



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

PAAWG 2024-02 Meeting Minutes

The Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group (PAAWG) met on May 16th, 2024, 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:

Brian Wannamaker, Citizen-at-Large
Britt McKee, EcoSource (7:52pm)
Dwight Matson, Peel Federation of Agriculture
Ed Russell, Peel Soil and Crop Improvement Association
Gary Mountain, Chair, Peel Soil and Crop Improvement Association
Karen Hutchinson, Vice-Chair, Caledon Countryside Alliance
Mario Russo, Regional Councillor, Region of Peel
Mark Vanderwees, Citizen-at-Large
Raphael Adegboye, Representative of the Agricultural Community (7:10pm)
Tom Dolson, Peel Federation of Agriculture

Members Absent:

Patrick Brown, Mayor, City of Brampton
Pat Fortini, Regional Councillor, Region of Peel
Manjari Mehta, Citizen-at-Large

Staff:

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

Guests:

Olivia Sparrow, Manager, Stormwater Programs, City of Brampton
Ryan Carlow, Soil Health Specialist, Greenbelt Foundation

May 16, 2024

1) Welcome and Opening Remarks

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

Gary Mountain welcomed Councillor Mario Russo, who has been appointed to PAAWG for the Town of Caledon in place of Mayor Groves.

2) Declarations of Conflict of Interest

The Chair declared a conflict of interest on Peel Rural Water Quality Program (PRWQP) and ALUS application 03-CVC-24. No other conflicts of interest were identified.

3) Review and Approval of May 16, 2024 Agenda

Moved by Tom Dolson

That the Agenda for the May 16, 2024, meeting of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group be approved as amended.

Carried PAAWG 2024-11

4) Review and Approval of Minutes of March 7, 2024 Meeting

Moved by Tom Dolson

That the Minutes of Meeting 2024-01 of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group, held on March 7, 2024 be approved.

Carried PAAWG 2024-12

5) Update on Greenbelt Foundation Soil Health Program – Peel Results

Ryan Carlow, Greenbelt Foundation

Ryan Carlow presented on the objectives of the Greenbelt Foundation's Soil Health program and an update on the first year of sampling data on soil health and sustainable farming practices across the Greenbelt.

Overall, data indicated that Peel soil has a higher potential to store carbon naturally and high aggregate stability. Preliminary findings showed that farms applying soil health practices, like no tillage or cover crops, had increased aggregate stability compared to baselines.

The Greenbelt Soil Health Program has begun their 2024 sampling campaign. There is no cost associated with participating in this program. Participating farmers receive a soil health report and soil management plan. To confirm eligibility to participate in the study, farmers are requested to contact Ryan Carlow directly.

Questions/Discussion:

PAAWG members inquired how OMAFRA's recent updating of soils mapping data compared to the existing Canada Land Inventory (CLI) soil classes in the Greenbelt's study results. Ryan Carlow replied that he can follow up on this.

6) Update on City of Brampton Stormwater Management and Agricultural Charges/Credits

Olivia Sparrow, City of Brampton

The City of Brampton is developing a streamlined Farm Credit program to provide relief to farmers from the stormwater management (SWM) charges. This is being explored due to the efficacy of farm stewardship practices in controlling stormwater from pervious & impervious areas.

It is proposed that the reduction in fees would be backdated to beginning of stormwater charges (June 1, 2020). Immediate savings are expected for most farms. Implementation of this program will include retaining a consultant, drafting a framework for a farm credit program, engagement with the farming community and anticipated City of Brampton Council approval for November 2024.

Questions/Discussion:

PAAWG members expressed interest in the exemptions offered in other municipalities and offered assistance in organizing continued discussion with agricultural stakeholders.

Olivia Sparrow indicated that she would follow up with benchmarking research to answer specifically regarding the relevancy of municipal drains in other relief strategies.

PAAWG wanted more information on how billing units were calculated, along with how the value of what the City must recoup through SWM charges, is calculated.

Olivia Sparrow responded that there is an established billing unit and after the City maps the total impervious area, they divide that by the billing unit then it is rounded to a whole number for non-residential properties. The value the City must recoup is derived from how much the city previously spent maintaining the SWM network and a servicing exercise undertaken to estimate the cost of additional required services. Olivia Sparrow offered to follow up with this financial assessment on the breakdown of how much the City will need each year.

PAAWG inquired about the cost associated with installing SWM infrastructure on a private property, using the example of a culvert.

Olivia Sparrow indicated that replacing existing culverts would require proponent funding. Olivia Sparrow confirmed she would follow up with PAAWG regarding the funding and installation of new culverts in the City of Brampton.

7) Region of Peel and Provincial Updates

Melanie Williams, Region of Peel

Regional Staff provided an update on [Bill 185 Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024](#). This Bill is going through public consultation but if passed, it will amend a series of Acts with interests to PAAWG. Some significant impacts include removal of upper-tier planning authority, expediting development timelines, and allowing for the appeal of settlement boundary amendments.

Regional Staff also presented on the proposed updated [Provincial Planning Statement](#) (PPS). Overall, proposed policies decrease the protection standard for specialty crop and prime agricultural areas. While previous proposed policies permitting multiple residential development and consents for multiple, non-farm residential lots in prime agricultural areas have been removed, there is still the permission of additional residential units on non-farm lots in the prime agricultural area.

Staff comments remained consistent to what was discussed previously at PAAWG and submitted for the last proposed PPS.

