

## STAFF REPORT:



**REPORT TO:** Council  
**MEETING DATE:** May 17, 2010  
**REPORT NO.:** SPS.10.07  
**SUBJECT:** Agricultural Advisory Committee  
**PREPARED BY:** Peter Tollefsen, Director of Special Projects (Sustainability)

### A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive the Staff Report SPS.10.07 "Agricultural Advisory Committee".

### B. Background

The Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) was set up by Council in 2008 to identify, review, discuss and recommendations to staff on agricultural related issues. Attached is the Feb. 4, 2008 Terms of Reference.

The Chair of the Committee Mr. James McKinlay will be at the meeting to address Council to give an update on the activities of the AAC as well as discuss the future of the Committee.

Attached for your information is the Agendas from the last number of meetings. Also attached is the Meeting Notes from the last two meetings; March 25 and May 11, 2010. You will note from the last meeting the Agricultural Advisory Committee under item 8 Half Load Restrictions – recommended That the Town consider rebuilding the Thornbury Sideroad as soon as possible and that, in the meantime, an exemption be applied to all vehicles using this road for agricultural purposes, and

That a permit system be developed to allow agricultural use of roads on which load restrictions are placed.

And under item 13 Volunteer Awards recommended That the Town consider adding an Agricultural Category for the Order of The Blue Mountains Volunteer Awards Program.

The AAC is hosting an Agricultural Farm Tour for Friday June 4, 2010 for Town staff to learn about the business of agriculture.

### **C. The Blue Mountains' Strategic Plan**

The input from the Agricultural Advisory Committee is helpful to the Town and is aligned with the goal of – *Managing growth to ensure the ongoing health and prosperity of the Community.*

### **D. Environmental Impacts**

None at this time

### **E. Budget Impact**

Nothing significant.

### **F. Attached**

Attachment 1 – Agricultural Advisory Committee Feb 2008 Terms of Reference.

Attachment 2 – recent meeting AGENDAS

Attachment 3 – Meeting Notes from the May 11 and March 25, 2010 meetings

Attachment 4 – Agricultural Farm Tour map

Respectfully submitted,

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Peter Tollefsen, Director of Special Projects (Sustainability)

For more information, please contact:

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February 04, 2008

**AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS  
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**1.0 Goal**

- 1.1 To identify, review, discuss and make recommendations to staff on agricultural related issues.

**2.0 Mandate**

- 2.1 The Agricultural Advisory Committee of the Town of The Blue Mountains (AAC) is a volunteer advisory committee established by the Municipality in accordance with these Terms of Reference. Committee members are bound by these Terms of Reference while providing advice to the staff of the Town of The Blue Mountains.

**2.2 Scope of Committee Activities**

The scope of the Committee shall include activities such as:

- a) Providing advice, comments and recommendations on issues and concerns of farmers and agricultural organizations.
- b) Reviewing and commenting on proposed Official Plan Policy and any Zoning By-law Amendments that affect the agricultural area.
- c) Identifying key issues of concern for farmers which can be addressed by municipal government.
- d) Providing advice, comments and recommendations on economic strategies, development plans or studies dealing with agriculture and a wide range of other rural issues.
- e) Advising Town staff of changes and key issues within the agricultural industry.
- f) Identifying and recommending programs which encourage

public awareness, land stewardship and education of agricultural and rural issues.

### 3.0 Committee Composition

- 3.1 The Agricultural Advisory Committee of the Town of The Blue Mountains shall consist of eight (8) voluntary members who are appointed by Council for a term ending November 30, 2010, to coincide with the term of Council. A majority of the membership, five (5), shall constitute a quorum.
- 3.2 Members of the Committee to be appointed should represent as many of any of the following groups as possible:
- a) Grey Cattleman's Association (1)
  - b) Georgian Bay Fruit Growers Association (1)
  - c) Christian Farmers (1)
  - d) National Farm Union (1)
  - e) Ontario Federation of Agriculture (1)
  - f) Young Farmers (1)
  - g) Organic farming (1)
  - h) Sheep Producers/Dairy Farmers (1)
- 3.3 The members shall possess expertise, experience and willingness to devote the necessary time to the Committee. Members will be selected to provide an appropriate representation of various agricultural interests (dairy, beef, apple, tender fruit, greenhouse, cash crops, commodity groups, etc.).
- 3.4 Openings for membership shall be publicly advertised. All of the farming public and any nominated representative of an organization involved in agricultural and rural issues are invited to apply. Applicants must live in the Town and will submit the attached application form to the Town of The Blue Mountains Clerks Department. Applicants shall possess knowledge of agricultural issues within The Blue Mountains and a Farm Business Registration (FBR) Number, preferable (but not mandatory). Applicants may also possess relevant farm experience, technical training in an agriculture-based field, and/or current involvement in agricultural activities. Members will be formally appointed by Town Council.

