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GREATER TORONTO AREA AGRICULTURAL ACTION COMMITTEE 2010 ANNUAL REPORT AND 2011 WORK PLAN; AND UPDATE OF THE YORK REGION AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY LIAISON GROUP

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report dated September 22, 2011, from the Acting Commissioner of Planning and Development Services.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Council endorse proposed changes to the Terms of Reference for the York Region Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group in *Attachment 3*.
2. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to the local municipalities in York Region for information.

2. PURPOSE

This report highlights the activities of the Greater Toronto Area - Agricultural Action Committee (GTA-Agricultural Action Committee).

In addition, the report provides an update of current and proposed initiatives being undertaken by the York Region Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group, including proposed changes to the Committee's Terms of Reference.

3. BACKGROUND

The GTA-Agricultural Action Committee is a GTA-wide committee that ensures the implementation of the action items in the GTA Agricultural Action Plan

The GTA-Agricultural Action Committee is a GTA-wide committee, established in 2005, to facilitate and co-ordinate the collaborative efforts of GTA municipalities (Durham, Halton, Peel, York, and Toronto), Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, GTA Federations of Agriculture and agricultural stakeholders, to implement the GTA Agricultural Action Plan (the Plan).

The Plan, which was endorsed by Regional Council on January 22, 2005, identified 37 actions to address agricultural issues related to economic development, education, marketing and land use planning. The purpose of these action items is to foster a positive environment for farming in the GTA and improve the competitiveness of the industry. These actions are monitored to ensure they are being implemented. Furthermore, these actions are being reviewed to address their effectiveness going forward.

The GTA-Agricultural Action Committee is supported by a GTA Regional Working Group in implementing the Plan

The Regional Planning Commissioners of Ontario (RPCO) GTA Caucus provides guidance and direction on the implementation of the GTA Agricultural Action Plan, and they co-ordinate Regional staff assistance, through a GTA Regional Agricultural Working Group to ensure that progress is made on Regional led actions outlined in the Plan.

The Working Group is comprised of planning and economic development staff from the four GTA Regions and the City of Toronto. The Working Group has been instrumental in providing background and research input and assistance to the GTA-Agricultural Action Committee, which is developing a new “Golden Horseshoe Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy and Action Plan”.

Municipal Representation to the GTA- Agricultural Action Committee

Membership on the GTA- Agricultural Action Committee Board includes one member appointed from each Regional Council in the GTA. The Regional Municipality of York is represented by Mayor Virginia Hackson, who was appointed by Regional Council in 2010.

The GTA- Agricultural Action Committee Board's membership is as follows:

- One member from each of the four GTA Federations of Agriculture;
- one member from each of the four GTA Regional Municipalities (Regional Chairs or delegates)
- One member from the City of Toronto
- One member from the Toronto Food Policy Council
- Five members-at-large appointed by the GTA- Agricultural Action Committee from the agri-food sector (e.g., processors, retailers, food service, consumers, etc.)
- One Provincial government representative (non-voting)
- One Federal government representative (non-voting)

Representation from the agri-food sector has been increased to obtain a broader cross-section of the industry.

The York Region Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group advises Regional Council on agricultural matters and assists the Region in its efforts to protect and promote agriculture in York Region

While the GTA- Agricultural Action Committee has a critical role in promoting and supporting GTA agricultural issues, the York Region Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group has an important role in assisting York Region in agricultural matters. The Region formed the York Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group in 2001 with a mandate outlined in a Terms of Reference (*Attachment 3*). It should also be noted that similar Agricultural Advisory Committees have been set up in the Regions of Halton, Peel, and Durham. The York Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group is a voluntary advisory committee authorized by Regional Council in accordance with a Terms of Reference that provides its overall goals, purpose and membership requirements. The Liaison Group meets on a quarterly basis or as required. Meetings are normally held at the Regional Administrative Centre.

The main goals of the York Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group are:

- To assist the Region of York in its efforts to protect agricultural lands as a natural resource of major importance to the economic viability of the Region
- To support York Region's farmers and agricultural organizations as valuable contributors to the community and the economy of the Region
- To promote healthy rural communities that contain living, working, and recreational opportunities, and that respect the natural environment and resources

The Liaison Group may also invite individuals, interest groups, or organizations to appear at any meeting as a delegation or to submit/present information which will assist the Liaison Group in carrying out its mandate.

Membership of the York Region Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group and supporting role of Regional Staff

Membership requirements for the York Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group are outlined in the Terms of Reference (*Attachment 3*). The membership term runs for four years following a municipal election. The current term of this Group is 2011-2014. At its June 1st, 2011 meeting, the Liaison Group appointed Kim Empringham (York Federation of Agriculture) as the Chair for 2011-2012. Mayor Virginia Hackson is Regional Council's representative on the Group. A number of members are also active on other farm organizations, including the GTA- Agricultural Action Committee and bring their expertise and guidance to the York Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group to serve the farming and agricultural interests of York Region.

Regional Staff of the Planning and Development Services Department provide administrative, procedural or technical assistance for the York Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group. Regional staff co-ordinate involvement of other Regional Departments and agencies as necessary, and prepare reports, as required by the work of the Group.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The GTA-Agricultural Action Committee had a number of accomplishments in 2010 linked to raising the profile of agriculture in the GTA and the Province

In 2010, the GTA- Agricultural Action Committee engaged in the following activities:

Provincial Policy Statement 5 Year Review

Comments were provided to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on the 5-year review of the Provincial Policy Statement.

Planning Template for Agricultural Policy Review

The Working Group created a template for the GTA-Agricultural Action Committee to be used when responding to municipal requests for the review of local policies and plans. This was used in the review of the Town of Markham's Community Sustainability Plan.

Provincial Pre-Budget Submission

A briefing was submitted to the Province on agricultural policy and program priorities that the Government should be considering in the 2011 Ontario budget.

Promoting Farmers Markets

Provided funding to Durham Farm Fresh to support a consultant in creating a site selection and business plan template for the development of indoor farm markets in the GTA. The pilot project for this initiative is the Durham Farm Fresh Indoor Market.

Greenbelt Fresh Website

Participated in consultations for a new website that would foster a relationship between local producers and bulk buyers. The new website will be launched in 2011 as 'greenbeltfresh.ca'.

Royal Agricultural Winter Fair

Co-hosted a farmers market at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair. Booths were made available for the sale of locally grown produce.

Ontario Culinary Tourism Summit

Sponsored the 2010 Ontario Culinary Tourism Summit, The summit focused on Ontario's food distribution system, sessions with food industry leaders and the showcase of Ontario products by celebrity chefs. The next summit is scheduled for October 2012.

The GTA-Agricultural Action Committee has prepared their Work Plan for 2011, and a significant number of these agricultural related initiatives are underway

The GTA-Agricultural Action Committee is undertaking the following activities identified in their work plan for 2011:

Royal Agricultural Winter Fair

The GTA-Agricultural Action Committee will partner with other agricultural organizations to host a farmers market at the Royal in 2011, showcasing locally grown produce.

Country to City - City to Country Forum

The GTA-Agricultural Action Committee is exploring a partnership with Sustain Ontario and the Metcalf Foundation for an open-dialogue forum between rural and urban participants. The partnership is being confirmed and a date for the event will be set.

Golden Horseshoe Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy and Action Plan

In 2010, the GTA-Agricultural Action Committee, in partnership with the Region of Niagara, the City of Hamilton and the Holland Marsh Growers Association, initiated preparation of an agriculture and agri-food strategy for the Golden Horseshoe entitled "Golden Horseshoe Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy" (the Strategy). The Strategy will be the primary focus of the GTA-Agricultural Action Committee and the work is well underway.

The GTA-Agricultural Action Committee will be hiring a public relations firm to promote outcomes of the Strategy and to assist with engaging various audiences to move actions forward.

Members of the York Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group have been providing input into the Strategy by attending GTA-Agricultural Action Committee meetings and by participating at the Summit, held on March 30th 2011.

A staff report on the new Strategy will be brought to Planning and Economic Development Committee on November 30th, 2011. Janet Horner will present the Strategy on behalf of the GTA-Agricultural Action Committee.

York Region's Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group is currently undertaking two initiatives: an Agricultural Tour; and, proposing changes to the Committee's Terms of Reference

Initiated by York Region's Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group, a 2011 York Region Agricultural Tour jointly hosted by the Region and the York Federation of Agriculture took place on Monday September 19, 2011. The purpose of the Tour was to educate and increase awareness of agricultural issues and to raise the profile of farming operations in York Region. The Tour visited five agriculturally diverse farms in the south eastern portion of the Region, focusing on near urban agriculture, local food and farm markets.

The York Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group is also proposing changes to the Committee's Terms of Reference. These changes are identified with "Track Changes" in *Attachment 3*. The proposed key changes, which primarily focus on membership, include: reducing the number of members needed from specific groups because it is difficult to get more than one representative from a particular group due to other demands on volunteer committee time; adding a York Region Food Network representative, which adds more diversity to the Liaison Group; adding references to local food and urban agricultural practices because this has emerged as important components of agriculture; and, some minor refinements to reflect current practices and procedures that seek to minimize process requirements. Further examination of the Terms of Reference will be undertaken by this Liaison Group in the context of the Greenbelt Plan.

Work plan items for the York Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group in the 2011-2014 term aim to foster education and awareness programs for Agriculture in York

At its first meeting for the 2011-2014 term, held on May 4th, 2011, the York Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group discussed potential tasks and implementation of several initiatives identified below:

- Education and awareness programs for the general public about agriculture, farming operations and challenges the sector faces
- To raise awareness of traffic and road safety concerns with farming operations
- To learn about source water protection as it relates to agriculture
- To consider an approach to commenting on class environmental assessments for roads that accommodate farm vehicles
- The need to promote urban agriculture, local healthy food and food security
- To undertake a business case for grant money to support initiatives of this Group

In addition, delegations and discussions were presented to the Group regarding Vision 2051, and the Economic Strategy consultations.

The next and 3rd meeting of the 2011-12 year for this Group is scheduled for Wednesday October 26th 2011. It is anticipated discussion around the Agricultural Tour and the upcoming release of the GTA-Agricultural Action Committee's new "Golden Horseshoe Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy" will be part of the agenda.

Relationship to Vision 2026

The Enhanced Environmental, Heritage and Culture goal area of Vision 2026 identifies "Sustaining Our Agricultural Base" as an action area. The existing GTA Agricultural Action Plan and soon to be released new draft Strategy are key strategic initiatives to meet the objectives of this Vision 2026 goal.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Agriculture is an important part of the Region's economy. Enhancing the competitiveness of the agricultural industry will help position the Region in the long-term for all related sectors, such as food processing.

There are no budget implications arising from this report.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Local staff across York Region has participated in the development of the GTA-Agricultural Action Committee's "Golden Horseshoe Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy and Action Plan". Their continued support is important to implement certain action items within the Plan to assist in supporting local agriculture.

The ongoing efforts of the York Region Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group provides input, education and awareness of York Region's farming and agricultural issues, and helps promote healthy rural communities that will have a positive impact on local municipalities.

7. CONCLUSION

The Region's continued participation and support of GTA-Agricultural Action Committee activities is important to fostering a positive environment for farming across the GTA in partnership with the GTA Regions, Toronto, the Province and Federations of Agriculture.

The GTA-Agricultural Action Committee's partnership to develop the new "Golden Horseshoe Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy" will be important for the GTA-Agricultural Action Committee in moving forward in the future. A staff report will be brought to Regional Council once the new Strategy has been completed.

The York Region Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group continues to be an important forum for the exchange of information on agricultural and rural land use issues in York Region.

For more information on this report, please contact Jason Ezer, Planner, Community Planning Branch, at (905) 830-4444, Ext. 1533, or Heather Konefat, Director of Community Planning Branch, at Ext. 1502

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The three attachments referred to in this clause are attached to this report.)

GTAAAC Annual Report
March 30,2011

The GTAAAC has had a busy year. At the annual meeting a motion to submit a grant application to the Agricultural Adaptation Council was passed. One of the first tasks of the new board was to award the contract for the Agriculture and Food Strategy to Planscape on condition of securing funding. The board decided to commit its own funds in order to move forward with Phase 1 of the project. To help move the grant process forward successfully, letters of support were solicited from GTAAAC partners and other stakeholders in the agri-food sectors. The campaign was successful and the AAC granted funding for the project. The funding was less than anticipated and it was decided to either send out additional grant applications or fund the shortfall internally. Thanks to contributions from the Federations of Agriculture, the City of Hamilton, Niagara Region, Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation and the Credit Valley Conservation Authority, the goal is almost achieved. A steering committee was established to oversee the progress of the Agriculture and Food Project. The steering committee met several times with Planscape and a number of stakeholder consultation meetings were planned including the March 30, 2011 Summit where a 10 year action plan will be formulated.

Communications

One of the board's work plan priorities was to develop a communication strategy to promote the information gathered in the Profiles of Agricultural Attributes in the GTA Study. On the recommendation of our Coordinator Janet Horner, five members of the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP) were asked to help to develop a strategy as part of their training program. At the November meeting the AALP team presented the completed communications strategy to the board. Four sets of key messages were derived from the Study as follows: Umbrella Key Messages; Key Messages Targeted to Government/Policy Makers; Key Messages Targeted to Primary Producers; and Key Messages Targeted to Consumers. The Umbrella Key Message states that: The agri-food industry in the GTA is a key driver for the Toronto and Ontario economy with many food processing and growing opportunities. I would like to thank the AALP team for their work completing this Strategy. The board has started to implement the strategy by developing two sided recipe cards with a farmer profile and recipe on one side and key messages on the other. A bimonthly communication was also

initiated called Message from the Chair to keep board members and stakeholders up to date with GTAAAC news. The GTAAAC also has a Twitter account and a Facebook page launching us into the Social Media arena.

Royal Farmers Market

It was decided that the GTAAAC would work in partnership with the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association and the Royal Winter Fair Board to host a Farmers Market at the 2010 Royal. The farmers market would be situated in the Upper East Annex. Booths were made available to farmers to sell their locally grown produce and value added goods. The success of the farmers market was compromised partly by location and inadequate signage. The farmers felt that the Upper East Annex was not easily accessible for families because of the stairs. The Royal Winter Fair Board acknowledged this and plans are being made to move the farmers market downstairs this fall, in the location previously occupied by the dog show.

Provincial Policy Statement Submission

The Provincial Policy Statement was up for review in 2010 and the board of the GTAAAC decided to submit comments based on recommendations from the Region of Peel planners. Many thanks to Regional planners Mark Head and Nancy Rutherford for their work wording the submission in language that would be most understood by the Provincial planners in the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Bus Trip

On July 15th, the GTAAAC hosted a bus trip to a number of destinations in the GTA. The adventure took us to Real Food for Real Kids, a Toronto food processor that provides healthy, locally sourced and seasonal meals for day care centres. On to Armstrong Manor, a state of the art dairy farm located in the white belt with a new FIT solar installation. From there they went to Spirit Tree Cidery, a Caledon area orchard value-added with the production of cider, where we had lunch. The production facility features straw bale construction and geothermal heating. After that we visited the Holland Marsh, visiting the Pumpkin King Vegetable Patch owned by Doug and Kimberly Van Luyk and Gwillamdale Farms owned by John Hambly. Our last stop was the McVean Farm, a unique partnership between the Toronto Regional Conservation Authority and Farm

Start. This farm provides opportunity for beginning farmers to start to grow their farm business.

Durham Farm Fresh Indoor Market

The GTAAAC has pledged support for other projects this year. Of note is the Indoor Farmer's Market being proposed by Durham Farm Fresh. The board agreed to provide funding for a consultant to research demographics, site selection and development of a business plan with the condition that it could be shared with other regions in the GTA proposing similar ventures. Also, the GTAAAC was a funder for the **Ontario Culinary Tourism Summit** held in Toronto in November.

Planning Template For Agricultural Sustainability

The GTAAAC was asked to comment on the Town of Markham's Community Sustainability Plan known as "Greenprint". The GTA Regional Planner's Working Group, at the request of the GTAAAC, were asked to review the document and found there was no reference to agriculture and supporting infrastructure or means of supporting economic viability of farmers in the town. Instead of replying directly to the Town of Markham, the Working Group was asked to formulate a template that could be used by other municipalities asking for similar guidance.

"Greenbeltfresh" Web Site

The GTAAAC was asked by the Friends of the Greenbelt to participate in consultation workshop to help design and develop a website to foster relationships between local producers and bulk buyers. The new web site will be www.greenbeltfresh.ca. Further consultations were hosted to test the site during its construction. "Greenbeltfresh" will be up and running later this year.

Provincial Pre-Budget Submission

The GTAAAC board requested that the Chair and Coordinator prepare a pre-budget submission to the Province. With the help of board member Jamie Reaume, a GTAAAC specific submission was crafted. The result was a reply from the Minister of Finance and an invitation to the Premier's Summit on April 4, 2011. The timing of this invitation will be beneficial for the further promotion of the Agriculture and Food Strategy with the completion of the Summit, a major consultation with stakeholders to develop a Ten Year Action Plan.

GTAAAC Board Membership Review

Because of status changes of representatives from the Federal and Provincial Government sitting on the GTAAAC board, a membership review was required. The one Federal and two Provincial representative's status will be changed from voting members to advisors. This change leaves a vacancy of three seats. The board decided to fill these seats with representation from the retail and processing sectors and invite a Young Farmer representative. The seats have been filled and the new members will be formally welcomed to the GTAAAC board with the ratification of revised Bylaw #2, at the annual meeting.

By the time this report is released, the Agriculture and Food Strategy and 10 Year Action Plan will have completed a major consultation summit. The actions proposed at this summit will be the major work plan for the GTAAAC and its partners Hamilton and Niagara Region for the next few years. I have great faith that stakeholders invited to this summit will be infected with the excitement of starting a new era of cooperation and achievement and champions will be identified to lead the way. New alliances will be formed that will drive the actions forward to make the Golden Horseshoe a global example of an excellent food system. One that will solve the many challenges we face with economic, health and environmental concerns.

This will be the final year for the original funding that the GTAAAC received from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing mandating it to identify implementable actions to keep the GTA agricultural industry competitive and facilitate farming within the urban shadow. We have come a long way and have completed the actions of the original 2005 GTA Action Plan within our capability. New actions are being drafted and new alliances will be formed. We now require the means to take this organization to the next level and realize the full potential of food production and the almost infinite ways it touches people's lives.

Respectfully submitted,

Nick Ferri
Chair

Work plan for the GTA AAC for 2011

Food and Farming Strategy

Phase One of the Food and Farming Strategy was completed in January of 2011. Phase One was a background document that examined all current studies and the current status of Agriculture and Food Processing in the Golden Horseshoe. Planscape presented the document which was endorsed by the Steering Committee of the Strategy. Steering Committee members include Peter Lambrick, Chair, Halton Region Federation of Agriculture, Sue Coverdale, City of Hamilton, Nick Ferri, Chair GTA AAC, Fiona Nelson, City of Toronto, Kathy MacPherson, Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation, Jamie Reaume, Holland Marsh Growers Association, Patrick Robson, Region of Niagara, Barb Shopland, Project Coordinator, Marlene Werry, Region of Durham and Janet Horner, Coordinator GTA AAC.

Phase Two of the project is currently underway. At the end of March, a Summit was held with over 100 participants making input to some of the directions identified in Phase One. Input from the Summit has been synthesized and consultations will continue during April and May. It is our intention to release the report in early June.

Strategic promotion of the study results must happen in order to engage our intended audience and the food processing sector to move the actions forward. We will be hiring a public relations firm to assist us in this effort. As a committee, our energy will be directed to this project.

Royal Agricultural Winter Fair

We will be working with the Royal to feature GTA farmers and their products. In 2010, some of our farmers participated in a Farmers Market area on the 2nd floor. Evaluations indicated that the market needed to be moved to the main floor for accessibility for fair attendees and vendors. Recipe cards produced by the GTA AAC featuring participating farmers, local food recipes and facts about agriculture in the GTA were well received. The Royal has indicated that they will be moving the Farmers Market to the first floor and we will be working with them to develop the space.

Country to City/City to Country

As our funds are starting to be limited, we had removed the GTA AAC bus tour from our work plan. Sustain Ontario had applied to the Metcalf Foundation for an initiative to bring City and Country citizens together to spark a dialogue between urban and rural communities about their differences and commonalities. Although the actual event is not yet defined, we will be involved in assisting with event coordination and reaching out to rural GTA communities.

Future Funding

2011 will mark the end of funding for the GTA AAC. We have projected less than \$30,000 in our account at the end of this year. With the launch of the Food and Farming Strategy that sets a course for our region for the next 10 years, there will not be any funds left to champion and push forward the actions

in the strategy. If there is not a strong, well funded organization to coordinate the activity, this strategy will sit on the shelf gathering dust.

Funding for the previous committee work came from the Province of Ontario as seed money given to the municipalities to initiate the implementation of the Greater Toronto Area Agricultural Action Plan in April 2005. Additional funding, if it were available, would have to come through an ask from the municipalities. We are currently preparing a listing of accomplishments and outcomes of the last 6 years to show how the original dollars were spent.

In addition, we will be exploring alternate avenues of funding that would include more complex funding arrangements with different organizations and levels of government. It is not our intention to stop our activities at this time.

Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group

Terms of Reference

GOAL

The goals of the Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group are:

- To assist the Region of York in its efforts to protect agricultural lands as a natural resource of major importance to the economic viability of the Region.
- To support York's farmers and agricultural organizations as valuable contributors to the community and the economy of the Region.
- To promote healthy rural communities that contain living, working, and recreational opportunities, and that respect the natural environment and resources.

MANDATE

The York Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group is a voluntary advisory committee authorized by Regional Council and established by Council in accordance with these Terms of Reference. Liaison Group members are bound by these Terms of Reference and are ultimately responsible to Regional Council. The Liaison Group will report to Regional Council through the Planning and Economic Development Committee.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the York Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group is to:

- a) Solicit issues and concerns of York's farming industry, agricultural organizations, community groups and rural citizenry and make appropriate recommendations.
- b) Assist Regional Council in implementing Regional and area municipal official plan policies and programs.
- c) Assist Regional Council in the implementation of the provincial legislation related to farm practices and, at the request of Council, act as interim arbitrator on local nuisance complaints.
- d) Provide input on how agricultural and rural issues can be incorporated into goals and objectives in the review of official plan policies.
- e) Provide a forum for the exchange of information on agricultural and rural issues and initiative and to advise on potential concerns.
- f) Encourage public awareness and education of agricultural and rural issues including urban agriculture practices.
- g) Provide strategies to ensure agricultural land is available for growing and producing, among other things, local food that is accessible to York Region residents and neighbouring communities.

g)h) Review studies, plans and proposals, as required by Provincial legislation, or as may be referred by Regional Council/ Staff and provide comments on agricultural and rural impacts.

h)i) Provide comments and recommendations on legislation, programs and funding from Provincial departments and other agencies that affect agricultural and rural issues on York.

MEMBERSHIP

The York Region Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group will consist of ~~nine-six~~ (96) members who are appointed for a term of three (3) years. A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

The members shall be appointed as follows:

- Members of Regional Council: ~~3-1~~ appointees
- Representatives of York Region Federation of Agriculture: ~~2-1~~ appointees
- Representatives of York Soil and Crop Association, Agricultural societies or other agricultural groups in York Region: 2 appointees ~~plus 2 alternates~~
- Representative of York Region Food Network: 1 appointee
- Citizens at large: ~~2-1~~ appointees

The representatives of these organizations or agencies should have qualifications, interests, abilities, and willingness to devote the necessary time to the Liaison Group. The members-at-large should possess expertise, experience and willingness to liaise with the range of agencies, organizations and interest groups represented on the Liaison Group and represent the interests of the broader community rather than a specific interest group. Additional individuals and agencies are encouraged to attend the meetings and participate in discussions; however, the membership will carry voting privileges.

