

**THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA  
AGRICULTURAL POLICY & ACTION COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

**APAC 2-2020  
Friday, September 25, 2020  
Committee Room 4/Video Conference  
Niagara Region Headquarters  
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Thorold ON**

Committee Members Present in Committee Room 4:	Councillor Witteveen (Committee Chair)
Committee Members Present via Video Conference:	Councillors Disero, Easton, Jordan, Steele; G. Janes, J. Kikkert, B. Schenck (Committee Vice Chair), J. Schonberger, L. Troup, A. Vaughn, K. Wiens
Absent/Regrets:	Bradley (Regional Chair), Councillor Butters, C. Hamilton, C. Mullet Koop
Staff Present in Committee Room 4:	K. Lotimer, Legislative Coordinator, L. Sicoli, Economic Development Officer
Staff Present via Video Conference:	E. Acs, Policy Planner, Adam Boudens, Senior Environmental Planner, K. Constantini, Planning Analyst, Regional Official Plan, Britney Fricke, Senior Development Planner, C. Lampman, Manager, Environmental Planning, D. Morreal, Director, Development Approvals, K. Provost, Manager, Strategic Economic Initiatives, M. Trennum, Deputy Regional Clerk
Others Present via Video Conference:	B. Craig, Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance, D. Drennan, Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, J. Janiec, Ontario Federation of Agriculture, S. Marshall, Ontario Tender Fruit, Sal Spitale, Principal/Senior Ecologist, North-South Environmental

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Committee Chair Witteveen called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

**2. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

**3. PRESENTATIONS**

**3.1 Natural Environment Work Program - Phase 4: Identification and Evaluation of Options**

Sal Spitale, Principal/Senior Ecologist, North-South Environmental, provided information respecting Natural Environment Work Program - Phase 4: Identification and Evaluation of Options. Topics of the presentation included:

- Project Overview/Overview of Phase 4
- Provincial Direction - Natural Environment
- Policy Direction
- Natural Heritage System and Agricultural System
- Water Resource System (WRS)
- Developing Options for the Natural Environment System
- Natural Heritage System Options
- Water Resource System Options
- Additional Considerations for the Natural Environment System
- Next Steps

**3.2 Woodland By-law Update**

Britney Fricke, Senior Development Planner, and Adam Boudens, Senior Environmental Planner, provided information respecting Woodland By-law Update. Topics of the presentation included:

- Public Consultation Summary
- Overview of Existing By-Law
- By-Law Exemptions
- Key Changes Proposed

**4. DELEGATIONS**

There were no delegations.

**5. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

There were no items for consideration.

**6. CONSENT ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

Moved by Councillor Steele  
Seconded by Councillor Easton

That the following items **BE RECEIVED** for information:

APAC-C 5-2020

Comments Respecting the Niagara Region Review of Woodland By-law

APAC 1-2020

Agricultural Policy and Action Committee Minutes - February 28, 2020

**Carried**

**7. OTHER BUSINESS**

**7.1 Irrigation Update**

Bill Schenk, Committee member, provided an update respecting the Niagara Irrigation Project, highlighting various activities that have occurred from November 2019 to the present, as well as next steps.

**7.2 Natural Heritage Regional Planning Policy Update**

Erik Acs, Manager, Community Planning, provided an update on the Natural Environment Work Program - Natural Heritage Regional Planning Policy project. Mr. Acs advised that the consultation process respecting the project is ongoing and a recommended option is expected to be provided at the Planning and Economic Development Committee meeting being held in January, 2022. Once the suggested option has been approved by Regional Council, draft policy and mapping will commence. Staff will continue to provide updates to the Agricultural Policy and Action Committee throughout the process.

**7.3 Agricultural Sector COVID-19 Survey Information**

Linda Sicoli, Economic Development Officer, provided an overview of the responses received from the agricultural sector respecting the second COVID-19 survey completed in June. Ms. Sicoli advised that as the survey was conducted prior to the introduction of the many agricultural programs introduced as a result of the pandemic, responses would have changed. A further survey, focusing on specific business sectors is planned for late fall/early winter.

Ms. Sicoli advised Committee members that Niagara Region is participating in a project focusing on the acceleration of innovation in the Agri-Food sector, led by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, through Brock University's Niagara Community Observatory. Niagara Region's role in the project is to facilitate the connection of the researchers to the Agri-Food chain. Staff will be reaching out to Committee members to assist in identifying relevant participants.

7.4 Farm Help Housing

Sarah Marshall, Ontario Tender Fruit, requested information respecting the process for seeking an exemption for Regional development charges, specific to farm help houses, prior to the next review of the Development Charges By-law scheduled to occur in 2022. Erik Acs, advised that he would look into the process for requesting exemptions and report back to the Committee.

7.5 Ramsar Designation Request

Kai Wiens, Committee member, advised Committee members of the request for securing a Ramsar designation for the Canadian portion of the Niagara River, made at the Planning and Economic Development Committee meeting held on September 9, 2020. Mr. Wiens expressed concern with the potential politics/legalities associated with the Ramsar designation and the effects it would have on the agricultural sector. Committee Chair Witteveen advised that this request was referred back to staff to provide additional information to a future Planning and Economic Development Committee meeting and encouraged Committee members to provide comments expressing their concerns to Erik Acs, Manager, Community Planning.

8. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Friday, November 27, 2020, at 9:00 a.m. in Committee Room 4.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

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Councillor Witteveen  
Committee Chair

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Kelly Lotimer  
Legislative Coordinator

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Ann-Marie Norio  
Regional Clerk