

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE (DRAFT)

MANDATE

The Agriculture and Rural Affairs Advisory Committee (ARAAC) is a volunteer Advisory Committee established by City Council in accordance with these adopted Terms of Reference. The ARAAC will provide input to Council and City staff on issues that impact agriculture and rural communities, and act as the liaison between those communities and Council, helping to preserve, maintain and advance an economically viable agriculture base in the City of Hamilton.

SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES

The ARAAC’s scope of activities, as it relates to their mandate, are as follows:

- To solicit and coordinate the interests and concerns of Hamilton’s farming industry, agricultural organizations, farm families and non-farm rural residents, presenting recommendations before City Council as necessary;
- To serve as a community forum for the exchange of information on agricultural and rural affairs matters and encourage public awareness and education of agricultural and rural issues;
- To review and provide advice on federal, provincial and municipal strategies, policies, studies, plans, by-laws and proposal related to agriculture and rural affairs;
- To provide advice on agricultural and rural affairs matters, as they arise, at the request of Council or staff; and,
- To serve as the Tree By-Law Committee, as set forth in By-law No. R00-054, the Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth Woodland Conservation By-law, for the purpose of hearing applicants who are refused a permit for minor exception, and recommending whether the permit should be issued or denied with or without terms and conditions.

REPORTING STRUCTURE

The Agriculture and Rural Affairs Advisory Committee reports to City Council, through the Planning Committee.

COMPOSITION & TERMS

The Agriculture and Rural Affairs Advisory Committee shall be comprised of up to 19 voting members and up to five key stakeholders/advisors (non-voting) as follows:

Voting Members:

- Three members appointed by the Hamilton-Wentworth Federation of Agriculture;
- One member appointed by the Wentworth-Brant Christian Farmers Association;

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- One member appointed by the Hamilton-Wentworth Women’s Institute;
- One rotating member appointed by the Agricultural Societies (Rockton, Binbrook and Ancaster);
- Two members appointed by the Wentworth Soil & Crop Improvement Association;
- Up to five citizen members appointed by Council; and,
- Up to six Councillors appointed by Council from Wards 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and/or 15.

Key Stakeholders/Advisors (Non-voting Members):

- The Member Service Representative for Zone 5 from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture;
- One staff representative from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs;
- One member appointed by farmers markets in Hamilton;
- One member appointed from the Chamber of Commerce (Flamborough, Stoney Creek, Hamilton); and,
- One member appointed from the Wentworth Junior Farmers Association.

Quorum shall be a half of the voting membership rounded up to the nearest whole number. Non-voting members are not counted in determining the number required for quorum or in determining whether or not quorum is present.

Volunteer citizen members of the ARAAC will be selected as per the City of Hamilton’s Policy respecting the Appointment of Citizens to the City’s Agencies, Boards, Commissions, Advisory (Volunteer) Committees and Sub-Committees for the Term of Council (4 years) or until such time as a successor is appointed by Council.

A Chair and Vice-Chair of the ARAAC shall be elected for the Term of Council (4 years) or until such time as a successor is appointed.

COMMITTEE SUPPORT

The following resources will be made available to the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Advisory Committee:

- The City Clerk’s Division will provide legislative support and be responsible for the administrative costs of operating the Committee meetings;
- City staff liaison(s) from the Economic Development Division and Planning Division; and,
- The Committee may request information or support from other City Divisions and Departments or experts in the field to assist in formulating appropriate decisions and recommendations.

MEETINGS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Meetings shall be held at the call of the Chair at an appropriate meeting space and time. Regular meetings will not be scheduled during the months of July, August or December,

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but special meetings may be called during these months.

The Terms of Reference shall be reviewed by the Committee within each Term of Council.