

Clarington won't be making request for clarification from chairman

'Perfectly clear,' says mayor

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By Jennifer Stone

CLARINGTON -- The Municipality won't be seeking official clarification on what Durham Regional Chairman Roger Anderson meant when he said Clarington declaring itself an unwilling host would have "absolutely no effect whatsoever" on the process.

Local Ward 1 Councillor Adrian Foster had asked Clarington's General Purpose and Administration Committee to request from the Region "a clear understanding of the ramifications of Clarington declaring itself as an unwilling host" for the proposed facility.

The Regions of Durham and York are in the midst of an environmental assessment (EA) on possibly building the energy from waste facility on one of three sites --- two in Clarington and one in East Gwillimbury.

Mr. Anderson said during a recent meeting of Clarington council that naming itself an unwilling host, as East Gwillimbury has done, would have "absolutely no effect whatsoever." He has since said his comments related specifically to the EA process, noting that in spite of the declaration from East Gwillimbury, it still remains on the short list of possible sites. Any unwilling host declaration, he said, would be considered by the Province when it makes the final decision, after the EA is complete.

That wasn't clear, said Coun. Foster, who felt, coupled with follow-up comments, the Chairman's message seemed to indicate Clarington had no say in the matter. That sentiment was echoed by Oshawa Councillor Brian Nicholson last week. He sent out a media release, demanding an apology from the Chairman.

"I think the people of Clarington need a clear understanding of what was meant," said Coun. Foster. "If I was mistaken ... it's clear I had a great deal of company out there."

But, Clarington's three Regional representatives voted against requesting the clarification, with Mayor Jim Abernethy saying he felt the answer Mr. Anderson gave was "perfectly clear."

"I think what some people are confusing is the process. The EA process cannot be changed," said Mayor Abernethy. "The answer is no, it won't. It will not change the process."

The question could be asked through a Regional committee, said Councillor Charlie Trim, chairman of the Durham-York committee looking into the issue.

"There is a channel to go through. That's where these types of questions should come from," he said.

But, when asked if sending the request to the committee via a motion from Clarington wasn't the appropriate route, Coun. Trim declined further comment.

A preferred site for the proposed incinerator is expected to be released later this week.