

## **Delegation to City hosted Public Meeting on Proposed lakefront Ethanol plant**

By Colleen Knight, Oshawa  
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Good evening members of the Development Services Committee, staff, and residents of Oshawa and Durham Region.

My name is Colleen Knight and I am a resident of Oshawa and live at 576 Mary Street North.

I am speaking in opposition to the FarmTech application.

I have to agree with the previous speaker that the elephant in the room is that we have two nuclear stations, a proposed incinerator, a cement plant, a steel foundry in Durham Region and now we have a proposed ethanol plant for Oshawa.

Only a fool would think that we are lucky to live amongst these industrial choices considered to be progress.

The ethanol plant is an environmental issue, but it is also an issue for agriculture, local and global food and water supplies, economics, tourism, health and safety, industry, politics, and transportation, plus more issues all intertwined – nothing is simple.

After looking at “Inside Oshawa,” which appeared in my mailbox recently, I strongly suggest that you take into consideration looking for other light industry options if you support the article entitled “Wanted: a vibrant harbour for our city.”

We may rob ourselves of a planned vibrant waterfront for Oshawa residents and potential tourists and instead, leave ourselves with a dormant waterfront because of issues of safety. In the event of an ethanol plant system failure -- and nothing is perfect in this world -- residents and potential tourists may stay away from the Lakeview Park area whether it remains structured as it is today or if you hope it can grow into an attraction for Oshawa tourism.

The downfall of Garth Drabinsky’s theatrical Live Entertainment company and the SARS epidemic each contributed to Toronto’s avalanche in tourism. With that in mind what would an ethanol plant do to the opportunity of a lively waterfront for both residents spending money where they live and tourists bringing in their cash?

If there is a perceived chance or if in actuality it does happen that there may be emissions, or strong, unpleasant odours, sometimes described as something like burning hay or a brewery from the plant then dreams of a vibrant waterfront will sink to the bottom of Lake Ontario. I have to wonder just how many times a year people will put up with foul smells due to system failures.

If you hope that we will be able to live, work, and play along our waterfront then an ethanol plant may put up a barrier for that goal.

I also have to wonder if it’s a human rights issue as well – the right to breathe clean air, and eat healthful foods, and replenish our bodies with water, thereby sustaining generations to come.

How are we going to keep feeding ourselves with a variety of foods if we pave over agricultural lands for subdivisions and continue to divert agricultural production to benefit industry? And

how are we to quench our thirst if we create scarce water resources using up water to produce ethanol?

Will Robin Hood, who stole from the rich to give to the poor, come to the rescue of those who are already impacted by ethanol plants on a global level? Is Canada going to impact on people in third-world and developing countries? In my opinion it is not a noble idea to steal food from the poor to support industry and to put fuel in gas-guzzlers.

We seem to be willing to continue to pollute, continue to encourage urban sprawl, and continue to avoid looking at alternative methods of transportation locally.

Perhaps we need the federal gas tax to help us with public transportation issues, which may help us to not need to build an ethanol plant. Better public transportation may mean less reliance on our personal vehicles. Has that been considered?

I'm hoping that the word amazed in Oshawa's motto or mandate *Be Prepared to be Amazed* won't be spelled A-m-a-i-z-e-d if we choose to truck, train and ship in corn to feed an ethanol plant.

I have done a lot of wondering this evening and hope that I have left you with some food for thought or some thirst for positive change.

Let's pretend that as a resident of Oshawa I want to petition Demeter the goddess of corn, from ancient Greece.

Grant that as I grow and develop my garden,  
husband my plants, animals and pets, they  
grow, are nurtured and protected as can be.

Give me the strength to adjust to the seasons, neither  
too rigid nor too pliable, and the ability to  
change and adapt to life.

Assist me in respecting and communing with nature.<sup>1</sup>

Thank you for your time and consideration.

***Colleen Knight, Oshawa***

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<sup>1</sup> Demeter (2008) Mythology: Demeter, goddess of Crops. Polychrome's Pantheon.  
<http://hunter.apana.org.au/~gallae/pantheon/myth/demeter.htm>