Oshawa council says no to incinerator

Region votes on issue this Wednesday
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By Jillian Follert

OSHAWA -- It's official -- Oshawa is saying no to an incinerator next door.

At a special meeting Monday afternoon, council voted to tell the regions of Durham and York that Oshawa is not a willing recipient of air pollution from a possible incinerator in Clarington.

"I supported this in the past with the information I had at the time, but it's a woman's prerogative to change her mind and it's a councillor's prerogative to change their mind when they get new information," said Councillor April Cullen, who flipped her position on the issue at council's strategic initiatives committee last week. "My priorities are, is this safe and what will it cost With what I know now, I can't support it."

Council spent an hour voting on an 11-point motion, one point at a time.

With Councillor Maryanne Sholdra absent, the 10 remaining councillors either voted unanimously or 8-2 in favour of the various points, which included asking York and Durham to respect the wishes of local councils by not allowing an incinerator in a community that is not a willing host.

Councillor Nester Pidwerbecki, who along with Councillor Joe Kolodzie voted against several points, said he thinks the process should continue as planned.

"It's cost the taxpayers of the Region a whole pile of money to get to this point and I think we should follow through. When we get the answers, then we can make a decision," he said. "We have a very transparent and open way of doing things at the Region and we should follow that course right to the end."

On Jan. 9, Durham Region's works committee endorsed an incinerator site in Clarington's Energy Park on lands south of Hwy. 401, near Courtice Road. The day before, a joint Durham-York committee supported the same site.

The issue now goes to Regional council, which will look at approving the site this Wednesday, Jan. 23.

Oshawa councillors are hopeful their resolution will impact regional council's decision.