



THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF PEEL:
PEEL AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY WORKING GROUP
PAAWG 2024-04 Meeting Minutes

The Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group (PAAWG) met on November 21, 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:

Raphael Adegboye, Representative of the Agricultural Community
Karen Hutchinson, Vice-Chair, Caledon Countryside Alliance
Dwight Matson, Peel Federation of Agriculture
Manjari Mehta, Citizen-at-Large (7:41pm)
Gary Mountain, Chair, Peel Soil and Crop Improvement Association

Members Absent:

Patrick Brown, Mayor, City of Brampton
Tom Dolson, Peel Federation of Agriculture
Pat Fortini, Regional Councillor, Peel Region
Britt McKee, EcoSource
Ed Russell, Peel Soil and Crop Improvement Association
Mario Russo, Regional Councillor, Peel Region
Mark Vanderwees, Citizen-at-Large
Brian Wannamaker, Citizen-at-Large

Staff:

Tara Buonpensiero, Director, Peel Region
Marsha Paley, Principal Planner, Peel Region
Melanie Williams, Advisor, Peel Region
Duncan Ivany, Agricultural Outreach, Credit Valley Conservation
Holly Shipclark, Agricultural Outreach, Credit Valley Conservation
Patrick Esson, Sr. Project Manager, Toronto and Region Conservation
Fallon Hayes, Project Co-Ordinator, Toronto and Region Conservation
Mary Anne Young, Project Manager, Toronto and Region Conservation

Guests:

Ben Roberts, Senior Economic Development Officer, Town of Caledon

1) Welcome and Opening Remarks

The Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group (PAAWG) was called to order with quorum at 7:41 pm by Chair, Gary Mountain. Note: Prior to having quorum,

Melanie Williams, provided to those in attendance, information on Items 5, 6 and 7, which did not require a vote.

2) Declarations of Conflict of Interest

Gary Mountain declared a conflict of interest on Peel Rural Water Quality Program application 08-CVC-24 Education and on 09-CVC-24 Cover Crop. No other conflicts of interest were identified by members in attendance.

3) Review and Approval of November 21, 2024 Agenda

Moved by Karen Hutchinson, seconded by Raphael Adegboye.

That the Agenda for the November 21, 2024, meeting of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group be approved as amended.

Carried PAAWG 2024-24

4) Review and Approval of Minutes of August 15, 2024 Meeting

Moved by Karen Hutchinson, seconded by Raphael Adegboye.

That the Minutes of Meeting 2024-03 of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group, held on August 15, 2024, be approved.

Carried PAAWG 2024-25

5) Provincial Plans and Agriculture, Agriculture-Related and On-Farm Diversified Uses

Melanie Williams, Peel Region

At the May 16, 2024, PAAWG meeting, PAAWG requested information on the different Provincial Plans and the differences in the policies that permit agriculture, agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses in the Prime Agricultural Area and Rural Lands. Information on why on-farm diversified uses were restricted in its size/footprint was also requested. Information was presented comparing the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and the Niagara Escarpment Plan, showing where these activities were permitted or restricted in the Prime Agricultural Area and Rural Lands.

Questions/Discussion:

PAAWG questioned how on-farm diversified uses and agriculture-related uses are regulated if there is an unpermitted change of use of the property? Ben Roberts spoke to the role of municipal enforcement officers in ensuring zoning and permitting is followed.

6) Grown in Peel Reels

Melanie Williams, Peel Region

The Region has produced the first in a series of 1 minute 'reels' promoting Grown in Peel farm and farmer market listings, across the growing seasons. This reel has been publicly posted on social media platforms. The reel was shown to PAAWG. Members were made aware another reel was in the making for the upcoming holiday season and would showcase trees, food for dinners and decor. The reels and their related advertising were being posted on Facebook, Instagram and other Peel social media starting in September 2024.

