



Agricultural Advisory Committee

Minutes

Thursday, October 9, 2014

7:00 PM

Council Chamber

<p>Members Present: Regional Councillor Gord Landon, Chair Jay Reesor, Vice Chair Ruth Brock Kim Empringham Lynne Koss Paul Reesor</p> <p>Agency Representatives: Sonia Dhir, TRCA Candice Einstoss, York Region Public Health Jason Ezer, York Region</p>	<p>Staff Present: Lilli Duoba, Manager Natural Heritage Ruth Rendon, Senior Natural Heritage Planner Laura Gold, Council/Committee Coordinator Patrick Wong, Policy Student</p> <p>Regrets: Councillor Don Hamilton Prabh Banga, Sustainability Coordinator Mike Bender, Rouge Park, TRCA Bryant Hulshaf Richard Reesor Ligia DeFilippis Guy Farintosh Doug Lindeblom, York Region Maria Gatti, Transport Canada Maria Papoulas, Rouge Park , TRCA</p>
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1. Presentation on City By-Laws Regulations within Agricultural Areas

Bill Wiles, Manager of By-Laws & Enforcement provided a presentation entitled “City By-law Regulations within Agricultural Areas”. The presentation provided an overview of agricultural exemptions to City by-laws.

The following questions were asked regarding agricultural exemptions to City by-laws:

1) When are farmers permitted to cut down a tree?

Farmers can cut down or trim a tree without a permit when it is interfering with agricultural activity. A permit would be required if the tree is just a nuisance.

2) When is a fence required around a manmade pond/body of water on agricultural lands?

A fence would be required if there are houses adjacent to the farm.

3) Can farmers use firearms to deal with wildlife interfering with farming?

Firearms may be used when the wildlife is interfering with the farms livestock or crops. The hunter would be deemed an agent of the farm.

4) What is the Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program?

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs manage the Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Fund for farmers who have had their livestock or crops affected by wildlife. For example the City provided compensation to a farmer who had their goat attacked by coyotes.

5) What should a farmer do if wildlife or unwanted pets are dumped on their property?

The farmer should call the OSPCA who will pick up the animals.

Moved by Kim Empringham

Seconded by Lynne Koss

That the presentation entitled "City By-law Regulations within Agricultural Areas" be received.

CARRIED

2. Minutes

The Committee reviewed the Minutes.

Moved by Jay Reesor

Seconded by Paul Reesor

That the Minutes of the Thursday, April 3, 2014 Agricultural Advisory Committee be approved as presented.

CARRIED

3. Presentation on the Farm Start- McVean Farm Tour conducted on July 16, 2014

Sonia Dhir, Toronto & Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) provided a presentation on the Farm Start-McVean Farm Tour conducted on July 16, 2014. A short video of the Farm Start program was presented to the Committee.

A success story of a farmer who started farming through the TRCA's Farm Start Program was shared with the Committee. The farmer is now farming a larger plot of land within the Kortright Centre in Vaughan.

Moved by Jay Reesor

Seconded by Kim Empringham

That the presentation on the Farm Start-McVean Farm Tour be received.

CARRIED

4. Presentation of York Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group (YAALG) on York Region Agricultural Farm Tour conducted on September 12, 2014

Kim Empringham spoke about the York Region Agricultural Farm Tour held on September 12, 2014. The tour is held every two years. Kim provided an overview of the three farms visited including Don Chapman's Farm, Sharon Mushroom farm and Homestead Orchards. Information on the farm tour will be circulated to the Committee by email. The information is also published in some farm publications.

It was questioned why the farm on the tour grew its strawberries hydroponically. Some possible reasons included to extend the farming season and to make it easier to pick the berries, but the reasoning was unknown.

Lynn Koss requested that the type of bed used to grow the strawberries hydroponically be provided to her by email.

Moved by Kim Empringham

Seconded by Jason Ezer

That the presentation on the York Region Agricultural Farm Tour be received.

CARRIED

5. Update on Share the Roads Signage on 19th and Elgin Mills

Ruth Rendon, Senior Natural Heritage Planner provided a presentation on share the road signage.

Ruth Rendon presented the potential signage locations along 19th Avenue and Elgin Mills Road and the criteria used to guide the placement of the signage.

The Committee recommended additional signage be placed in the following location:

- Hwy 48 and Elgin Mills Road— on Elgin Mills, as there is a large hill with no site lines;
- 19th Avenue near Warden Avenue which is in the Future Urban Area. It was suggested that share the roads signage be placed in areas zoned for future development, as most of these areas will not be developed for 5 to 10 years, or more.
- Major Mackenzie Drive, east of Ninth Line.

Staff will report back at the next meeting regarding the recommended new signage locations and next steps. It was anticipated that the signs would be installed by the end of 2014, weather and funding permitting.

A Member suggested placing an article in Markham Life regarding the AAC's work on this matter.

Moved by Lynne Koss

Seconded by Kim Empringham

That the presentation on the Share the Roads Signage be received; and,

That share the road signs be installed in the locations suggested by the Committee; and,

That staff report back on this matter at the next meeting.

CARRIED

6. Organic Garden Update

This agenda item was deferred to the next meeting, as the presenter was unable to attend.

Moved by Ruth Brock

Seconded by Kim Empringham

That the Organic Garden Update be deferred to the next meeting.

CARRIED

7. New Business

The Committee thanked staff for improving the drainage of ditches in agricultural areas of Markham.

8. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee will be held in November 6, 2014 in the Building Boardroom.

9. Adjournment

Moved by Ruth Brock

Seconded by Jay Reesor

The Agricultural Advisory Committee adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

CARRIED