

To debate or not to debate, that is the question

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By: Jennifer Stone

CLARINGTON -- Waste isn't up for debate, says Clarington's mayor.

He and local councillor Adrian Foster engaged in a discussion during Monday's General Purpose and Administration committee over how best to present information about waste management, given the current proposal by the Region to build an incinerator in Courtice.

The mayor announced in February that he would bring presenters to council on what he views as the only three options available in terms of waste management: incineration, landfill and the so-called Zero Waste idea.

The first information session, on incineration, featured a number of pro-incineration presenters and resulted in a council meeting that lasted more than 10 hours over the course of two evenings, to complete.

Many argued then council simply wasn't the right venue for such presentations. That sentiment remains, said Coun. Foster.

"I have felt on a large number of occasions, and my colleagues (on council) have as well, that you have ignored local council and moved forward with what you want to do," he said Monday.

Incineration has been a divisive issue at Clarington council. In January, Clarington's four local councillors outvoted the three Regional councillors to declare the Municipality an unwilling host to the incinerator.

A number of councillors and members of the public would prefer a moderated event, outside council, where experts on all sides would be brought in, said Coun. Foster.

Local councillors are welcome to bring forward a motion calling for such a meeting, said the mayor. But that won't stop him from continuing with the information presentations at council.

"We agree to disagree, and as the chair, I have the final say," said Mayor Abernethy.

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