



## Site approval moves Durham incinerator one step closer to reality

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**By Gordon Brunt**

**A**fter hearing from more than 35 delegates, Durham Regional Council voted 19-7 to approve the recommendations made by consultants on a site to build an energy from waste facility (EFW) to deal with the increasing problem of residual waste.

The approved site for the EFW facility is located on a 12-hectare area of land that is owned by the Regional Municipality of Durham in Clarington Energy Park.

A majority of the delegates at yesterday's meeting, most of whom did not get to say everything they wanted because of strict time limits given by Regional Chairman Roger Anderson, were opposed to an incinerator being built and obviously passionate about the facts that they presented to the Council.

Events in the Municipality of Durham Headquarters really became heated after the fourth delegate to speak, June Davies asked, "Is there lobbying or coercion going on behind the scenes to influence the court for this project?"

Davies was referring to a slide presentation made by Dr. Paul Connett on Jan. 10 at the Oshawa CAW Hall. Davies mentioned that the most disturbing slide from Connett's presentation was the one in which he drew a correlation between waste diversion and corruption.

Most notably upset by Davies' comments were Councillors Joseph Drumm and Bill McLean. When asked to apologize for her comments by Coun. McLean, Davies refused.

After learning that the Council had voted to approve a site Davies later said, "It's expected but it's very disappointing. It's something that's been railroaded through and it seems that the public input given is irrelevant."

Residual waste is the garbage leftover after it is recycled and composted. An incinerator is only able to release 70 per cent of burnt residual waste into the air. The other 30 per cent would turn to ash.

A landfill would be required to store the ash that is left over. Other issues that concern the opposed delegates are environmental and economic consequences, destroying natural resources from future generations and the health problems that would arise from poor air quality.

Prior to his delegation Dave Renaud, president of the CAW Durham Region Environmental Council, felt that an alternative to incineration could be to develop a research facility to share ideas on how to decrease residual waste.

"We would have their students (University of Ontario Institute of Technology and Durham College) analyze leftover residual waste. It will give them an opportunity to share their ideas with industries," Renaud said.

Renaud feels it is necessary to study products and packaging made by retailers and provide options that will be less harmful to the environment.

One of the few delegates supporting EFW facilities was Magnus Schonning, first secretary from the Embassy of Sweden in Ottawa.

Schonning made many points in his presentation that drew many questions from 14 members of council, some of who had previously travelled to Sweden to do their own research on EFW facilities.

This could have been a case of foreshadowing because no other delegates stood before council for close to an hour answering questions about their suggestions.

The final decision on an incinerator will not be made until York Regional Council votes on the site selected by consultants later today. The project's next step after that would be to find a satisfactory vendor for an EFW facility later this year.

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