last day

Nov 30,

Dec 1 New Council

first Council meeting,

Dec 6 first Mon

3.5 Resource People to Attend Meetings will include appropriate Town staff.

3.6 A Chair and Vice-chair shall be selected by the Committee and both must be a member of the Committee.

#### 4.0 Meetings and Reporting

4.1 The Town of The Blue Mountains shall schedule the location and frequency of meetings. It is anticipated an average of once a month. Committee members, if absent for three consecutive meetings without a reason being given at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting, will be considered to have lost interest in the Committee and will be informed of his or her being removed from the Committee. If any member is removed from the Committee or resigns from the Committee, the Clerk of the Town of The Blue Mountains shall be informed and a new member shall be appointed by Council.

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

#### 5.0 Communicating with the Municipality

5.1 Recommendations from the Committee shall be submitted to appropriate Town staff for inclusion in reports to Council.

# A Attachment 2

## AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday May 11, 2010 @6:30pm , Town Office, 26 Bridge Street E.  
, Thornbury - Committee Room

## A G E N D A

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1. Centurion Bike Race, Rob Potter, Dan Mainguy
2. Share the Road program Shawn Everitt
3. Succession planning (membership Agricultural Advisory Committee)
4. Agricultural Farm Tour, June 4 Peter
5. Meeting Notes from our last meeting (March 25) Rob P
6. Cover-All Building Systems issues safety notice  
Old Business:
7. Farm Buildings + Building permit requirements
8. Livestock protection act
9. New items: (next meeting date \_\_\_\_\_  
1. Community Policing, rural watch, Larry Hall. 2. source Water protection)
- ↵. Adjournment

## AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thursday March 25, 2010 @7:00pm , Town Office, 26 Bridge Street E.  
, Thornbury - Committee Room

### A G E N D A

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1. Livestock Protection (letter from OMAFRA, Farm Finance Branch,  
Feb 23/10) DF
2. Culinary Tourism (requesting you attend the Apple Pie Trail forum  
Tuesday, March 30, 2010 at 1:00pm BVCC) RP
3. Community Sustainability Plan update PG
4. Community Watch (Larry Hall is requesting you attend the  
Community Information Session this Wed. March 24, 7pm at the  
**LE Shore Library** ) RP
5. New Safety training Program.
6. Electricity Conservation on Ontario Farms
7. Planning Farm Tour
8. Other items:
9. Adjournment

## AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday Sept. 2, 2009 @7:00pm , Town Office, 26 Bridge Street E.  
, Thornbury - Committee Room

## A G E N D A

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1. Tornado damage + relief efforts (Prov. ODRAP attached)
2. Proposal to the Grey Bruce Regional Economic Development Partnership (by Rob Potter attached)
3. Stewardship Program Funding (AMO Alert attached \$ for drinking water)

Staff; Paul Graham COA,

Steve Conn, Community Emergency Management Coordinator.

Rob Potter, Communications + Economic Development Coordinator.

## AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Monday Nov. 16, 2009 @7:00pm , Town Office, 26 Bridge Street E.  
,Thornbury - Committee Room

## A G E N D A

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1. Comprehensive Transportation Strategic Plan
  - Introduction; Reg Russwurm, Director of Engineering & Public Works
  - Looking for input from the Committee, where there is continuing conflict between vehicular traffic and agricultural equipment.
  
