

Metroland

## Anti-incinerator group angered as report deferred until September

Tue Jul 31, 2007

By Jennifer Stone

CLARINGTON -- Some members of a group which has vocally opposed construction of a garbage incinerator in Clarington were fuming Monday over a decision to defer an anticipated report to September.

Reports from two consultants were included on a draft agenda for Monday's meeting, but did not appear on the final agenda -- a decision for which Clarington's CAO Franklin Wu took responsibility.

The report is now expected to be on the first General Purpose and Administration Committee agenda in September.

Some say they were led to believe the report -- Clarington's independent peer review of work done so far in the Environmental Assessment process -- had been pulled from the agenda to allow the Region time to give input.

"If we're going to let the Region 'manage' the findings of our studies ... how independent is that?" asked Orono resident Linda Gasser.

Her sentiment was shared by another Orono resident, Jim Richards.

"You have completely negated the purpose of why we needed an independent review," said Mr. Richards, suggesting the decision was influenced by Regional Chairman Roger Anderson.

Mayor Jim Abernethy said the report hadn't actually been "pulled" from the agenda, since it had only appeared on the draft document.

But that draft was "being distributed for public consumption," said Mr. Richards, noting he had also received a letter, dated July 11, from the Municipality, indicating the report would be dealt with Monday.

"Many of us planned our vacations around this," said Newcastle resident Wendy Bracken. "Today was our day to hear our peer review studies ... Please show respect for those of us who care to be involved with this process."

But, removing the consultants' reports from the agenda was entirely his own decision, said Mr. Wu. Any report to go on the agenda must be on his desk by 4:30 p.m. on the Tuesday preceding a council meeting.

"I did not receive the report until Wednesday morning. That gave me very little time to go through the report and put my signature on it. I was not comfortable with that," said Mr. Wu.

There was also a need for further information from the Region, before the report could be complete, he said, noting he attended the meeting between consultants and the Region last week "to ensure there was no undue influence on the consultant for what we are supposed to do.

"I made that decision alone, without any input from elected officials."