

Date: January 31, 2024
Time: 2:00 pm
Location: Committee Meeting Room, Town Hall

Attendance: Councillor Kevin Ker
Dan DeVries
Doug Wilson, Vice Chair
John Langendoen, Regrets
Joyce Sonneveld, Regrets
Louis Damm, Chair
Sherry Rusin
Sandra Frayne

Staff: Barbara Wiens, Director, Community Planning & Development
Lindsay Richardson, Policy Planner

1. Call to Order and Declaration of Quorum

Noting that quorum was present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 2:02 pm.

2. Land Recognition Statement

The Chair recited the land recognition statement.

3. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Dan DeVries
Seconded by: Sandra Frayne

THAT the agenda for the January 31, 2024, regular meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee be adopted.

Carried

4. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature

There were no pecuniary interests disclosed by any of the members present.

5. Approval of Meeting Minutes – October 25, 2023

Moved By: Doug Wilson
Seconded By: Dan DeVries

THAT the meeting minutes from October 25, 2023, regular meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee be approved.

Carried

6. Regular Business

6.1. Terms of Reference

Staff provided an overview of the Terms of Reference (TOR), which were approved by Council in January 2023. The TOR provides a purpose and mandate for the Committee which can be amended by the Committee if there is desire to do so.

The Committee discussed some of the key items they would like to focus on which including:

- invasive species identification, information and best practices
- endangered species protection/mitigation with agricultural practices
- greater focus on climate change and issues around import and exporting goods (specifically to the US)

The Committee felt that the current mandate is broad enough that they are able to focus on any number of issues that have been identified.

6.2 Dark Sky By-law

Staff provided a brief overview of the proposed Dark Sky By-law, which was deferred by the Committee until 2024 for their review and input. It was noted that in Niagara, municipalities typically handle lighting for commercial uses through site plan control and that lighting for agricultural purposes is generally exempt from this requirement.

The Committee discussed the By-law including new technologies that virtually eliminate the use of white light, curtains and also various growing techniques (i.e. lettuce grows better under blue light, which does not emit

as much light pollution as a standard white light). This item will be brought back to the Committee at a subsequent date, Councillor Ker indicated that he will provide more information and an update at this time.

6.3 Project Status – Official Plan Update

Staff have been preparing the first draft of the Official Plan, policy sections of interest to the Committee include: Section 4: NES/Climate Change and Section 10: Agriculture/Rural policies. Staff indicated that there will be a series of upcoming public meetings that will be open to everyone and the Town will provide multiple options to provide input (engaging pelham etc). Further, the Plan will be reviewed by agencies, Town Staff, Region of Niagara, NPCA, NEC and Town Advisory Committees (Seniors, Climate Change, Active Transportation and Agricultural Advisory Committees)

6.4 Future Topics

- East Fenwick development and water/stormwater impacts of development;
- Oakhaven (west side of Maple Street) – water issues;
- Municipal drain maintenance plans;
- Welland River floodplain area;
- Farr Road development;
- Updated NPCA mapping of the floodplain for Drapers Creek and Coyle Creek;
- Billing structure of drain maintenance;
- Understanding the function of a road side ditch;
- Updating the municipal drain plans, and putting together a maintenance plan for these ditches;
- Solar and wind regulations (climate change);
- Educating the public on what farmers do; and
- New technologies that are coming to farming and how can the municipality adapt and create policy that doesn't limit ability of farmers to embrace new ways of doing things.

7. Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on March 20, 2024, in Council Chambers at Town Hall at 2:00 pm.

8. Adjournment

Moved by Dan DeVries
Seconded by Sherri Rusin

**THAT this Regular Meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee
be adjourned at 3:12 pm.**

Carried



Chair, Louis Damm



Lindsay Richardson, Policy Planner