



\* Subject to Advisory Committee Approval \*

## **Agricultural Advisory Committee of Clarington Meeting Minutes**

Date: Thursday, August 8, 2024  
Time: 7:30 p.m.  
Location: Microsoft Teams  
or Meeting Room 1C, Municipal Administrative Centre  
40 Temperance St., Bowmanville, Ontario  
Members Present: Henry Zekveld (Chair), Tom Barrie, Eric Bowman, Richard Rekker,  
John Cartwright, Craig Rickard, Jordan McKay, Mitch Morawetz  
(DRFA), Councillor Zwart  
Regrets: Brenda Metcalf, Jennifer Knox, Ryan Cullen  
Staff Present: Sylvia Jennings, Jane Wang – Planning and Infrastructure Services  
Guests: Allison De Vos, Lori Talling – Invest Durham, Ian Nokes – Ontario  
Federation of Agriculture, Wayne Caldwell – Greenbelt Foundation,  
Allison Hansen, Janice Freund – Rodenticide Free Ontario

### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

H. Zekveld welcomed all to the meeting, with introductions.

### **2. Land Acknowledgement Statement**

H. Zekveld recited Clarington's Land Acknowledgement Statement.

### **3. Declarations of Interest**

None

### **4. Approval of Minutes of**

**024-011** Moved by Eric Bowman, Seconded by Richard Rekker

*That the Minutes of the June 13, 2024, meeting be approved.*

**Carried**

### **5. Presentations / Delegations**

#### **5a. Presentation on Battery Energy Storage Systems**

Ian Nokes, policy analyst for the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA), provided a presentation on Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS). He described how BESSs could potentially address various challenges to providing power across the Province. Challenges include transmission bottlenecks, and the need for energy sources that can be turned on and off to meet changing demand. He reviewed how a lack of available power was preventing certain industries, such as greenhouses,

from growing. While more transmission corridors are being built, this is a costly solution. Natural gas has typically been used to address on-demand power needs, but this is planned to be phased out to meet emissions targets. As wind and solar are being promoted, a storage solution is needed since times of peak power generation likely won't match when power is most demanded. BESSs can help alleviate these challenges.

I. Nokes described how the Province, working through the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO), is considering BESS projects. In response to this emerging issue, the OFA is seeking to inform municipalities and farmers so that they can make informed decisions when BESSs are proposed. The OFA has developed policy recommendations with the intention of minimizing the risks associated with BESS projects and ensuring that farmland is protected. This included recommendations such as adopting standards from other jurisdictions, minimum set back distances, and fire codes.

I. Nokes answered questions from committee members related to battery capabilities, and the OFA's position on which jurisdiction should regulate BESSs. I. Nokes noted that stakeholders should be informed so that they can balance the risks of these projects with their benefits.

H. Zekveld thanked I. Nokes for his presentation.

#### **5b. Presentation on Housing Needs for the Agricultural Sector**

W. Caldwell shared a brief description of the Greenbelt Foundation's study on housing and actions for the agricultural sector in rural greenbelt communities. Clarington has been chosen as one of the case studies for the study.

W. Caldwell asked the group for their insights into their experience with housing needs on farms. Committee members brought up the following:

- Conflicts between farmers and newly rural residents living on severed parcels of former farmland
- Building additional housing on farms to accommodate family members working on the farm without severing
- Renting a house on the farm to a non-farmer
- Building migrant worker housing
- Working to educate municipalities on migrant worker housing
- Considering options for under utilized surplus housing on farms

W. Caldwell then asked the group for any insights into policies that are working well, or that should be reviewed. Committee members brought up the following:

- Housing shortage overall is a huge concern. Allowing more additional dwelling units could be the correct policy.
- Additional education for municipalities on farm worker housing could be helpful. Municipalities like Clarington often understand the nuances, but that's not consistent across the province.
- On-farm family or worker housing is encouraged, but new housing on farms shouldn't be permitted to sever due to MDS conflicts and breaking up the countryside.

H. Zekveld thanked Wayne for attending the meeting.

## **6. Business Arising from Previous Meeting**

### **6a. Update on CP Rail Crossing at Bennett Road**

S. Jennings provided a brief update on work at Bennett Road and the CP Rail Crossing. Work is expected to commence in September. The farmer leasing the land is in communication with the Municipality's Manager of Infrastructure.

## **7. Correspondence, Council Items and Referrals**

S. Jennings shared the following for information:

- Letter from Rodenticide Free Ontario
- [Ontario expanding the Farmer Wellness Initiative to farm workers](#)
- [Ontario increasing financing available through Feeder Cattle Loan Program](#)

## **8. Liaison Reports**

### **8a. Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee – T. Barrie**

No report.

### **8b. Durham Region Federation of Agriculture**

M. Morawetz provided the update. DRFA received correspondence regarding expanding the Rouge National Park, the Toronto Region Conservation Authority, and a study on the logistics of using ferries to export agricultural products. Brock Council will be going ahead with permitting backyard chickens in some circumstances. The Touch a Truck event will be held on August 23 in Oshawa.

### **8c. Durham Farm Connections – B. Metcalf**

No report.

### **8d. Durham Agricultural Economic Development Update – A. De Vos**

A. De Vos and L. Talling provided the update. An education campaign focusing on the apple value chain in Durham will be rolled out this month to investor channels and social media. The North Durham OFDU study is ongoing. Consultation was completed in July and received good feedback. Recommendations are now being developed and will be presented for consultation before going to Council in December.

C. Rickard spoke about his recent success in raising awareness of agriculture using a yard sign and social media to demonstrate the impact of agriculture. Durham Farm Connections will be considering expanding yard signs in the future.

## **9. New Business**

### **9a. Farmer's Parade of Lights Subcommittee**

**024-012** Moved by Craig Rickard, Seconded by Councillor Zwart

*That a subcommittee be formed to organize the Farmer's Parade of Lights and that this subcommittee report back at the December AACC Meeting.*

**Carried**

**10. Date of Next Meeting**

October 10, 2024

**11. Adjournment**

**024-013** Moved by Tom Barrie, Seconded by Richard Rekker

*That the meeting adjourn at 9:34 p.m.*

**Carried**