2. Information items:
  - Premier's award for Agri-Food Innovation Excellence
  -
  
3. Other items :
  - Housing Need Study , Workshop Wed. Dec. 2 @ 2:00pm – 4:30,BVCC
  - Sustainability Workshop Invitation
  - Construction projects
  
4. Adjournment

## AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday June 10, 2009 @7:00pm Committee Room , Town Office, 26  
Bridge Street E. ,Thornbury

# A G E N D A

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1. Approval of Meeting Notes, May 26, 2009 PT

2. Integrated Community Sustainability Plan

Guest – Paul Graham, CAO

3. Other Business:

- Chervil

4. Adjournment

Also in attendance – Guest; Paul Wettlaufer, Ontario Federation of Agriculture

## AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thursday July 2, 2009 @7:00pm Committee Room , Town Office, 26  
Bridge Street E. ,Thornbury

# A G E N D A

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1. Mandate + roll of the Committee
2. Planning process - Integrated Community Sustainability Plan

Guests; Councillors Duncan McKinlay, John McKean and Bob Gamble.  
Staff; Paul Graham COA and Peter Tollefsen, Director of Special Projects (Sustainability).

**The Blue Mountains**  
**Agricultural Advisory Committee**  
**Meeting Notes**  
**May 11, 2010**

Present: James McKinlay (Chair); John Ardiel; Jacquie Hendry; Grant McMurchy; Sid Dykstra

Staff: Peter Tollefsen; Rob Potter; Shawn Everitt

Guest: Dan Mainguy (Centurion Cycling Canada)

James called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

**1. Official Plan Review**

Jacquie reported she had attended the Official Plan Review Public Meeting Monday, May 10. She was disappointed that agricultural issues were not included in the presentation by Town staff. She suggested that the Town ensure that the consulting team hired to work on the Official Plan Review include someone with a background in agriculture. John also attended the Public Meeting. Peter advised that, at the request of Councillor Cam Kennedy, the recommendation to Council will be revised to include agricultural initiatives.

**2. Share the Road**

Shawn Everitt outlined the Share the Road campaign which is aimed at encouraging cyclists and motorists to be more courteous on local roads. The program will include educational and awareness materials and road signage. He is hoping the Committee will assist in developing information related to agricultural and rural areas. Making cyclists aware of use of roads by farm vehicles and times of year when there is a lot of agricultural traffic is another goal for the campaign. He added that he would also like help to ensure the information is distributed to the seasonal farm workers who work in the area. Shawn noted that the campaign may not be 100 per cent effective but should help. It's expected the program will be phased in over five to six years.

James asked whether there are plans for more bike lanes on rural roads. Shawn answered that Grey County has found cost savings in widening roads because less maintenance is needed on gravel shoulders. He expects that, combined with the growing number of bicyclists in the area, will encourage construction of more bicycle lanes on all area roads.

John asked why there isn't signage to direct cyclists to the Georgian Trail instead of Highway 26. Shawn responded that the Town can add signage on the connecting link (through Thornbury) but would have to ask the Ministry of Transportation to add signage on the remainder of the Highway.

Dan Mainguy added that the Trail isn't suitable for some cyclists because the gravel surface is too rough for narrower tires.

**3. Centurion Cycling**

Dan and Rob outlined plans for the Centurion Cycling event, September 17 and 18, 2010. Up to 3,000 riders of varying skill levels are expected to take part in the three rides (25 mile, 50 mile and 100 mile). Routes are posted on the Centurion web site. Dan explained that the rides will move along with a police escort. There will be a rolling road closure lasting 30-45 minutes as the ride goes through. Any riders who can't keep up will be advised that they must obey all traffic signs and signals. There will be opportunities to market and promote local produce at the Blue Mountain Village and at community stops along the routes as well as in information packages supplied to all participants. Some of the proceeds will go to local and national charities. The Crohn's and Colitis Foundation has been earmarked for a donation from the 50-mile race. Dan advised that he will be going door-to-door along the routes to supply information about the dates, times and routes and to gather information about concerns, etc.

Members of the Committee had strong concerns about the dates, saying that weekend is right at the beginning of the apple harvest. A week sooner would be much better as the cycling events could cause delays for farmers attempting to get their crop to packing and processing facilities. Any delays could result in damage to the fruit.

Jacque expressed concerns that traffic on Grey Rd. 19 is very busy, even on weekend mornings and the Centurion event could cause great inconvenience.

James suggested that local families should have a greater opportunity to take part and a shorter ride should be added to accommodate them. Dan and Rob advised they would take the idea to the organizers.

