

Brock landfill not a Durham backup plan

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By: Erin Hatfield and Scott Howard

Durham's backup plan for garbage doesn't include the Brock Township landfill.

At a recent works committee meeting, Regional Chairman Roger Anderson veered from the agenda to ask Cliff Curtis, commissioner of works, where staff is in developing a plan for Durham's waste should the Michigan boarder close early or if a planned incinerator gets held up or doesn't happen at all.

"I know staff has been working on it and I wanted to make sure it hadn't slipped through the cracks," Mr. Anderson said.

"If the energy-from-waste process doesn't work out we have no spot to put our garbage at the end of 2010. We need something in place to deal with it until we come up with a long-term, permanent solution."

Mr. Curtis said for the past six months talks have been under way with the operators of three landfill sites in Ontario -- the Hale site, just outside Newtonville in Clarington; the Toronto-owned Green Lane Landfill; and, a Waste Management Inc. facility in the Sarnia area.

"We don't want to landfill, but it has to have somewhere to go," Mr. Curtis said.

"The stuff doesn't stop coming; people still put out garbage."

In an interview last week, Mirka Januszkiewicz, director of waste management, confirmed that the Region is not considering the local landfill.

"We've knocked on every door in the province...but we're not considering Brock at all," she said. "We're doing improvements to the landfill, but the message I got from (regional) council was very clear -- don't look at the Brock landfill as part of the contingency plan."

While Ms. Januszkiewicz did confirm the Region is looking at the three sites mentioned by Mr. Curtis, she would not discuss any specific details, saying a report on the issue would be discussed by the works committee at its meeting on Jan. 9.