

We may be fighting the same fight, but I'm hoping that you lose

By Scott Howard



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It's often said that Brock Township is out of place being a part of Durham Region. As the northern-most municipality, it sometimes seems like we're forgotten about and that we share nothing with our neighbours to the south - with the exception, of course, of Port Perry and Uxbridge.

The hustle and bustle of daily life in the lakeshore communities may be a stark contrast to the laid-back rural atmosphere up here, but residents in Brock and Clarington are in the same boat these days - none of us want to play host to garbage from the rest of Durham Region.

Last year, the Region proposed expanding our landfill to 850,000 tonnes. While it appears that they've scaled back their plans, nothing is set in stone.

Especially if the planned energy-from-waste facility doesn't get built by the time the Michigan border closes to Ontario trash after 2010.

Of the four proposed sites for that facility, three lie within Clarington's borders. The other is in East Gwillimbury in York Region.

Those odds don't stack up to well for Clarington, especially since York politicians have pulled back their participation in the project.

Once 50-50 partners with Durham, York will now provide just over 10 per cent of the garbage needed to run the incinerator at maximum capacity.

Though the announcement of the preferred site won't be announced until later this month, it's unlikely that officials with either region would opt to set up shop in York when they have such a small stake.

So, as it stands, neither of the two likely destinations for Durham's trash are willing hosts. Our council has said as much a number of times in the past 12 months.

While Clarington's council has not yet provided any official thoughts on the matter, some of their politicians have spoken out against the facility being located within their borders.

And the sad part of both situations is that none of it seems to matter to the Region.

Durham owns the Brock landfill and will operate it in whatever way they see fit.

Our council could pass a million resolutions stating that we're not a willing host - they'll just end up in the landfill with the rest of the region's trash.

Same goes for Clarinton.

Regional chairman Roger Anderson told them as much earlier this week.

That municipality's sentiments on hosting the incinerator has "absolutely no effect whatsoever" on the site selection process.

"It would be nice if we could have a willing host, but it is not essential," Mr. Anderson told the members of Clarington council and the dozens of residents packing the room to speak out against the project.

So we're all in the same boat, fighting the same fight.

Unfortunately, the construction of an incinerator would likely take Brock off the hook for the most part.

So, as callous as it may sound, there's an awful lot of people in Brock hoping that the good people of Clarington don't put up too much of a struggle.

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