

## **Most future incineration meetings to be here**

Wed Jan 09, 2008

By Jennifer Stone

NEWMARKET -- It only makes sense that local meetings about the proposed incinerator take place in Durham, says the Region's chairman.

The decision to hold a meeting in Newmarket at which Courtice was named the preferred site for a proposed incinerator was roundly criticized by residents who made the trek to York Region to comment on the proposal Tuesday. But, both Durham chairman Roger Anderson and York chairman Bill Fisch defended the meeting locale, saying the plan all along had been to alternate meetings between Durham and York.

For many, that explanation simply wasn't good enough.

"The very fact it's being held here in York ... illustrates how the proponents (of the incinerator) continue to deny the most impacted communities reasonable access at key points" in the process, said Clarington resident Linda Gasser.

It's not the first time that's happened, she said, pointing to the announcement of the short list of preferred sites -- four were in Clarington and only one in York Region -- was also held in Newmarket.

Another opponent to the incinerator took it a step further.

"If you were fair, if you weren't ashamed, if you weren't guilty ... about dumping this (incinerator) on that community, you would have held (the meeting) in that community," said Dr. Paul Connett, a retired chemistry professor from St. Lawrence College in Canton, NY, and a long-time opponent of incineration.

But while he recognized the distance Durham residents had to travel to comment Tuesday, Mr. Anderson said it was simply a matter of process. Though York has reduced its commitment to both paying for the incinerator and providing trash to fuel it to about 12 per cent, from the 50-50 partnership the two regions originally had, the two regions remain joint partners in the \$9-million Environmental Assessment process.

"The terms of reference of this committee ... dictated alternate meetings because we're partners 50-50 in this process and York is paying 50 per cent of this bill, as are Durham residents," said Mr. Anderson.

But now that the committee has recommended the preferred site be in Courtice, near Courtice Road and Hwy. 401, Mr. Anderson asked that the committee's remaining meetings be held in Durham. To some extent, York's chairman agreed.

"I'm prepared to say we can have most (of the remaining meetings) in Durham ... maybe of the next four or five, we could have one" in York, said Mr. Fisch.

Still, he said, "it is clear at this point in time that most of the meetings should be held in Clarington."