

Council to talk incinerator March 25

By Katie Richard/The Oshawa Express
March 15, 2011

A multi-million dollar facility that generates power by burning municipal waste leftover after recycling and other diversion efforts.

It's a topic that has caused much debate for the past six years.

And with a regional council made up of 15 new members, along with 13 returning councillors, debating the controversial project is anything but simple.

Such is the reason why council made the decision to take part in an education session all about the Energy-From-Waste facility.

"You're going to get from start to finish," says Regional Chair Roger Anderson, who called the meeting for Friday, March 25 at 9:30 a.m.

Councillors have said in the past they hope to gain knowledge on the financial aspects, contractual obligations and operating procedures of the facility.

Originally council debated the issue of allowing residents to ask questions, but ultimately it was decided that only councillors would have the floor.

Members of the public are welcome to attend the educational session, which takes place at Regional Headquarters in Whitby.

The idea of an Energy-From-Waste facility first arose in 2005 when both York and Durham regions were looking for solutions to manage residual waste.

After deciding that an incinerator was the preferred method of disposal, the regions began the search for a vendor.

Covanta Energy Corporation was chosen in spring 2009, after putting out a request for proposals (RFP) to five pre-qualified vendors who had passed the Request for Qualifications process.

The EFW facility, which will be built in Clarington on a 12-hectare parcel, north of the Courtice Water Pollution Control Plant, will be fully owned by Durham and York regions through a partnership agreement based on a 78.6 per cent Durham and 21.4 per cent York ownership proportion.

As facility owners, Durham and York will have complete oversight of the operation through a 20-year contract with Covanta, the region says.

Thus far, the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) has approved the Environmental Assessment, which allows the project to proceed to the permitting stage and into detailed design, construction and operation of the facility.

In addition, Covanta, the company slated to build and operate the waste-burning facility, has recently submitted the Certificate of Approval (C of A) to the MOE.

If approved, the region says construction of the facility will begin this year, with a target operation date of 2014.

Once built, it will be capable of processing 140,000 tonnes of residual waste per year.

The region's website dedicated to the project says the estimated capital cost of the project when adding in architectural enhancements, site servicing, adjustments for inflation, and economic development activities in the host community brings the total project cost to \$276.5 million.