

Clarington This Week

Energy-from-waste meetings draw hundreds

May 4, 2007

By Erin Hatfield ehatfield@durhamregion.com

DURHAM -- Concerns about air emissions, the environment, recycling, traffic and where a proposed energy-from-waste facility might be located took centre stage at a series of public meetings in April.

"I believe the whole purpose was to get the message out that we have a short list of sites and give the residents a chance to provide some feedback," said Jim McKay from the project consultant firm Jacques Whitford.

Four public information sessions about the Durham/York waste management study, three in Clarington and one in East Gwillimbury, were held between April 10 and 21.

Each session was aided by an independent facilitator and included an open house, a presentation by the project consultants, and a question-and-answer period.

"Very common questions were related to air emissions, health impacts, traffic impacts," Mr. McKay said. "And lots of residents concerned about this facility competing with diversion."

The April 12 session, held at the Clarington Beech Centre in Bowmanville, included 155 attendees, while 74 residents were at the April 14 session at the Clarington municipal offices and a further 66 participated in the April 21 meeting at Faith United Church in Courtice.

"We didn't know what the reaction was going to be, whether there would be a lot of support or opposition," Mr. McKay said. "If there was a lot of opposition we would have expected 1,000 people. Usually at this stage of a land-filling process we would have two or three thousand people out."

Residents who provided their contact information will receive a full report from the professional facilitator that includes a detailed question-and-answer section.

Final site selection is to be presented to both Durham and York Regional councils in September.

"This is just the start of the consultation so there will be more in the future," Mr. McKay said.

durhamregion.com