were received:

- a) Grown in Peel 2024 listing registration reminder
- b) Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association's [Biosecurity Webinars and Workshops](#).
- c) Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Associations [Upcoming Environmental Farm Plan \(EFP\) Workshops](#)
- d) Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Associations [Nature Smart Program](#)
- e) 2024 Farmland Forum: The Future of Ontario Farmland [Registration](#)
- f) [Ontario On-Farm Climate Action Fund](#)
- g) Conservation Matters: [Award-Winning Work](#) in the Credit River Watershed
- h) Golden Horseshoe Food & Farming Alliance [newsletter](#)

13) Round Table and Other Business

No other business stated.

14) Adjournment

Moved by Karen Hutchinson

That the March 7, 2024, meeting of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group be adjourned.

Carried PAAWG 2024-10

The meeting adjourned at 9:19pm. The next PAAWG meeting will be held will be held in-person at the Peel Conference and online via Microsoft Teams on May 16th, 2024, at 7:00pm.