CALL TO ORDER
Chair Carl Loewith called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Chair Loewith welcomed all committee members, staff and visitors.

1. CHANGES TO AGENDA – none

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – none

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Minutes of August 27th, 2009. Motion to approve by Doug Cranston, seconded by Roy Shuker. CARRIED.

4. PRESENTATION – Feasibility Study for Establishing a Local Food Distribution Initiative in Niagara and Hamilton. Staff from the George Morris Centre (Nicole Marenick) and Strategic Research Associates (John Vieira) made a presentation to committee on the study commissioned by the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation, City of Hamilton and Region of Niagara. They presented the outcomes of the final report and explained that the project was conducted in four stages: Background research, primary research, data analysis and finally recommendations. The objectives of the report were to identify the critical success factors associated with a local food initiative,
identify markets that would support a local initiative, identify preferred products and target markets, quantify the support of producers, small food processing and marketing businesses and finally identify operational and marketing arrangements best suited to the local areas. The consultants described the extensive research and then presented the recommendations as follows:

- identify the LFDI system best suited to the business environment
- identify the most appropriate leaders before establishing the LFDI
- target specific markets
- strategically align the LFDI with existing systems
- Enhance cool chain and grading capabilities
- Determine the geographic scope and a manageable expansion program
- Determine the product mix
- Establish a verifiable quality assurance system
- Develop a strategic marketing plan

The report identified three structural options for a local food distribution initiative

1. Regional Distribution Hubs
2. Piggyback on leading supplier
3. Local food network

The committee discussed the presentation and report at length and felt that it didn’t identify any clear direction, recommendations other than a tremendous amount of literature and statistics. The group felt that based on the information presented it did not merit Hamilton’s participation in Phase II of this study as there were no clear deliverables established from the first phase.

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

5.1 Tile Drainage Culverts in Agricultural Areas

Gord McGuire – City of Hamilton staff attended the meeting to discuss this issue specifically relating to a request by Councillor Mitchell. There have been some issues with regards to getting permissions to allow field tile culverts under City Roads. Currently there doesn’t seem to be a process, application or method to solve the issue. Gord McGuire explained that this process is no different than locates and installations under the road by hydro, gas, phone etc. With proper documentation which would include a reasonable sketch, map, utility locates, encroachments it is not a problem to get the approvals to precede with the necessary work. It’s reasonable to require this protocol for any work under the road allowance. Gord indicated that he will prepare a sketch document that could be used when Agricultural / Farm request to bore under the road to simplify the process.
5.2 Draft Sign By-law Update – Vince Ormond

City staff presented the proposed recommendations and changes to the sign by-law as it pertains to rural agricultural signage. Extensive discussion had taken place at previous meetings. The report and presentation made to this committee clearly showed that the new draft by-law did indeed include and incorporate the previous recommendations of this committee and the rural community. Doug Cranston commended staff for incorporating the changes and presented a fair and reasonable draft sign by-law update. The committee indicated they would have the Chair and Secretary prepare a letter of support to be included in the staff report to Council supporting the changes to the rural agricultural component. (see copy attached) Motion: The Agricultural and Rural Affairs Advisory Committee supports the recommendations and proposed changes to the rural agricultural sign policies as outlined in the draft sign by-law presented to the committee at this meeting. Forwarded by Doug Cranston, seconded by Cathy McMaster. CARRIED.

5.3 OFA Correspondence regards Surface Water Discharge at 919 Trinity Road

Henry Swierenga was not present to discuss the issue as outlined in the letter. However Councillor Ferguson and Councillor Pasuta assured the committee that this issue has been given unlimited attention. City staff and Councillor Ferguson are working very diligently with the owner to find a reasonable solution. The committee received this information and agreed no further action was required by the ARAAC Committee.

5.4 Agricultural Fair Updates

Ancaster Fair exceeded the expectations of the society, some rainy weather but the transition to the new fairgrounds went very smoothly and was an overall success.

Binbrook Fair had their best weekend weather wise and the crowds were their largest ever. Need to work on the entrance and exits of the fairgrounds to handle the crowds. They have purchased the house on the property and will work toward an alternative exit for future years.

Rockton Fair had bad weather on Friday night but other than that they continued to have record crowds. An overall success.
5.5 Farmers Market Report on Feasibility of Farmers Market at Ancaster Agricultural Society

Sue Coverdale presented the report from the Consultant regarding locating a market at the AAS. It was pretty clear this location would require a commitment from the society and it would have to be much more than a weekly farmers market. Councillor Ferguson and Sue Coverdale indicated that the AAS are not interested in taking the lead on a farmers market at their location at this time. In light of the great success of the Ancaster Farmers Market in the village core Councillor Ferguson feels it is better to receive the report and to fully support the efforts and initiative of the market within the village.

6. GENERAL INFORMATION

ARAAC Committee Member Update

- The HWFA advised the committee that they had made a presentation to City Planning committee regarding their opposition to the Draft Tree Cutting By-law. The Councillor’s indicated that the by-law has been put on hold because of opposition and the need for additional work that would be required of City staff.

7. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting was adjourned at 9.45 p.m.