John noted that while the current plans are likely to cause some problems, everyone can learn from the first year and make changes for the future. John also suggested that Town staff ensure the organizers (North American Sports) references are solid. Rob will follow up.

All agreed that good communication is needed to ensure the event is successful and that there is as little disruption as possible.

#### **4. Succession Planning**

Peter advised that the term for the Committee is the same as the term for council which ends on November 30, 2010 after the municipal elections.

James asked the Committee to consider whether the Committee should continue and, if so, the future make-up.

Peter and Rob explained that issues and concerns raised by the Committee do get forwarded to Council and appropriate staff and that the Committee is having an effect raising awareness of agricultural and rural issues with Town Council and Staff.

Members of the Committee agreed that it is very worthwhile to continue the Committee and to consider adding representation from other farm and rural groups.

James will attend the May 17, 2010, Council meeting to present a report on the Committee's activities and suggestions for the future of the Committee. All members are invited to attend.

#### **5. Agricultural Farm Tour**

Peter presented an update on the Tour which will take place June 4, 2010. Members discussed ideas for information to be presented to Staff and Council members taking part. The route was approved as presented by Peter and James.

**6. Meeting Notes**

Committee members advised the format for the Meeting Notes was suitable and asked that the notes be shared with Council and appropriate Staff.

**7. Livestock Protection Act**

Peter advised that David Finbow is still working on a response to the proposed changes.

**8. Half-load Restrictions**

Committee members agreed there is a need for the Town to consider easing restrictions to avoid impeding agricultural operations that have no choice but to use various roads on which restrictions are placed. A major concern for many farmers is the need to use the Thornbury Sideroad (Beaver St.) to get to Bluewater Storage. The Committee agreed to the following Recommendation:

THAT the Town consider rebuilding the Thornbury Sideroad as soon as possible and that, in the meantime, an exemption be applied to all vehicles using this road for agricultural purposes, and THAT a permit system be developed to allow agricultural use of roads on which load restrictions are placed.

Grant added that the Town should consider improvements to the intersection of Beaver St. and the 10<sup>th</sup> Concession as that is becoming an increasingly busy route for trucks as residential development spreads outward from Thornbury.

**9. Cover-All Buildings**

Peter reported on discussion with Greg Miller, Chief Building Official, about the situation regarding the Cover-All Buildings company. Grant noted that the company which makes Cover-All and the Titan brand of buildings has gone bankrupt because of legal action. He added that it should be clear that only that company and their buildings are affected and that building officials should be aware that the situation does not apply to all fabric-covered buildings.

**10. Building permits**

Peter circulated a memo from Greg Miller regarding building permits for farm buildings.

**11. Community Policing**

Rob gave a brief explanation about plans to launch a Rural Watch program in The Blue Mountains. Larry Hall will be invited to attend the next Committee meeting on May 18 to present more information.

**12. Chervil**

James suggested the Peter pass on to Town bylaw staff further information and to suggest that the Town and County be aware that chervil often spreads from roadside ditches and road allowances onto farms. Peter will contact the Roads Department for more information.

**13. Volunteer Awards**

Jacque noted that there is no Agricultural Category for the Town's Volunteer Awards. Rob will follow up and see whether an agricultural category could be added for 2011. The Committee agreed to the following Recommendation:

THAT the Town consider adding an Agricultural Category for the Order of The Blue Mountains Volunteer Awards Program.

**14. Next Meeting**

The Committee agreed to meet again Tuesday, May 18, 2010 at 7 p.m. in the Committee Room at the Town Hall. Peter will prepare and circulate an agenda.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

# AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**NOTES: Meeting of March 25, 2010**

Present: James McKinlay (Chair); Grant McMurchy; Jacquie Hendry; John Ardiel

Staff: Peter Tollefsen; Paul Graham; David Finbow; Rob Potter

## **1. Livestock Protection**

David Finbow, Director of Planning and Building, joined the meeting to discuss a letter from Farm Finance Branch, OMAFRA. (Letter circulated with agenda along with appropriate section from the Livestock Protection Act). David explained that the letter had raised concerns among members of Council – The Committee noted several issues:

- Reported losses don't reflect total loss because often there is no carcass.
  - Predator attacks can cause infertility among surviving female livestock
  - Significant economic loss to farmers
  - Province appears to be downloading responsibility to municipal level
  - Losses to fruit and vegetable farmers can also be significant
  - Better communication needed to help city dwellers understand the issues
- ACTION: David will draft a proposed response to the Province. Peter will circulate to the AAC members for comment before it goes to the Province. As well, a letter will be drafted for presentation to Council.

