

Resident urges Uxbridge mayor to say 'no' to incinerator

Thu Oct 25, 2007

By Jeff Hayward

UXBRIDGE -- A resident is urging Uxbridge's mayor to take a stand against a proposed energy-from-waste incinerator in Durham.

June Davies, an Uxbridge municipal election candidate in 2006 and a Durham Riding provincial candidate for the Green Party this year, told councillors she has attended public information sessions throughout the Region regarding a facility to handle trash left over from waste diversion. A consultant has recommended it be built near Courtice Road and Hwy. 401 in Courtice, but the final decision is yet to go to regional council.

"This is \$250 million we're talking about," said Ms. Davies. "We should create industry that can re-construct (waste products)... to take waste and re-use it."

Mayor Bob Shepherd did not say which way he will vote on the issue, but offered, "This is a huge issue, I'm learning. I sat through many presentations."

In 2010, the U.S. border will close to Ontario's trash, forcing Durham to seek alternatives. "I honestly believe we're making the right decision at the right time," said the mayor. "One of the alternatives is landfill, that's not viable. What are the other alternatives?"

Ms. Davies argued the incineration proposal is not hitting close enough to home. "If it was (being built in Uxbridge) all hell would be breaking loose," she said. "We don't have much of a window to turn our future around."

Councillor Bev Northeast supported Ms. Davies' concern. "Europe doesn't allow some products, it's safe incineration (there)," she said. "(Here) there's mercury and lead that will cause cancer, a lot of that is from air quality."

But Councillor Howie Herrema, who was recently part of a European tour to inspect incinerators, accused Ms. Davies of being misinformed. "You haven't researched this," he said. "If we needed a landfill would you support it in Uxbridge?"

Ms. Davies responded by saying, "I wouldn't compromise farmland."