

Clarington This Week

EFW discussion serves council well

May 25, 2007

It's safe to say the proposed Energy From Waste (EFW) facility being discussed for Durham Region and which could be located in Clarington, is one of the area's most controversial developments in recent memory.

Numerous public information meetings have brought out concerned residents by the hundreds. A subsequent meeting hosted by the CAW Local 222 brought out experts who warned of the pitfalls of such facilities. Since then a group of concerned residents has demanded the Region dump its EFW plans altogether.

The over-riding concern of residents opposed to EFW is pollution. Many don't believe any good can come from burning our garbage. That being the case, our politicians are taking no chances and educating themselves as best they can about this type of technology.

A few weeks ago Clarington Mayor Jim Abernethy, Regional Chairman Roger Anderson and Regional Councillor Rick Johnson travelled to Florida to tour a Tampa Bay-area EFW facility. Florida has used the technology since 1987 when it banned landfill.

It's good to see the mayor going the extra mile -- on his own dime we might add -- to make sure he's up on his EFW knowledge. He knows this issue is one of the most contentious ones he may have to deal with during this term in council. If he needed any reminding just look at Tuesday night's General Purpose and Administration Committee meeting.

One delegation was originally scheduled to address council about the proposed EFW facility. However, one turned to 16 delegations before the actual meeting started. That turned a regular meeting into a marathon one that dragged on close to midnight.

It's good to see council listening to residents' concerns. They're showing that this issue is one they don't take lightly.

At the end of the day there is a chance York Region could very well get the proposed EFW facility. But there's a greater chance Clarington could see the facility built right here. We need to make sure our elected representatives know all they need to in order to make an educated decision. So far they're doing just that.

-- Clarington This Week editorial