## **2. Community Sustainability Plan Update**

Paul Graham, Town CAO, discussed how the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan could address pest management

- Paul noted that more than 100 community partners are helping to create the Sustainability Plan
- Members of the Committee pointed out that pest management is governed by federal and provincial legislation
- Consensus was achieved on several changes to Draft wording in the ICSP document. These will recognize that: a) better communication and public awareness is needed and b) that waterways need to be protected from any contaminant(s) from any source (Document circulated at meeting)

## **3. Culinary Tourism**

Rob Potter, Communications and Economic Development Coordinator, outlined the Tourism Meets Agriculture event hosted by Blue Mountain Village at the Beaver Valley Community Centre on Tuesday, March 30. Members of the Committee are invited to attend. Rob noted that opportunities are expanding to promote local food and agriculture through tourism events, such as the Apple Pie Trail. (Poster attached to agenda)

## **4. Community Watch**

Rob Potter explained the Community Watch program which is just getting under way in The Blue Mountains. One of the four components is Rural Watch which is geared to the rural and

agricultural communities and the smaller villages and hamlets. The program encourages neighbours to help each other and to share information about suspicious activity and to contact police when they feel there is a potential for criminal activity. (Power Point handout circulated with agenda)

#### **5. New Safety Training Program**

Peter Tollefsen shared information regarding funding, from Farm Credit Canada for agricultural safety training programs, that is available through the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association. (News article attached to agenda.)

#### **6. Electricity Conservation on Ontario Farms**

The Committee discussed an article from Ontario Power Authority regarding the MicroFit Solar Program. John noted that there could be property tax implications and farmers should check with the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation. (Article attached to agenda)

#### **7. Farm Tour**

Peter and James outlined the proposed details for a tour of local farms by Town Staff. The objective will be to help Staff better understand the agricultural community.

- Proposed date – Friday, June 4 (June 11 is back-up date)
- Tour would begin at Town Hall at 9 a.m. and visit variety of farms with stop for lunch at Ravenna Hall.
- Proposed stops include John Ardiel vineyard, Sid Dykstra farm, Bay Growers, James McKinlay farm, Jacquie Hendry farm, Grant McMurchy farm as well as brief stops at several other points of interest. James will serve as lead facilitator with others taking over for specific sections. If the tour is running behind time Grant's farm could be dropped or the visit shortened as necessary.
- Tour would wrap up back at Town Hall about 4:30-5 p.m.
- Committee agreed the proposal is suitable. James and Peter will proceed with planning and preparation.

#### **8. Other items**

Committee Members asked whether there is any way to document follow up and impact from AAC meetings. Peter and Rob agreed notes should be recorded but not formal minutes. The notes would include proposed actions and would allow a follow-up discussion/brief report at the next meeting. Peter also suggested that James make a delegation to Town Council to communicate the Committee's activities and give/receive feedback.

#### **9. Weight restrictions on roads**

Committee Members noted there are now 1/2 –load restrictions on some roadways. While these are aimed at construction and industrial vehicles they also impact farmers who are trying to get in large loads of supplies, etc. The additional costs for extra trucking can be significant and there may be substantial delays. Although the restrictions apply for a limited time that time could be critical. Peter will follow-up with Town roads staff.

