

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

**APAC 1-2024
Friday, April 19, 2024
Meeting held by electronic participation**

- Committee: Councillors Bateman, Easton, Steele, Witteveen (Committee Chair); G. Janes, S. Marshall, C. Mullet Koop, J. Schonberger, K. White, K. Wiens
- Absent/Regrets: Bradley (Regional Chair), Councillors Kaiser, Seaborn
- Staff: E. Acs, Manager, Community Planning, A. Basic, Legislative Coordinator, B. Landry, Manager, Economic Research and Analysis, C. Lampman, Manager, Environmental Planning, S. McPetrie, Planner, D. Morreale, Director, Development Approvals, D. Root, Regional Forester, J. Spratt, Legislative Coordinator, A. Stea, Director, Community & Long Range Planning
- Others Present: P. Bootsma, Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, R. Carlow, Greenbelt Federation, I. Potter, Vineland Research Innovation Center, C. Warren, Ontario Federation of Agriculture

1. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Witteveen called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

Committee Chair Witteveen read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

3. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

4. PRESENTATIONS

4.1 Pelham Greenhouse Policies

John Langendoen, Louis Damm, Jan VanZanten, and Jason Weirenga provided information respecting Town of Pelham Greenhouse Policies. Topics of the presentation included:

- Pelham's restrictions on lot coverage for greenhouses
- Appeal with the Normal Farm Practices Board
- Request for Support

Moved by Councillor Easton
Seconded by Councillor Bateman

1. That the presentation respecting Pelham Greenhouse Policies **BE RECEIVED**; and
2. That staff **BE REQUESTED** to provide additional information on how the Region can support the Pelham Greenhouse Growers Group appeal to the Normal Farm Practices Board.

Carried

5. DELEGATIONS

There were no delegations.

6. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

There were no items for consideration.

7. CONSENT ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Moved by K. Wiens
Seconded by C. Mullet Koop

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

APAC-C 1-2024
Soil Health

APAC-C 2-2024
An Open Letter to all Councillors, Provincial and Federal Representatives: A
Note On Climate Change

APAC 2-2023
Agricultural Policy and Action Committee Meeting Minutes - December 1, 2023

Carried

Moved by C. Mullet Koop
Seconded by K. Wiens

1. That staff **BE REQUESTED** to provide information regarding a soil health working group and potential scope of work.

Carried

8. **OTHER BUSINESS**

8.1 Bill 185 - Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act and Draft PPS

Angela Stea, Director, Corporate Strategy and Community Sustainability, provided information on Bill 185 and updates to the Provincial Planning Statement and advised that feedback could be provided until the consultation period closes on May 10, 2024. Ms. Stea advised that information would be provided at the Planning and Economic Development Committee being held on May 8, 2024, and an update will be provided to the Agricultural Policy and Action Committee in September.

8.2 Woodland Conservation By-law Update

Cara Lampman, Manager, Environmental Planning, and Daniel Root, Regional Forester, provided information respecting proposed changes to the Woodland Conservation By-law and advised Committee members that they will be seeking feedback on the proposed changes.

8.3 Irrigation Project Update

Erik Acs, Manager, Community Planning, provided an update on the Irrigation Project and advised Committee members that staff are seeking funding from the Canadian Infrastructure Bank and have been selected to advance to the next stage of the Green Belt Foundation Grant Program.

8.4 Burn Permit Fees - City of St. Catharines

Kai Wiens, Committee member, provided information respecting the City of St. Catharines' Burn Permit Fees. Committee members requested that staff provide information identifying whether consistent practices for burn permit fees could be applied across Local Area Municipalities.

8.5 Surface Water Runoff Fees

Committee members discussed Storm Water Management Fees, specifically the challenges of implementing these fees in Niagara and whether the agricultural sector could be exempted. Paul Bootsma, Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, advised that they have asked for an exemption for all agricultural zoned properties that do not have storm water infrastructure.

8.6 Abandoned Orchards Act

Kai Wiens, Committee Member, inquired if the Abandoned Orchards Act could be reestablished at the regional level. Erik Acs, Manager, Community Planning, informed Committee that staff could provide legislative information and investigate authority under the Municipal Act, 2001.

8.7 Regional Agricultural 5-year Outlook

Erik Acs, Manager, Community Planning, advised Committee members that the Draft Agriculture Economic Development Action Plan would be included on the agenda for the Planning and Economic Development Committee being held in June and will be provided to the Agricultural Policy and Action Committee for feedback in the fall.

8.8 Farm Signs on Rural Regional Roads

Kai Wiens, Committee member, discussed the importance of farm signage on rural regional roads. Committee Chair Witteveen advised that this can be discussed with Regional Transportation staff.

9. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on September 20, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

Councillor Witteveen
Committee Chair

Jenna Spratt
Legislative Coordinator

Ann-Marie Norio
Regional Clerk