

The Blue Mountains
Agricultural Advisory Committee
Meeting Notes
March 1, 2011

Present: Jacquie Hendry, Lance Burnham, James Farmilo, Rod Knott, Ron Marshall, Grant McMurchy and Lynn Vail.

Staff: Peter Tollefsen; Peter McGee.

Regrets: James McKinlay, John Ardiel, Sid Dykstra

Guest: Pat Johnson, Al Lockhart.

Vice Chair Rod Knott called the meeting to order at **7:00pm** in the Building Meeting room, Town Offices.

1. Delegation: Pat Johnson

Pat explained that he has a 100 acre farm on the 10th Line. He has a son going into the apple business and would like to get a severance of land off his farm for him. Has gone to the Planning Dept and told his farm just outside the Specialty Crop designation and minimum farm size is different making it difficult for the severance. Looking into the process of changing the Official Plan designation. He just wanted the Committee to be aware of what he is doing. The Committee has a couple of questions. The Vice Chair thanked Pat for his attendance.

2. Minutes: Meeting Notes from the last meeting (Feb 1, 2011) adopted.

3. Business Arising (Updates):

Item 6. Share the Road.

Item 11. Environmental Farm Plan-Peter reported that the proposal has been cut from the 2011 Budget. The Committee gave support to James McKinlay to attend the Public Meeting March 14 request Council consider putting back into the final budget.

Item 12. University of Guelph student project on the future of the apple industry. Peter reported that a number of members were able to attend the recent interviews Feb 21.

Item 14-Ont. Soil & Crop Improvement Assoc summer conference in the Town of The Blue Mountains- resolution of support from the Committee was forward to Lisa Kidd

4. Brainstorming Session (Topics of interest for future meetings)

4.1 Need to look into a long term strategy of recreation, increasing tourists/visitors/recreation events now taking place in the agricultural area, impacts. (Jacquie H)

4.2 Should get involved in the Town's Comprehensive review of the Official Plan (J Farmilo). *Peter asked to invite senior planner Cindy Welsh to the next meeting to talk about the consultation process.*

4.3 Should investigate the decline of the apple industry, look for best ideas. Have a workshop (meet to see how we can reverse the decline) Stake holder meeting . Lobby Province. Look into labeling laws. Perhaps there are things the Town can do. (Lance B).

4.4 Concerned about the noxious weed problem such as wild Chervil and Giant Hogweed. What is the County and Town works Dept doing about it and are they preparing for this years season. Do they have a strategy and have the spray now ? (Lynn V)

The Committee passed the following Motions; -Recommendation that the Town Works Dept research and prepare for the spring Noxious Weed Program for this year, and;

Does the Town have a response strategy/education program to assist the public with help on private property.

4.5 The Committee should get involved in the Local Food Network. (Peter T). Could develop an education program for local stores (Jim F).

4.6 Concern that Chesley High School to close including the agricultural program. (Jacquie H).
Peter to draft a letter of concern for the next meeting.

5. **Apple Harvest Festival** Peter McGee looking for a representative to be on the planning committee for the 2011 Apple Harvest festival at Thanksgiving in the Village at Blue Mountains. Al Lockhart volunteered.
6. **Rib Fest** Peter McGee filled the Committee in on a major event being planned this year. It would be a Rib Fest and Rotary Chili cook off the weekend after Canada Day at the Cedar Run Horse Park on Grey Rd 2 and Clark St.
7. **Correspondence** the letters regarding the Canadian Plowing Championship 2011 and the Grey County Farm safety Association were received.
8. **County Official Plan** Peter gave an update. The Province has approved the new Plan with some modifications, not all of which we support. We were looking for a little more flexibility in the rural area designations permitted uses to encourage economic development.
9. **New Member** The Committee passed a motion to add a new member Al Lockhart to the Agricultural Advisory Committee, with Council's acceptance. CARRIED.
10. **Next Meeting** The Committee agreed the next meeting (the first Tuesday of the month) Tuesday April 5, 2011 at 7:00pm at the Town Office.
11. **Adjournment.**