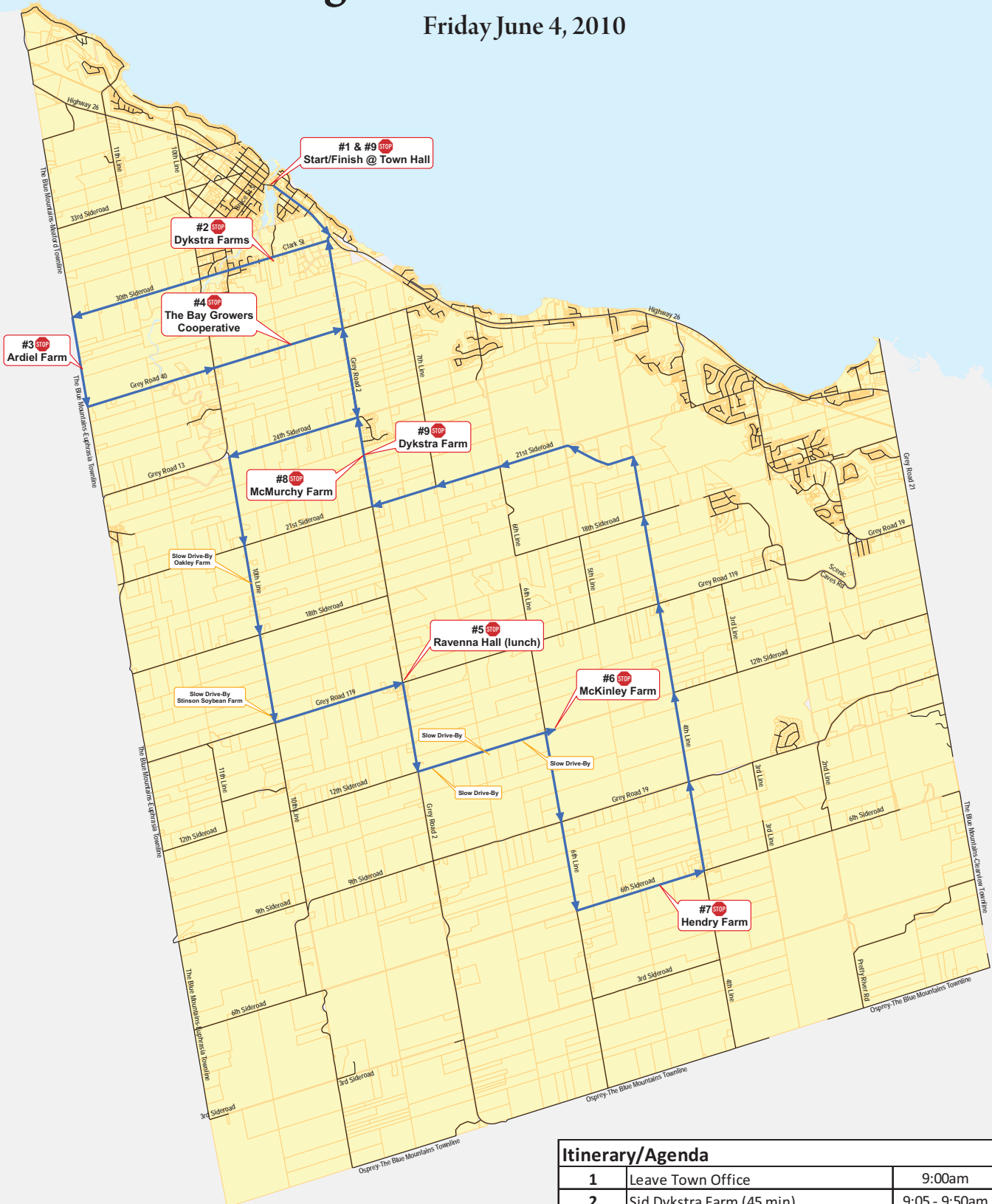
#### **10. Future Meeting**

Peter noted there are several more items awaiting the Committee's input and he plans to schedule another meeting soon. Committee Members agreed to try to be available.



# The Blue Mountains Agricultural Tour 2010

Friday June 4, 2010



Itinerary/Agenda		
1	Leave Town Office	9:00am
2	Sid Dykstra Farm (45 min)	9:05 - 9:50am
3	John Ardiel Farm (45 min)	10:00 - 10:45am
4	The Bay Growers Cooperative (50 min)	10:55 - 11:45am
5	Ravena Hall for Lunch (50 min)	12:10 - 1:00pm
6	McKinlay Farm (45 min)	1:10 - 1:55pm
7	Hendry Farm (45 min)	2:10 - 2:55pm
8	McMurphy Farm (40 min)	3:20 - 4:00pm
9	Dykstra Farm (20 min)	4:05 - 4:25pm
10	Return to Town Office	4:25 - 4:35pm



1:35,000

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