



\* Subject to Advisory Committee Approval \*

## Agricultural Advisory Committee of Clarington Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, October 10, 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, Jordan McKay, Brenda Metcalf, Jennifer Knox  
Regrets: Craig Rickard, Mitch Morawetz (DRFA), Councillor Zwart, Ryan  
Cullen  
Staff Present: Sylvia Jennings, Jane Wang, Lisa Backus – Planning and  
Infrastructure Services  
Guests: Allison De Vos – Invest Durham, Bianca Witzke – Witzke’s  
Greenhouses, Allison Hansen, Janice Freund, Lindsey Zehel –  
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 August 8, 2024

**024-014** Moved by Eric Bowman, Seconded by Richard Rekker

*That the Minutes of the August 8, 2024, meeting by approved.*

**Carried**

### 5. Presentations / Delegations

#### 5a. Delegation from Witzke’s Greenhouses concerning Migrant Worker Housing

Bianca Witzke from Witzke’s Greenhouses delegated to the Committee concerning a recent issue with migrant worker housing. Witzke’s has a duplex and two trailers on site to provide housing for migrant farm workers. After a recent fire inspection, they were given an Order to Comply with a list of changes that needed to be resolved. B. Witzke reported that they were not able to receive a building permit to

resolve the issues because of zoning issues. They are now concerned that they will not be able to comply with the order prior to January when the migrant workers would be arriving. B. Witzke expressed their concern that there doesn't seem to be a clear process for how to resolve the issue, and they are uncertain about timelines for getting the necessary approvals in place to start the compliance work.

B. Witzke reported that they have been in touch with other farmers who have experienced similar issues, typically when seeking to house migrant workers specifically in trailers. These farmers suggested a meeting between themselves and various municipal department heads to discuss the issue. Some farmers must put in applications for migrant workers this fall so that they'll be able to work in the spring, so they are concerned about timelines.

Committee members suggested that there be a meeting with farmers currently experiencing this issue and municipal department heads. The following motion was passed.

**024-015** Moved by Tom Barrie, Seconded by Richard Rekker

*That the AACC requests that heads of planning, fire, building, and health meet with growers who are dealing with the problem of acquiring permits for migrant worker housing.*

**Carried**

A committee member suggested that after this meeting has occurred, an education meeting for a larger audience should be held.

H. Zekveld thanked B. Witzke for sharing this concern.

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

### **6a. Discussion on Battery Energy Storage Systems**

The Committee discussed Battery Energy Storage Systems as presented at the previous meeting. They agreed to take no action at this time.

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

S. Jennings shared the following for information:

- Council direction to permit backyard chickens in rural areas
- [Staff Report on Backyard Chickens](#)
- [Additional funding available through the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership](#)
- [Open Farm Days in Alberta](#)

The Committee members discussed the Council direction to permit backyard chickens in rural areas in Clarington. Committee members described their concerns with permitting backyard chickens without a registry that could be used to trace

chicken owners in case of avian flu, or other issues. The following motion was passed.

**024-016** Moved by Brenda Metcalf, Seconded by Richard Rekker

*That the AACC recommends a licensing or registry system with fees to ensure traceability for backyard flocks in case of avian flu.*

**Carried**

## **8. Liaison Reports**

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

T. Barrie provided the update. The Hamilton-Oshawa Port Authority is expanding its grain operations. The Region of Durham shared plans for new road improvements in 2025. The 2024 DAAC farm tour had a last minute change in venue but was still a success with 131 participants. The DRFA has requested that Durham Paramedic Services acquire a vehicle with off-road capacities after an incident on a farm.

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

No report.

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

B. Metcalf provided the update. The Celebrate Ag Gala is on October 25<sup>th</sup> at the Royal Ashburn Golf Club. The grade 3 program will be returning to Brooklin in March, with an open house on April 2<sup>nd</sup>. Durham Farm Connections has expressed interest to Food and Farm Care to host a “Breakfast on the Farm” event.

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

A. De Vos provided the update. Invest Durham is currently marketing “Gather on the Farm” to encourage people to visit special events, farm stands, and farm markets this fall. An educational campaign highlighting the apple value chain is being shared through social media, newsletters, and with local school boards. The North Durham On-Farm Diversified Use study is continuing, with public consultation aimed for next month. Invest Durham is hosting field trips for high school students to learn more about agricultural related jobs including equipment mechanics and precision agriculture.

## **9. New Business**

Committee members shared miscellaneous items:

- Suggestion to invite the new fire chief to speak at a future meeting;
- October 7-13 is Agriculture week, with World Agriculture Day on October 11; and
- Planning and Infrastructure Services has a new Deputy CAO, Darryl Lyons.

## **10. Date of Next Meeting**

November 14, 2024

**11. Adjournment**

**024-017** Moved by John Cartwright, Seconded by Eric Bowman

*That the meeting adjourn at 9:15 p.m.*

**Carried**