

**Agricultural Advisory Committee
December 2, 2011
7:00 PM – 9:00 PM
York Room**

Members Present: Regional Councillor Gord Landon, Chair Councillor Don Hamilton Christopher Burkholder Ruth Brock Kim Empringham Guy Farintosh Harriet Friedmann Maria Gatti Bryan Hulshaf Jay Reesor Lynne Koss Paul Reesor Richard Reesor Agency Representatives: Maria Gatti, Transportation Canada Alan Wells, Rouge Park Carolyn Woodland, TRCA	Staff Present: Lilli Duoba, Senior Project Coordinator Elizabeth Wimmer, Senior Environmental Planner Katie Burns, Sustainability Coordinator Laura Gold, Council/Committee Coordinator
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The Agricultural Advisory Committee convened at 7:48 p.m. with Regional Councillor Gord Landon presiding as the Chair.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The members briefly introduced themselves.

2. BOARD AND COMMITTEE ORIENTATION

The Committee Clerk provided a board and committee orientation.

Discussion

There was a question regarding when a member should declare a conflict of interest. It was clarified that members should declare a conflict of interest when they have a direct or indirect financial interest in a matter. This would include discussions on a member's or a family members land. The Committee Clerk advised that when a member declares a conflict of interest they shall do the following: abstain from participating in discussion; abstain from voting on the matter; and leave the room if the matter is being discussed in-camera.

3. PRESENTATION ON GREEN PRINT AND AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

Ms. Katie Burns, Sustainability Office, provided a presentation entitled “Green Print & Agricultural Food”.

Discussion

The Committee recommended that the Sustainability Office discuss with York Region Public Health Markham’s food and agricultural plans. The link between agriculture and public health was discussed. It was suggested that “public health” be considered as an “observer” of this committee.

Ms. Katie Burns offered to circulate her “draft food map” to the committee. Ms. Burns also invited the committee to participate in the establishment of a “food charter” for Markham.

4. PRESENTATION ON THE NEW OFFICIAL PLAN

Ms. Lilli Duoba, Senior Project Coordinator, provided a presentation entitled “Markham’s Agricultural Advisory Committee”.

Discussion

Ms. Duoba presented the larger context which led to the formation of the Committee such as the Agricultural Assessment Study. ”. There was a discussion on the Official Plan (OP). It was noted that Markham is in the process of adopting a new OP, advising that this is a very lengthy process that involves public consultation. Staff advised that the OP protects the countryside lands. It was questioned if countryside land could be used for uses such as golf courses. It was explained that this is a term in Markham’s new OP which designates countryside land for agricultural use. It was recommended that a glossary be created of key terminology for the Committee in order to ensure that everyone has the same understanding of a subject matter.

It was questioned if the OP designates land for community gardens. Staff advised that the OP will use language that support community gardens rather than designate land for that use. It was noted that once the draft of the OP is complete the Committee will be asked to provide feedback.

The Committee discussed Markham’s Growth Management Strategy and the land use designations. There was a question regarding the definition for “white belt”. It was explained that the white belt is the term used in the growth plans as lands that may be available for urbanization. Currently, white belt lands can only be urbanized if there is a comprehensive review of the lands at the Regional level. Staff advised that the greenbelt is permanently protected as long as the Provincial legislation is in place.

There was a discussion regarding food incubators and agricultural lands. This topic was requested to be added to a future agenda.

It was noted that Markham's Growth Management Strategy focuses on both intensification of designated areas of Markham and on protecting its agricultural lands. Staff were confident with the Province's forecast for growth in Markham, advising that Markham is required to monitor its growth and measure how fast its land is being consumed. The Province will update its forecasts as required.

5. APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Moved by Kim Empringham

Seconded by Harriet Friedmann

That Regional Councillor Gord Landon be appointed as Chair of the Agricultural Advisory Committee.

CARRIED.

Moved by Ruth Brock

Seconded by Chris Burkholder

That Jay Reesor be appointed as Vice Chair of the Agricultural Advisory Committee with a term ending December 31, 2011.

CARRIED.

6. GENERAL DISCUSSION ON 2012 WORK PLAN

Staff recommended that the Committee read the materials provided in their agenda packages and email the Chair and the Committee Coordinator items that they would like to include in the 2012 Work Plan. The Committee Clerk was requested to circulate a list of the Committee's email addresses to the Committee.

7. FUTURE MEETING DATES

The Committee discussed meeting the fourth Thursday of the month at 7:30 p.m. The Committee will meet in January, February, March, June, October and November. The Committee Clerk was requested to provide a meeting schedule at next meeting.

Note: after the meeting the proposed meeting schedule changed.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The Agricultural Advisory Committee adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Action Item	Meeting Date	Responsibility of Staff/Committee Member	Meeting Date to be Completed By	Status
Invite York Region Public Health as an “observer” to future meetings.	Dec. 2, 2011	Katie Burns	January Meeting	
Create a glossary of key terminology to ensure that everyone has the same understanding of the subject matter	Dec. 2, 2011	Lilli Douba & Elizabeth Wimmer	To be included in draft Official Plan	
Read agenda material and email the Chair and Council/Committee Coordinator items that should be included in the 2012 Work Plan	Dec. 2, 2011	All Committee Members	January Meeting	
Circulate a Committee email list to the Committee	Dec. 2, 2011	Laura Gold	January Meeting	Completed
Provide a meeting schedule at the next meeting	Dec. 2, 2011	Laura Gold	January Meeting	