Questions/Discussion:

PAAWG members asked about the number of followers to the reel on social media which staff indicated they would provide to the members. Melanie noted that staff were beginning the work as of December 2nd to gather locations for next year's Grown in Peel promotions. Chair Mountain complimented staff on the reel as good promotions. There was a question about whether a paper Grown in Peel guide could be done again with staff suggesting that at minimum a pdf version could be made available.

7) 20th Anniversary Peel Farm Tour

Holly Shipclark, Credit Valley Conservation

The 20th anniversary Peel Rural Water Quality Program (PRWQP) and ALUS Peel farm tour was held Wednesday, October 2, 2024, at Spirit Tree Estate Cidery, Caledon, and emceed by Chair Mountain. Program staff provided an overview of the outcomes of the day. Overall, it was a well attended day with seventy-eight people including twenty farmers on the tour. Keynote speaker the Honourable Senator Rob Black, Ontario, spoke about the Senate Committee's report entitled *Critical Ground: Why Soil is Essential to Canada's Economic, Environmental, Human, and Social Health*. He also presented a special certificate from the Senate to PAAWG to celebrate the 20th anniversary and success of the PRWQP.

Questions/Discussion:

No questions. Chair Mountain provided compliments to the organizers and hosts of the tour.

Quorum at 7:41 pm

8) ALUS Peel Pilot Evaluation

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

The 3-year pilot of the ALUS Peel Pilot program will end February 2025. An evaluation of the pilot program is required for the program partners to determine if

the program will be adopted. Program staff completed an evaluation of the pilot's achievement of milestones and feedback from ALUS Peel Pilot participants. Results and recommendations were presented for PAAWG's feedback and endorsement.

Key findings included:

1. Peel farmers are interested in participating in a permanent ALUS Peel program.
2. Annual payments are valuable to farmers.
3. Annual payments may encourage greater implementation of Peel Rural Water Quality (PRWQP) projects that provide ecosystem services, but further evaluation is required.
4. Association with ALUS National elevates the profiles of the Peel agricultural community.
5. The PRWQP benefits from some of the tools and resources available through ALUS National.
6. The delivery of the ALUS Peel program is cost effective to the program partners.

The Memorandum of Understanding for the ALUS Peel Pilot will conclude on February 7, 2025. The preliminary pilot evaluation demonstrates positive outcomes that recommends that ALUS Peel becomes a permanent program of the partnership of ALUS National, Peel Region, CVC and TRCA.

Questions/Discussion: None

Moved by Karen Hutchinson, seconded by Manjari Mehta.

That the ALUS Peel Pilot evaluation be received and that PAAWG endorse ALUS Peel to become a permanent program.

Carried PAAWG 2024-26

9) Peel Rural Water Quality Program & ALUS Peel Pilot

Holly Shipclark, Credit Valley Conservation

a) Financial Report

The 2024 Peel Rural Water Quality (PRWQP) program year has a budget of \$70,000.00. With additional contributions through other funding partnerships for specific projects, this budget has been augmented to \$25,253.26. Pending the approval of the November 21, 2024, projects, as presented, the total remaining balance is \$33,306.45.

The 2024 ALUS Peel Pilot contribution for annual payments for new projects is \$7,500.00 of which \$6,432.50 has been previously allocated. Requested new annual payment grant allocation (subject to PAAWG approval) in the amount of \$4,635.00, and of which \$3,297.50 is subject to additional funding from ALUS National.

Questions/Discussion:

No questions.

Chair Mountain declared a conflict of interest and left the meeting at 8:32pm for the next two project applications. At this time PAAWG lost quorum. PAAWG Vice-Chair Karen Hutchinson took over as Chair at this time.

b) Project Applications

Duncan Ivany, Credit Valley Conservation

I. 08-CVC-24 Education (PRWQP)

Application 08 -CVC-24 proposes \$983.00 for a Peel Soil and Crop Improvement Association 10 acre (4 ha) demonstration plot of cover crops. This project helps pilot the establishment and overwintering of new varieties of cover crops, to educate the community on the benefits of different cover crops contribution to the reduction of erosion.