Questions/Discussion:

PAAWG members expressed interest in the proposed additional dwelling permissions in the Rural Areas as well as increased flexibility for on-farm diversified uses across the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP) and Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) areas.

Melanie Williams explained that across the current Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans, the Prime Agricultural Area (PAA) has the highest level of protection and therefore, there are restrictions on the introduction of some, non-farm land uses into the PAA. However, the PAA does permit a large range of agriculture, agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses. There are some agricultural policy differences across the Provincial Plans. Most notably, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan restricts agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses to only the PAA in some of the Plan areas. Regional Staff can provide PAAWG with information on the Provincial Plan PAA policies at a future meeting.

Councillor Russo asked Regional Staff to work with PAAWG to identify the Provincial agricultural policies that are creating issues/challenges for Peel farmers.

PAAWG and Regional Staff discussed current and the proposed surplus farm residence severance policy. PAAWG members felt that the proponent should be restricted from building another dwelling if a surplus residence severance has been received.

8) 20th Anniversary Peel Farm Tour

Holly Shipclark, Credit Valley Conservation

May 16, 2024

The planning committee appointed at the March PAAWG meeting to develop a 20th anniversary PRWQP and ALUS Peel Pilot farm tour, reported back. The event will be hosted on October 2nd, 2024, at Spirit Tree Cidery and the property of Gary Mountain. The planning committee opted to have a large stationary event instead of a tour to allow for increased attendance.

Questions/Discussion:

None.

9) Peel Rural Water Quality Program Guidelines

Holly Shipclark & Duncan Ivany, Credit Valley Conservation

a) Financial Report

In 2024, the PRWQP has a budget of \$70,000.00. 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.

This is the third year of the ALUS Peel Pilot. ALUS National is committed to funding \$7,500 for new projects on 10 acres (4 ha). Pending the approval of the March 7, 2024 projects, as presented, the PAAWG has committed \$3,757.50 for annual payments for new projects in 2024.

Questions/Discussion:

PAAWG member asked what is the typical ask per year of the programs and if 2024 was on course.

Program staff confirmed that at this time in 2023 there were more projects approved, however, project applications are largely received and funding allocated at the May and August PAAWG meetings.

b) Project Applications

Duncan Ivany, Credit Valley Conservation

I. 03-CVC-24 Erosion Control Structures & Tree Planting (PRWQP & ALUS Peel Pilot)

The application 03-CVC-24 proposes to support the three existing water and sediment control basins (WASCOB) on a 185-acre farm parcel situated within a highly vulnerable aquifer. The original erosion control structures were approved by the PRWQP in 2021. Two of the WASCOB will be extended by 20m of clay. The third WASCOB will have the edges built up by clay. Area surrounding the existing WASCOB will be planted with a species mix to provide cover and root structure.

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Questions/Discussion:

PAAWG member asked why 03-CVC-24 required further support, inquiring if the structure/methods had changed or if they should be investigated.

Duncan Ivany replied that the engineer's drawings are being followed and enhanced with plantings to increase resistance to overland flow and increase structural stability. In this specific case, revisiting the project is necessary because settling of the berm wasn't taking into consideration in the initial engineering of the WASCOB.

Moved by Karen Hutchinson

That application 03-CVC-24 be approved and that Peel Rural Water Quality Program funding be provided in the amount of \$ 8,123.50 under the category "Erosion Control and Tree Planting".

Carried PAAWG 2024-13

Moved by Britt McKee

That application 03-CVC-24 be approved for ALUS Peel Pilot annual payment funding in the total amount of \$ 240 per year for 5 years, for a total of \$ 1,200 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 2024-14

II. 04-CVC-24 Tree Planting (PRWQP & ALUS Peel Pilot)

The application 04-CVC-24 proposes to plant 300 potted trees and shrubs suitable to wet conditions on the site on to enhance the natural area, increase canopy cover and increase carbon sequestration. Some plantings will replace planting failures from a previous tree planting.

Questions/Discussion:

PAAWG members asked what was previous planted on the property and wondered why it was not sustainable. Duncan Ivany indicated that it was previously silver maple but the species did not take and the team is looking into more suitable species adapted to wet conditions.

Moved by Tom Dolson

That application 04-CVC-24 be approved and that Peel Rural Water Quality Program funding be provided in the amount of \$ 6,412 under the category "Tree Planting".

Carried PAAWG 2024-15

Moved by Councillor Russo

That application 04-CVC-24 be approved for ALUS Peel Pilot annual payment funding in the total amount of \$315 per year for 5 years, for a total of \$ 1,575 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 2024-16

10) For Information

Aylise Cooke, Region of Peel

a) 2024 Grown in Peel Launch

The 2024 Grown in Peel local food initiative has launched with an updated ArcGIS interactive, online map, and promotional material has been distributed to the councillors, listings and community organizations. Our 2024 social media plan intends to spotlight to guide and further connect community members to Peel farms and markets.

B) Letter from Lisa Thompson, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Re: Municipal Stormwater Fees

7) Round Table and Other Business

No other business stated.

8) Adjournment

Moved by Tom Dolson

That the May 16, 2024, meeting of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group be adjourned.

Carried PAAWG 2024-17

The meeting adjourned at 9:01pm. The next PAAWG meeting will be held will be held in-person at the Peel Conference and online via Microsoft Teams on August 15th, 2024, at 7:00pm.