

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY LIAISON GROUP

MINUTES OF MEETING

October 27, 2003

Members Present: Mayor James Young, David Morrison, Don Fieldhouse,
Hugh Mitchell, Allen Oldham, Gary Johnson, Jim Sellers, Eric
Elmhirst, Judy Coward

Others Present: Jim Gosnell, Brian Peterkin

Staff Present: Bryan Tuckey, Don Eastwood, Ian Buchanan, Barbara Jeffrey,
Ellen Ma

Regrets: Mayor Margaret Black, Mayor Wayne Emmerson,
Carl Wierenga

The Ninth Meeting of the York Region Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group commenced
at 7:08 p.m.

1. Welcome

David Morrison extended a warm welcome to Don Eastwood on his return to the
Region, and thanked Jim Gosnell and Brian Peterkin for attending the Meeting.

2. Minutes

It was moved by Gary Johnson, and seconded by Hugh Mitchell that the Minutes of
the York Region Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group Meeting held on December 4,
2002 be confirmed.

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

Barbara Jeffrey confirmed that septic system repairs were not included in the new
Nutrient Management Regulations released by the Provincial Government. Ellen Ma
advised that the OMAF-funded program operated by the Lake Simcoe Region
Conservation Authority had expired, and the Conservation Authority's budget had no
provision for septic system repairs.

4. Presentation on York Environmental Stewardship Council

Jim Gosnell and Brian Peterkin made a brief presentation on the York Environmental Stewardship Council. The purpose of the Presentation was to introduce the Council to the Liaison Group, and to encourage farm representation on the York Council. Discussion followed on how the agricultural community could get involved, and it was agreed that the York Council should contact the York Federation of Agriculture and the York Soil and Crop Improvement Association for their assistance and participation.

5. Nutrient Management Act and Regulations

Barbara Jeffrey gave a brief overview of the latest Nutrient Management Regulations released by the Provincial Government, and advised that a training session had been organized for November 4 in East Gwillimbury to familiarize municipal officials and the public on provisions of the Act and Regulations. Members of the Group who were interested in attending should contact Ms. Jeffrey. There were some concerns that smaller operations could encounter problems with the costs associated with developing the Nutrient Management Plans. In response to an enquiry from Mayor Black on funding mechanisms, Ellen Ma reported that OMAF was looking at a funding partnership with the Federal Government, and guidelines should be coming out in December. Mayor Young suggested that funding for municipalities involved with environmental clean-ups should be explored with the Province.

6. Regional Forest Updates

Ian Buchanan, Manager of Natural Heritage and Forestry Services, gave an update on the Review of the Region's Tree By-law, and advised that a new Forest Conservation By-law would be completed in early 2004. The new By-law would provide more effective tools for sustainable forest management and enforcement, and would also demonstrate the Region's commitment to work with the community to protect forest resources and the natural environment.

Mr. Buchanan also made a presentation on the infestation of the Asian Long Horn Beetle. It was agreed that the Region should source all opportunities to communicate and increase knowledge and public education on this issue.

7. Economic Strategy

Don Eastwood presented a brief overview of the Economic Strategy development process, and circulated copies of a Discussion Paper for the information of the members. Agriculture was considered an important sector and a viable part of the economy, and efforts should be made to support agriculture to move towards higher value-added. The framework of the strategy development process had been designed to take into consideration findings of the GTA Agricultural Update and the

GTA Agricultural Symposium, and aligned with some of the action steps proposed in the Agricultural Action Plan.

8. GTA Agricultural Issues

Bryan Tuckey gave a brief update on the upcoming GTA Agricultural Symposium. Invitations were being sent out and members of the Liaison Group were encouraged to participate.

Don Eastwood advised the Group that Regional staff met with the Federations of Agriculture in early October to review the draft GTA Agricultural Profile Update, and a final version would be published shortly. This was the most comprehensive study of agriculture in the GTA from a statistical point of view. Copies of the final report would be available for the members.

9. U.S. FDA Regulations

Ellen Ma gave an overview of the U.S. Bio-terrorism Act, and informed the Group of a Bio-terrorism Act Seminar that the Region was hosting in November. An article on the new Act and a seminar registration form were distributed for information of the members.

10. Other Business

Don Eastwood circulated the Terms of Reference of the Liaison Group and advised the members that new appointments were coming up in March 2004. Since the Terms of Reference had included provision for members to hold office for a maximum of two terms, all members were eligible to be re-appointed. Those who were interested in re-appointments should express their intentions as soon as possible.

Jim Sellers advised the Group that the York Federation of Agriculture was not supportive of Farmer Brown in his lawsuit with the Region regarding a drainage issue.

Don Fieldhouse advised the members that Phases 1 and 2 of the *Contract with Consumers* initiative had been completed. During Phase 3, Deb Lethbridge of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture would be going around to get buy-in from various groups. Ms. Lethbridge had expressed an interest in appearing before the Liaison Group and make a brief presentation on the initiative. It was agreed that arrangements be made for her to appear at a future meeting of the Group.

11. Next Meeting

The next Meeting would be held in January 2004.

There being no other business, the Meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m., moved by Hugh Mitchell, and seconded by David Morrison.

Minutes confirmed and adopted.

Don Fieldhouse, Vice-Chair