Questions/Discussion:

As quorum was not met, the project was discussed but could not be voted on. Karen Hutchinson noted many on PAAWG have seen the proposed project and PAAWG members present were generally supportive.

II. 09-CVC-24 Cover Crop (PRWQP)

The application 09-CVC-24 proposes \$2,000.00 for 50 acres (20 ha) of cover crops. 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 a highly vulnerable aquifer.

Questions/Discussion:

As quorum was not met, the project was discussed but could not be voted on. In general, PAAWG members present were supportive of the project.

Gary Mountain returned to the room and the role as the Chair at 8:45 pm. Quorum returned.

III. 03-TRCA-24 Natural Area Enhancement and Creation (PRWQP & ALUS Peel Pilot)

The application 03-TRCA-24 proposes \$5,542.08 in Peel Rural Water Quality Program grants and \$1,800 in ALUS Peel Pilot grants for the restoration of marginal farmland.

Questions/Discussion:

No questions.

Moved by Karen Hutchinson, seconded by Manjari Mehta.

That application 03-TRCA-24 be approved and that Peel Rural Water Quality Program funding be provided in the amount of \$5,542.08 under the category "Natural Area Enhancement & Creation" with the condition of submission of an Environmental Farm Plan.

Carried PAAWG 2024-27

Moved by Dwight Matson, seconded by Karen Hutchinson.

That application 03-TRCA-24 be approved for ALUS Peel Pilot annual payment funding in the total amount of \$360.00 per year for 5 years, for a total of \$1,800.00 subject to ALUS National confirming availability of the necessary funds, the project is eligible for funding in accordance with the terms and conditions of the funding.

Carried PAAWG 2024-28

IV. 04-TRCA-24 Tree Planting (PRWQP & ALUS Peel Pilot)

The application 04-TRCA-24 proposes \$7,849.61 in Peel Rural Water Quality Program grants and \$4,635.00 in ALUS Peel Pilot grants for the restoration of marginal farmland.

Moved by Manjari Mehta, seconded by Raphael Adegboye.

That application 04-TRCA-24 be approved and that Peel Rural Water Quality Program funding be provided in the amount of \$7,849.61 under the category "Tree Planting", with the condition of submission of an Environmental Farm Plan.

Carried PAAWG 2024-29

Motion moved by Dwight Matson, seconded by Manjari Mehta.

That application 04-TRCA-24 be approved for ALUS Peel Pilot annual payment funding in the total amount of \$927.00 per year for 5 years, for a total of \$2,835.00 subject to ALUS National confirming availability of the necessary funds, the project is eligible for funding in accordance with the terms and conditions of the funding.

Carried PAAWG 2024-30

For Information

Melanie Williams, Peel Region

- 1) Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance Fall Newsletter available online
- 2) New Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, is now in-effect.
- 3) Peel Food Action Council – An update to the Peel Food Charter that was completed and endorsed by PAAWG in 2017, will begin in 2025. Statistics in the Charter should be refreshed and this is the opportunity to identify new Charter statements. PAAWG discussed the importance of identifying the role of food processing in Peel's food system.

11) Round Table and Other Business

- 1) PAAWG members are eligible for reimbursement of their 2024 travel expenses. Melanie Williams will circulate the claim forms to those members who have attended in-person meetings and the farm tour.
- 2) Mary Anne Younge noted she is taking on a new role within TRCA and will no longer be part of the PRWQP. She noted her appreciation and confidence in other staff who taking on the role.
- 3) Chair Mountain listed the 2025 PAAWG meeting dates.

12) Adjournment

Moved by Karen Hutchinson.

That the November 21, 2024, meeting of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group be adjourned.

Carried PAAWG 2024-31

The meeting adjourned at 9:03 pm. The next PAAWG meeting will be held in-person at the Peel Conference and online via Microsoft Teams on February 20, 2025, at 7:00pm.