

**Agricultural Advisory Committee  
Minutes  
Thursday, February 4, 2016  
7:00 PM  
Ontario Room**

<b>Members Present:</b> Deputy Mayor Jack Heath Councillor Don Hamilton Paul Reesor, Chair Ruth Brock Kim Empringham Lynne Koss  <b>Regrets:</b> Bryant Hulshaf Richard Reesor Ligia DeFillippis Candice Einstoss, York Region Public Health Sonia Dhir, TRCA	<b>Staff Present:</b> Jessica Yau, Community Engagement Assistant Lilli Duoba, Manager Natural Heritage Ruth Rendon, Senior Planner Natural Heritage Laura Gold, Council/Committee Coordinator Pamela Cook, Council/Committee Coordinator
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The Agricultural Advisory Committee convened at 7:04 pm with Paul Reesor presiding as Chair.

Laura Gold, Council/Committee Coordinator introduced Pamela Cook, External Committee Coordinator and welcomed her to the Committee.

**1. Election of the Vice-Chair**

Moved by Councillor Don Hamilton

Seconded by Ruth Brock

That Deputy Mayor Jack Heath be elected as Vice-Chair of the Agricultural Advisory Committee.

CARRIED



## **2. Minutes**

The Minutes of April 9, 2015, Markham Agricultural Advisory Committee were reviewed.

Moved by Councillor Don Hamilton

Seconded by Lynne Koss

That the April 9, 2015 Agriculture Advisory Committee Minutes be approved as presented.

CARRIED

## **3. Appointment / Committee Members Update**

It was agreed that Committee's direction to review their membership would be discussed in detail under the agenda item for the Terms of Reference.

## **4. York Region Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group**

Minutes of the York Region Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group for March 16, April 20, May 20, June 15, September 21 and October 26, 2015 were received for information.

It was reported that York Region will no longer be sending a representative to meetings, as a representative from the Markham Agricultural Advisory Committee has been added to its Terms of Reference. Currently, Paul Reesor and Kim Empringham from the Committee are serving on the York Region Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group. .

## **5. Review of Terms of Reference and 2016 Work Plan for the Agricultural Advisory Committee**

Staff presented a review of the AAC Terms of Reference and 2016 Work Plan for the Markham Agricultural Advisory Committee. It was agreed that urban agriculture should remain a component of the Committee and both documents should clearly reflect that direction. It was agreed that the 2016 Work Plan should be finalized before any consideration of revisions to the Terms of Reference can be determined.

It was agreed that references to the *Town of Markham*, but changed to the **City of Markham**, and that current settlement boundary details of the most current City of Markham Official Plan be reflected as required. Deputy Mayor Jack Heath commented that there are many farms within the urban boundary of Markham that many residents of the City have little or no knowledge of.



## COMPOSITION

The membership of the Committee was reviewed with the following suggestions

- Members representing the City's agricultural sector including rural landowners and tenants and York Region Federation of Agriculture currently sit at 5 members, not 7. *The Committee will investigate ways to solicit interest for additional members.*
- There is currently only 1 (out of two allotted) member on the Committee representing urban issues, local and sustainable food procurement and other agricultural interests. *The Committee will review this further.*
- Up to 2 members representing the academic community or advocacy groups *it was suggested we might reach out universities or colleges to solicit a student – someone to help support civic engagement.*
- A minimum of 1 member of Council
- *Remove 1 representative from Federal Government (Transport Canada) – but could be 'advisor'*
- *Remove 1 representative from Provincial Government – could be 'advisor' only*
- (1) representative from the Toronto Region and Conservation Authority TRCA
- (1) representative from Rouge National Urban Park
- (2) representatives from York Region (preferable to include Public Health and/or Economic Development)
- (1) representative from Environmental Advisory Committee

Staff will revise the current Terms of Reference based on these suggestions and present the document to the Committee for further discussion at the next meeting. The Committee was reminded that their recommendations for revisions would need to be approved by Council.

## Work plan

The Committee presented and discussed items for the 2016 Work Plan. It was commented that this Work Plan should be driven by this Committee and that new items could be added as work plan items are completed.

The following 2016 Agricultural Advisory Committee Work Plan was drafted for development and discussion.



Priority	Topic	Lead	Potential Dates
1	<p>Markham Flood Control Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Farmers will incur flood control charges based on value of the land on their farm tax bill. Fee will require owners to adjust rent charges as well.</li> <li>Need to look at possible reduction /exemption for agricultural properties.</li> </ul>	<p>Lilli will ask City staff to attend next meeting and present on matter.</p> <p>Any exemptions would be the decision of City Council.</p>	tbd
2	<p>Municipal Tree Preservation Bylaw</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee discussed wanting options and flexibility in the tree by law to remove trees on agricultural lands without a permit.</li> </ul>	<p>Committee to provide research details of this practice in other municipalities for review and response from City staff.</p> <p>Staff to provide by-laws to Committee for information.</p>	tbd
3	<p>Building Permit Fees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee wants to review agricultural building permit fee exemptions or reduced rate for agricultural structure applications.</li> </ul>	<p>Committee will receive City and regional building permit fee by-laws and provide recommendations for future by-law updates including the exemption of agricultural fees.</p>	tbd
4	<p>Markham Firearms By-law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By-law needs to be updated to allow farmers to deal with predators and sick livestock.</li> </ul>	<p>Committee will receive City Firearms by-law and provide recommendations for future by-law updates.</p> <p>Committee to examine Provincial Act that regulates abilities for farmers to deal with nuisance wild life.</p>	tbd
5	<p>Rouge National Urban Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negotiations with Markham and the Park – need proposal from residents and especially reaction from the farm</li> </ul>	<p>Deputy Mayor Heath will work with Committee to lead discussions on this matter and provide Committee with Rouge National Urban Park</p>	tbd



Priority	Topic	Lead	Potential Dates
	community <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Land transfer decisions should be made in next 6 months</li></ul>	governance updates.	
6	Provincial Review: Coordinated Land Use Planning Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Committee review of plans and provide comments to Council.</li></ul>	Committee will review documents and provide comments, when the Provincial recommendations are released.	tbd
7	Community Outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identify outreach opportunities.</li></ul>	Committee will work on outreach opportunities to promote agricultural and local food opportunities.	tbd
8	Prepare 2017 Work Plan	MAAC Committee members & Planning / Sustainability Office.	December 1, 2016

## **6. Next Meeting**

The Committee agreed that the meeting schedule 2016 would be as follows:

March 3, 2016

April 7, 2016

October 6 or 13, 2016

November 3, 2016

December 1, 2016

## **7. Adjournment**

The Markham Agricultural Advisory Committee adjourned at 9:06 pm.