

## **Clarington to look into incineration panel discussion**

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By Jennifer Stone

CLARINGTON -- Other municipalities will be asked to help foot the bill should Clarington decide to go ahead with a moderated panel discussion on incineration.

Residents have been calling on council to hold such an event, with experts on all sides of incineration available to answer questions from the public.

On Monday, council voted 4-2, with only Regional Councillors Mary Novak and Charlie Trim voting against, and Mayor Jim Abernethy not voting, to ask staff to look into such an event.

As well, other municipalities will be asked to help foot the bill, which Mayor Abernethy said could run into the tens of thousands of dollars. Further, the Region will be asked to allow its consultants to be allowed to participate. That was a bone of contention for the Regional councillors.

The event proposed for Clarington "is pros and con," said Coun. Novak. "I hope our consultants are neither pro nor con, that they're neutral."

There are a number of environmental assessments ongoing on projects affecting Clarington beyond the incinerator, said Coun. Trim.

"We have other projects going on in Clarington -- the 407 extension, OPG (and the potential to add reactors to the Darlington Nuclear Station). Are we going to be open to having a debate on those?"

The environmental assessment process currently ongoing on the incinerator should be followed, Coun. Trim argued.

"There is, with the EA that has been established by the provincial government, a method for consultation," he said. "If you follow the system, you're OK. If you don't, you're open to all sorts of problems."

There will be other information sessions, said Mayor Abernethy.

That it could be a debate was an issue for Coun. Novak.

"I have absolutely no problem with looking at another public information session," she said. "This is a debate. It's not just that. It's that you also want a consultant that is neutral to take a side. As it stands here, I cannot support it."

But it's not intended to be a debate, said local councillor Adrian Foster, who crafted the motion.

"I have tried to avoid the word debate, hence the use of the words 'balanced presentation of information'," he said. "Do I anticipate a debate? No. Do I anticipate public participation? