



**THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF PEEL**  
**PEEL AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY WORKING GROUP**

**MINUTES**

**PAAWG 2011-02**

The Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group met on June 23, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Mississauga Room, Regional Administrative Headquarters, 10 Peel Centre Drive, Suite A, Brampton.

**Members Present:** Nick Ferri (Chair, Representative for Peel Federation of Agriculture); Heather Laidlaw (Vice-Chair, Representative for Peel Federation of Agriculture); Region of Peel Chair Emil Kolb (Ex-Officio); Taher Abu (Citizen-at-large); Darlene Downey (Youth Member Representative Candidate); Regional Councillor Patti Foley; Karen Hutchinson (Caledon Countryside Alliance Delegate); Ludwik Lipowski (Citizen-at-large); Randy McLeod (Caledon Agricultural Advisory Committee Delegate); Gary Mountain (Peel Soil and Crop Improvement Association Delegate); Regional Councillor Allan Thompson.

**Members Absent:** Brian Ellsworth (Citizen-at-large).

**Also Present:** Mark Head (Planning Manager, Region of Peel); Melanie Williams (Principal Planner, Region of Peel); Jelena Baker (Junior Planner, Region of Peel); Mark Eastman (Program Coordinator, Credit Valley Conservation); Nadine Abrams (Rural Clean Water Program Coordinator, Toronto and Region Conservation); Bob Nieuwenhuysen (Manager, Capital Roads, Region of Peel); Eileen Fernandez (Member of the public).

**1) Opening remarks and introductions**

The meeting was called to order at 7:10pm by Nick Ferri, Chair.

**2) Review and approval of 2011-01 Agenda**

Randy McLeod made a motion to amend the agenda to include under Discussion Items, Funding Cap on Peel Rural Water Quality Program projects. Emil Kolb also wanted to add a discussion on Environmental Assessment studies requested for on-farm projects such as cement pits and manure management.

Moved by Heather Laidlaw,  
Seconded by Emil Kolb;

That the agenda of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group meeting held on June 23, 2011 be approved with amendments.

Carried PAAWG 2011-012

**3) Presentation: Peel Capital Roads Projects**

*Bob Nieuwenhuysen, Manager Capital Roads, Region of Peel*

Bob Nieuwenhuysen, Manager Capital Roads with the Region of Peel, handed out maps and presented information on capital road projects underway and forthcoming in the Region. Currently a single roundabout is being constructed at the intersection of Dixie and Olde Base Line Road, which will have two lanes and will provide a wide access without the use of traffic signals. The apron is oversized so that vehicles can make turns and not get stuck and the roundabout will also include rollover curbs. A member asked if there will be an impediment to the arterial road by introducing a roundabout. Bob replied that the roundabout will actually regulate the traffic so that vehicles will never have to stop and in the next 30-40 years they do not foresee any problems with the volume of traffic in the roundabout. The centre of the roundabout will be vegetated.

Bob pointed out that there are not too many roads in Caledon that will be under construction. He updated members on some construction projects in Peel:

- The Forks of the Credit Road is nearing completion
- Old Church Road east of Caledon East will be resurfaced and should take about 2-3 months, with minor disruptions
- Mayfield Road has several projects that are active
- Bolton will have reconstruction through the town so that sidewalks and city amenities can be put in
- Brampton will have a major construction project on Winston Churchill.

Members expressed concern over the lane closures required through Regional Road 50 and King Street for the Bolton road construction. Bob clarified that lanes will not be cut in peak hours and they will continuously monitor road traffic to ensure a reasonable flow of traffic through the area during construction. Another member asked what kinds of measures are put in place when planning road construction to ensure that the roads are accessible for agriculture. Bob explained that whatever needs to be serviced is assessed and a part of the staging and construction plan.

Nick Ferri requested that the map and project sheet handed out to members be made available by link from the Region of Peel external site for the Peel Federation of Agriculture to access.

**Discussion Items**

**4) Revised PAAWG Work Plan**

*Mark Head, Planning Manager, Region of Peel*

Mark Head brought members' attention to one revision made to clarify the Urban Agriculture project in the work plan. The project has been revised to place focus within the built boundary and is not aimed at best practices for commercial agriculture. Over the next month Regional staff will be meeting to discuss the work plan and will report back at the next PAAWG meeting.

**5) Peel Living Snow Fence Program**

*Melanie Williams, Principal Planner, Region of Peel*

Melanie Williams was approached by Sally Rook, Project Manager, Peel Living Snow Fence Program to ask PAAWG members for their input regarding working out a per-acre cost-share equation for retirement of the land. The Peel Living Snow Fence Program are tree and shrub windbreaks strategically planted to allow snow to accumulate within and adjacent to the snow fence and not on the road. They reduce drifting and improve driving conditions during the winter months. Sally would like feedback on the price per year per acre as well as the number of years for the term that should be considered for the program. Members had questions about who controls the weeds, will the Region of Peel have any control over the land once the trees mature and to check to see what other region's (i.e. City of Ottawa) are doing with similar programs. Melanie asked members if they could provide an idea of crop values per acre. Heather answered that the only crop that would be usable would be corn and that would be priced at market value. Melanie will take PAAWG's questions to Sally and will report back at the next meeting with updates.

**6) Update – Credit River Heritage Designation**

*Mark Eastman, Program Coordinator, Credit Valley Conservation*

Mark Eastman reported back to members after questions were asked about the Credit River Heritage Designation at the April 28, 2011 meeting. The designation recognizes the water that feeds the Credit River, including the watershed, but contains no policies and has no negative impacts to agriculture. Rivers in regions to the East and West of Peel Region also carry this designation. Members asked if there are any new setbacks with the new designation. Mark answered that there is no consideration of the Heritage River Designation to change policies but it might give access to funding in terms of stewardship or infrastructure improvements (i.e., bridge crossings).

**7) Peel Rural Water Quality Program Discussion**

**a) Robert Nimmo Appeal 16-CVC-10– Cost-share calculation**

*Mark Eastman*

Mark provided a recap of the Robert Nimmo appeal and the conditions put on the project after the approval from the April 28, 2011, PAAWG meeting. Since the last meeting Mark has worked closely with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) and provided them with the information to estimate the size of silage storage needed for 40 head of cattle. OMAFRA estimated that a 1,800 square foot storage with 8 foot walls would be sufficient for 40 head of cattle. Using OMAFRA's numbers, only 22% of the silage storage Mr. Nimmo constructed would be necessary for the original 40 head of cattle.

Therefore, since the estimated project cost was \$45,000, 22% of this cost would be \$9,900. Since the PRWQP funds up to 50% of the project, the total PRWQP funding approved for 16-CVC-10 is \$4,950.

Members stated that going forward, PRWQP staff and PAAWG need to re-enforce the message that applicants should apply to the program prior to the initial construction of a project. This way the applicant and PRWQP staff can work together to determine the best project solution to have the greatest water quality improvement on the property.

**b) Appeals Process for the PRWQP**

*Melanie Williams*

Melanie explained to members that the appeals procedures followed for the Robert Nimmo appeal was correct, as to the Terms of Reference. Based on this, there were no opportunities to go in-camera. The process to vote in front of the appellant is the proper procedure. Members suggested that they should have had more time than the 2 weeks circulation period provided, to look at the appeal and study it before casting their votes. Melanie said that Regional staff has taken the feedback from members and will make some changes to the process.

**c) Review of the PRWQP**

*Mark Eastman*

Mark Eastman presented a history of the PRWQP. The goals of the PRWQP can be found in the guidelines available in members' binders.

Mark then took members through the PRWQP application process. Staff conducts site visits and work with the applicant to develop a project that addresses the water quality concerns on the property, while also meeting the needs of the applicant (i.e., farm business management plan). PRWQP staff act in a neutral position, and summarize the current scenario, solution and project cost in a project profile sheet circulated to the Working Group two weeks prior to a PAAWG meeting. PRWQP staff are available to answer questions and clarify project aspects with members during this 2 week review period.

PRWQP staff present the project through a PowerPoint presentation at the PAAWG meeting to show photographs and mapping that highlight the water quality benefits that would occur by supporting the project. Once projects are approved, PRWQP staff obtains copies of invoices with proof of payment from the applicant and visit the project site to make sure the project is completed as presented.

PRWQP staff are required to bring all project applications to PAAWG for their approval. This may include projects that are not currently indicated as an eligible project under the PRWQP. While PRWQP staff strive to work with the applicant to develop projects that have the greatest water quality improvement possible, some projects brought forth may not have as great of a water quality improvement as

others. PRWQP staff highlights any improvements and provide sufficient information to PAAWG to make the final decision.

Additional tasks of the PRWQP staff include marketing and promotional strategies. They look for and research new and upcoming project types. They also complete strategic program evaluations to identify areas for improvement in the program. Mark suggested that members familiarize themselves with the guidelines and categories.

Melanie Williams added that PRWQP application forms will be circulated so that members can see the type of information gathered from the applicants. If anyone has any other questions they think the application form should include they can contact PRWQP staff.

**d) New PRWQP Categories for Review**

*Mark Eastman*

**i) Silage Storage Enhancement and Relocation Category**

Mark Eastman provided information about the environmental issues with silage storage, how silage seepage is generated and the Best Management Practices (BMP's). OMAFRA states that silage seepage can be the most polluting organic discharge produced on the farm. One gallon of silage effluent can lower the oxygen content of 10,000 gallons of river water to a critical level with respect to fish survival. Silage seepage is generated when green crops are harvested/chopped and placed into a silo, the moisture drawdown out of the silage creates seepage. Uncovered silage storages create seepage throughout the year due to precipitation. The Canada- Ontario Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) funds Silage Seepage collection, transfer and storage systems at 50% up to \$20,000 however; they do not fund relocations of existing storages. PRWQP staff recommends that PAAWG adopt a Silage Storage Enhancement and Relocation category.

Mark Head suggested that to have a water quality benefit focus on silage storages that are in sensitive areas and to include in the general guidelines that a water quality benefit must exist.

Allan Thompson moved that Silage Storage be added as a new project category to the PRWQP,  
Seconded by Patti Foley;

That the Silage Storage Category be added as a new project category to the PRWQP.

Carried PAAWG 2011-013

**ii) Precision Agriculture Category**

Mark Eastman presented the environmental benefits and goals of a Precision Agriculture Category and how the technology works. Precision agriculture is a farming management concept based on observing and responding to intra-field variations by relying on technologies like satellite imagery. It is meant to increase the efficiency of fertilizer and pesticide application at the farm level resulting in decreased use of fertilizer and pesticides on the farm and decreased environmental losses of fertilizer and pesticides. It increases efficiency by eliminating overlap of fertilizer and pesticides, allowing for within field management using geo-referenced mapping for yields, soil nutrients, pest problems etc.

Variable rate technology automatically adjusts fertilizer application to match the requirement needed at that exact location in the field. The goal is to create yield maps that show little to no variation across a field and to get there without significantly over fertilizing certain locations in the field. In some cases using this technology leads to a 7.69% reduced pesticide use.

PRWQP staff recommend PAAWG adopt a Precision Agriculture Category to the PRWQP.

Heather Laidlaw moved that the Precision Agricultural Category be added as a new project category to the PRWQP,  
Seconded by Gary Mountain;

That the Precision Agriculture Category be added as a new project category to the PRWQP.

Carried PAAWG 2011-014

**iii) Irrigation Management Category**

Mark Eastman presented the environmental issues and BMP's for the Irrigation Management Category. Low efficiency irrigation results in increased water takings and threatens the natural environment. Over-irrigation results in the inefficient use of water and nutrients by pushing water soluble nutrients below the root zone into the groundwater or causing surface runoff. The BMP's for irrigation management would include upgrading sprinkler systems with low pressure nozzles or drop tubes, use drip irrigation system, use monitoring equipment (e.g., soil moisture sensors, rain gauges) and record keeping, use of monitoring equipment to practice efficient irrigation scheduling and installing irrigation water recapture systems.

Members asked if you could use any component of the BMP's mentioned, such as purchasing a new water meter. Mark Eastman reminded members that the program funds only voluntary actions, so anything that is regulated or legislated would not be funded.

Allan Thompson moved that Irrigation Management be added as a new project category,  
Seconded by Heather Laidlaw;

That the Irrigation Management Category be added as a new project category to the PRWQP.

Carried 2011-015

**e) Funding Cap on Peel Rural Water Quality Program Projects**

*Mark Eastman*

As amended in the agenda.

The 2007 PAAWG minutes show a request from PAAWG to look into whether a cap should be implemented to limit the amount of funding applicants can receive in the entirety of the program. PAAWG decided not to assign a funding cap for applicants. In late 2010, PAAWG went through the same process and assessed that no single applicant was over subscribing to the program so there was no need to introduce a cap at that time. To date, the highest amount of grant funding received by a single applicant has received was \$32,000. This was granted to projects over a 2 year period. The majority of funding that is granted is approximately \$15,000 and fall under a single category. A member recommended that PAAWG not adopt a funding cap until the PRWQP has granted all available funding in the program's budget year.

Mark Eastman informed members that the EFP has a cap and that each farm is capped at \$30,000 for the 4 year time of the program. This per farm cap is often reset at the start of another program cycle. The Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority Landowner Environmental Assistance Program has a \$20,000 cap per farm because they have limited funds that go quickly. The Region of Peel provides funding to the Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) who manages the funds for the PRWQP. The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) is also eligible to apply for grant funding from provincial government to augment the PRWQP grant budget.

Members decided not to implement a funding cap on the PRWQP at this time.

**f) Environmental Assessment Studies**

*Emil Kolb*

As amended in the agenda.

Emil discussed the process of on-farm non-nutrient management structures in Caledon and asked members for their input on their experiences with Nutrient Management Strategies for Sileage Storages. Mark Eastman offered to follow up

with Emil with further information about how the Nutrient Management Act relates to silage storages.

**8) Peel Rural Water Quality Applications**

**a) 05-CVC-11 Livestock Access Restriction  
06-CVC-11 Buffer Strip Planting  
07-CVC-11 Barnyard Runoff Control**

Mark Eastman presented 05,06,07-CVC-11 project applications together as they are from the same applicant. The applicant would like to install high tensile fencing to restrict cattle access to the wet area of the pasture (\$2,500), install 3 frost-free nose pump watering systems (\$7,500), plant native trees and shrubs to re-vegetate the wet area of the pasture (\$5,000), and install new eavestrouthing on the barn and direct downspouts to the least sensitive areas (\$4,165) for a total of \$19,165 of PRWQP funding.

In the summer of 2010, the applicant installed 365 meters (1200 feet) of fencing to restrict livestock access. The applicant did the work themselves, so the PRWQP would cover 100% of the cost at the page-wire equivalent. As cattle access to the wet area is restricted, the applicant would like to install 3 frost-free nose pumps. Members requested more information about how cattle can access the nose pumps based on their proposed located in the field in relation to where the fences are on the property. .

In addition to this, the applicant would also like to re-vegetate the wet area with potted stock, which would cover just under 2 hectares (5 acres) with native trees and shrubs. The vegetation would filter runoff from adjacent lands. The trees are within the standard size of 2-3 feet.

The eavestrouthing component of the application was also completed in 2010. The new eavestrouthing on the barn directs downspouts to the least sensitive areas on the property. Members asked where the sensitive area was. Mark explained that there is a municipal drain but no surface water area and that groundwater is the issue. Members asked if the applicant received EFP funding. Mark will confirm when receiving the invoices. Members expressed concerns over the location of the downspouts as there was the potential for surface water runoff to still occur based on the location. The opportunity to split the cost of the eavestrouthing was reviewed.

Allan Thompson moved that applications 05,06-CVC-11 be approved,  
Seconded by Gary Mountain;

That 05-CVC-11 Livestock Access Restriction in the amount of \$2,500 for fencing and \$7,500 for nose pumps and 06-CVC-11 Buffer Strip Planting in the amount of \$5,000 be approved.

Carried PAAWG 2011-016

Randy McLeod moved that application 07-CVC-11 be approved with conditions, Seconded by Allan Thompson;  
That of 07-CVC-11 be approved with funding allocated only to the smaller section of the barn and half of the larger section of the barn; and recommend to the applicant that the outstanding downspout be relocated.

Opposed PAAWG 2011-17

The motion was brought forth for reconsideration with new conditions by Heather Laidlaw.

That 07-CVC-11 be approved with the condition that the outstanding eavestroughing be connected to the main eavestrough and downspouts.

Carried with conditions PAAWG 2011-018

**b) 08-CVC-11 Precision Agriculture/Innovative Project**

Mark Eastman presented 08-CVC-11. The applicant would like to increase the efficiency of fertilizer and pesticide use at the farm level to reduce losses to the natural environment. The applicant would like to purchase and install a Trimble CFX-750 GPS system and Auto-Steer in tractor to be used for pesticide and fertilizer application. Currently the applicant has a dairy operation and applies fertilizer and pesticide without the assistance of GPS technologies. Mark explained that the applicant has no intentions for variable rate technology using the GPS. PAAWG determined that they did not have enough information at this time to make a decision on this project.

Heather Laidlaw moved that PAAWG defer the application and requested that PRWQP staff revise the guidelines of the newly adopted Precision Agriculture Category to include the mandatory implementation of a yield monitor and variable rate technology in all applications for the next meeting, Members voted in favour.

That 08-CVC-11 Precision Agriculture/Innovative Project be deferred until PRWQP staff provide further information on the Precision Agriculture Category guidelines.

Carried PAAWG 2011-019

**c) 09-CVC-11 Barnyard Runoff Control**

Mark Eastman presented 09-CVC-11. The applicant would like to reduce the amount of contaminated runoff from manure storages and exercise yards by diverting clean rain and snow melt away from the sources of contamination. Currently there are 15 head of cattle and a Provincially Significant Wetland (PSW) on the property. The applicant received a previous PRWQP grant to develop a berm to divert the runoff from the concrete barnyard and the wetland, 70 meters (230 feet) away. The applicant proposes enhance this berm by constructing an earthen basin adjacent the barnyard to capture the runoff and store it allowing it to infiltrate into the soil instead of running off overland into the wetland. There are two chambers - first chamber would be the catchment area and the second basin would be a larger basin. The design is meant to contain a one hour storm or 1 ½ inch rainfall. The landowner is not eligible for EFP funding. CVC staff worked with the applicant's son to design the basins. Members asked if there was an extra benefit by going above and beyond the original PRWQP granted project, with this design. Mark explained that there would be a water quality benefit with the new design. Members asked how the landowner would clean the basin to clean out sediment and nutrient loading. Mark explained that the basin is not significantly deep and the applicant could get in with a backhoe.

Gary Mountain moved that application 09-CVC-11 be approved,  
Seconded by Allan Thompson;

That 09-CVC-11 Barnyard Runoff Control be approved.

Carried PAAWG 2011-020

**d) 03-TRCA-11 Innovative Project**

Randy McLeod declared a conflict of interest for 03-TRCA-11. Based on his knowledge of the project Randy requested the opportunity to provide additional information on the project, if required. Members agreed to Randy participating in the discussion, as needed.

Nadine Abrams, Toronto and Region Conservation, presented 03-TRCA-011 . The applicant would like to reduce in-field erosion and therefore reduce sediment and nutrient losses to nearby watercourses. The applicant has not used traditional ploughing in the last 15 years and the current farming practices are no-till. The applicant has noticed too much crop residue remaining in the fields which has resulted in fewer yields over time. There is a large tributary of the Humber River running through the property with 3 smaller headwater tributaries along the southeast edge of the property. To address the sediment and nutrient losses the

applicant would like to purchase a Salford Residue Tillage System, a vertical tillage system in the amount of \$53,000. Grant eligibility for this project is \$10,000.

Members asked what the water quality benefit of this equipment would be. Randy answered that you could go into a field that you couldn't with standard equipment and it would leave an excellent seed bed. Randy suggested that members put a condition that the applicant could not lease or sell the equipment. Members expressed concern about using PRWQP funding towards purchasing equipment that does not have a direct water quality benefit. EFP does not fund this type of equipment.

Heather moved that application 03-TRCA-11 be declined  
Darlene Downey seconded the motion

That 03-TRCA-11 Innovative Project be declined.

Carried PAAWG 2011-021

**9) Communication Items**

**a) Grown in Peel Guide**

Jelena Baker presented the final 2011 Grown in Peel guides to the group. These are now in print and have been distributed to all participants and farm markets in the guide. Region of Peel Archives staff worked with the Grown in Peel Advisory Committee to develop the 'History of Farming in Peel' as well as provided in-kind archived photographs of agriculture in Peel.

Nick Ferri mentioned that the Greater Toronto Area Agricultural Action Committee (GTA AAC) will once again have a Farmers' Market area at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in November. The area will be located in a more visited area on the first floor which will improve visibility. The area will have space to display Buy Local guides from around the Greater Toronto Area. Grown in Peel guides will be coordinated with the GTAAAC and sent to the Fair.

**b) CleanFarms Stewardship Organization**

Jelena Baker provided PAAWG members with some information about the CleanFarms Stewardship organization that collects used plastic pesticide containers and recycles them into other on-farm products. The program runs across Canada and has deposit depots at some Farm Supply stores in Peel, including one in Norval and Bolton.

**10) Adjournment and Next Meeting**

The meeting stood adjourned at 10:40pm. The next Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group meeting will be held on Thursday September 8, 2011 at 7pm.