MINUTES:

Agriculture & Rural Affairs Advisory Committee
August 25th, 2005
Ancaster Marritt Hall

Present:  Chair:  Roy Shuker
Members: Carl Loewith, Cathy McMaster, Murray Ferguson, Susan Coverdale, Robert Pasuta, Mel Switzer, Philip Krakar, David Mitchell, Frank Regan, Dale Smith, Dave Braden

Absent: Members: Robert Murphy, Henry Swierenga, Doug Cranston, Carol Pupo, Nancy Mills, Ralph Kikkert

Chair Roy Shuker welcomed the members, made introductions and called the meeting to order.

1. **CHANGES TO AGENDA** – Add 8.3 – Slow Moving Vehicle Identification Signs

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – none

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

   3.1 Minutes from June 23rd, 2005

   Frank Regan moved that the minutes of June 23rd, 2005 be adopted as presented; seconded by Mel Switzer. CARRIED

4. **DELEGATION REQUESTS** – none

5. **CONSENT ITEMS** – none

6. **PUBLIC DELEGATIONS** - none

7. **STAFF PRESENTATIONS**

   7.1 **City of Hamilton – Pesticide Reduction Strategy** – Carmen Bian and Steve Walsh updated the committee on the Lura Consulting Public and Stakeholder Consultation Report. Topics discussed included:
• **Background** information on when the City of Hamilton began looking into the reduction of pesticide use. May 2002 City Council approved Pesticide restriction by-law on municipal lands and public spaces. February 2004 Council established Pesticide Sub-Committee. May 2004 Council approved consultation process – hiring of consultant to begin Public Stakeholder Process and report

• **Purpose** To obtain feedback from the general public on three proposed approaches to Pesticide reduction strategy

• **Context** Precautionary principle be applied and applies only to use of cosmetic pesticides on private residential property but would not apply to agriculturally zoned lands

• **Options** Education program, by-law to restrict pesticide use, by-law to ban pesticide use

• **Consultation Process** Five public workshops 87 participants, one stakeholder symposium 28 attendees, overview to answer key questions

• **Key Questions** – Control of pesticides by the City, Public Education Program, By-law to restrict, By-law to ban, Other options

• **Conclusions** – Overall support for a pesticide reduction strategy specifically an education program in conjunction with other initiatives, divergence of opinion on the viability on a by-law to ban pesticides

A lengthy discussion took place between staff and ARAAC members regarding the strategy. Committee unanimously recommends that the only method adopted be an education program for both urban and rural residents and put forward a motion accordingly (see item 9.2). Next meeting of the Pesticide Sub-Committee is September 22\(^{nd}\). Again, it was strongly emphasized that agriculturally zoned lands be exempt from any strategy that is adopted. The committee made another motion to be forwarded to Council to emphasize this point (see item 9.1). The ARAAC members also have asked staff to respond at their next meeting as to the clear definition of rural lands versus agriculturally zoned lands. This request will be forwarded to Long Range Planning staff for clarification and update at next month's meeting. Staff from Public Health strongly emphasized that no decisions have been made on what direction this strategy will take and assured the ARAAC members all developments will be vetted through this committee prior to any approvals or submission to Council.

7.2 **Future of Agriculture in the City of Hamilton** – Councillor Braden spoke to the committee regarding his concerns regarding the future economic prosperity of the agriculture and rural communities. Pressures on agriculture from all levels of government continue to increase and making it more difficult and we need to be creative as a municipality on how we can stay viable including ideas that are not necessarily related to agriculture. Discussions took place pertaining to various economic and social ideas/programs that could be implemented to keep our rural areas sustainable. The committee certainly listened to the various ideas but no
recommendation was put forward to adopt any ideas or suggestions at this time.

8. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

8.1 **GTA Agricultural Action Plan** – Sue Coverdale distributed copies of the Greater Toronto Area Agricultural Action Plan for their review. Later this year members of the ARAAC and various agricultural/rural representatives along with government will be adopting an agricultural plan for the City of Hamilton. This document was distributed to share some of the Toronto insight with the committee.

8.2 **Bio-Solids Stakeholder Committee Update** – Carl Loewith gave the committee an update on what is happening with this committee. Two months ago the stakeholder committee was given a tour of the Woodward Avenue Sewage Treatment Plant. Carl said it was a very educational and interesting tour. He described how the tremendous amount of equipment takes in sewage treats it and then puts it back into the bay. Carl was surprised to learn that is fairly normal for the system to fail for short periods and untreated sewage is put into the Bay. The committee has learnt that there will be 1,000 tons per week of Bio-Solids that need to be distributed either on farmland, landfill, trucked to the U.S., made into pellets or incinerated. These are several options that are being looked at and reviewed by the stakeholder committee. Carl emphasized that he doesn’t see this committee’s role to question standards or regulations simply to investigate the best method of dealing with the bio-solids. There already is a very strict monitored regulatory process in place. Carl will keep us posted as developments take place.

8.3 **Slow Moving Vehicle Identification Signs** – Mel Switzer and Councillor Mitchell brought forward concerns regarding the lack of public knowledge regarding slow moving vehicles and particularly the lack of understanding as to what the signs actually mean. In other community signage has been posted that basically tell motorist to beware of slow moving vehicles and show what the sign means. These are not mandatory signs according to the rules of the Ministry of Transportation but something that an individual municipality can choose to install. The committee felt it was a very good idea that these signs be considered for the City of Hamilton in areas of specific concern or as requested and have but forward a motion to Council (see item 9.3)

9. **MOTIONS**

9.1 The Agricultural and Rural Affairs Advisory Committee recommends to Council that all agriculturally zoned lands be exempt from the City of Hamilton Pesticide Reduction Strategy. Moved by Mel Switzer, seconded by Phil Krakar. Carried
9.2 The Agricultural and Rural Affairs Advisory Committee recommends to Council that an education be the method adopted by the City of Hamilton to effectively educate, control and reduce the use of pesticides. Moved by Philip Krakar, second by Dale Smith. CARRIED

9.3 The Agricultural and Rural Affairs Advisory Committee recommends to Council that the City of Hamilton install Slow Moving Vehicle Identification Signs as requested. Moved by Mel Switzer, seconded by Dale Smith. CARRIED

10. NOTICES OF MOTIONS - none

11. GENERAL INFORMATION

11.1 ARAAC Committee Member Update
- Councillor Braden invited everyone to contact him or his office if they would like to tour his Energy Conservation House.
- Councillor Mitchell invited the ARAAC members to an open house on September 7th at the Glanbrook Town Hall 7:00 p.m. to discuss the proposed Maple Leaf development at the Glanbrook Industrial Park.
- Robert Pasuta congratulated City staff on the excellent job done in development the myhamilton.ca site.

12. PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL – none

13. ADJOURNMENT – Roy Shuker announced the meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting: Thursday, October 27th, 2005
Ancaster Marritt Hall – Boardroom
7:30 p.m.

(Note: September meeting has been cancelled due to heavy workload (fall harvest) for committee members and the three agricultural society fairs.)