~~A maximum of two (2) citizens at large shall hold membership on the Liaison Group at any one time.~~ All members shall be limited to a maximum of two (2) terms. Members-at-large will be limited to residents of York; however, organization representatives are not necessarily residents of York.

~~Openings for membership shall be publicly advertised.~~ All citizens and any nominated representatives of organizations involved in agricultural and rural issues are invited to apply. Applicants will submit their application to the Region of York Planning and Development Services Department.

~~A The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be appointed at the first meeting of the Liaison Group and shall serve for the remainder of the calendar year. A member may hold the Chair or Vice-Chair position for a maximum of three (3) years. Should the Chair not be re-appointed, a new Chair will be appointed by members of the Group, it is intended that the Vice-Chair will succeed the previous Chair in the subsequent year. The Chair/ Vice-Chair should be prepared to devote time between meetings for Liaison Group business and to occasionally make presentations at other meetings.~~

New or additional members, with the exception of the representatives of Regional Council will be appointed by resolution of the Committee and must be ratified by Regional Council.

MEETINGS

The York Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group meets normally on a quarterly basis or as required. Agendas for Liaison Group meetings will be made available to the public a week in advance. Meetings may be held in various locations throughout the community; however, meetings will generally be held at the Regional Administrative Centre in Newmarket.

Meetings shall be open to the public.

The Liaison Group, by resolution or through its Chair, may invite any individual, interest group, agency or consultant to appear at a meeting as a delegation or to submit or present information, which will assist the Liaison Group in carrying out its mandate.

STAFF SUPPORT

Staff of the Region of York Planning and Development Services Department will be designated to provide administrative, procedural or technical assistance for the Liaison Group. Regional staff will co-ordinate involvement of other Regional Departments and agencies as necessary, and prepare reports as required by the work of the Committee.

Expenses for the normal ongoing work of the Committee shall be provided as part of the Region of York operating budget.

Area Municipal and Senior government staff may be invited to participate in an advisory non-voting capacity.

~~The minutes~~ Regular updates of the Liaison Group will be forwarded as part of regular Planning and Economic Development Committee agendas.

All Liaison Group resolutions addressed to Regional Council shall be transmitted to the Planning and Economic Development Committee in a staff report.

CONDUCT AND PROCEDURES

1. General

Where not specified in these Terms of Reference, conduct and procedures of the Liaison Group will be governed by the relevant sections of the Regional Council Procedural By-Law ~~A-3-70-~~ 32009-53 (as revised).

2. Conflict of Interest

For the purposes of this Committee, the principals of The Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, 1983 regarding the existence and declaration of a conflict of interest shall apply to all members. Any member who has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in a matter before the Committee is required, prior to consideration of the matter at the meeting, to declare the interest and disclose the general nature of the interest. The member shall abstain from the decision-making process by not participating in discussion or voting with respect to the matter at issue, and shall not attempt in any

way, whether before, during, or after the meeting, to influence the voting on the matter. The onus for declaring a conflict of interest rests solely with the individual member.

3. Delegations

Requests by any person wishing to appear before the Liaison Group as a delegation must be forwarded to the Regional Planning and Development Services Department, advising staff of the topic or item to which they wish to speak. It is preferable that this should be done at least 15 days prior to the meeting in order that the delegation be included in the Agenda.

Any persons wishing to address the Committee as a delegation, and who are not listed as a delegation in the Agenda, may be granted permission to do so only by resolution of the Liaison Group.

4. Resolutions

Only resolutions as they appear in the amended and adopted minutes may be considered as officially representing the positions of the Committee.

5. Amendments to the Terms of Reference

Amendments to these Terms of Reference can be made only by Regional Council.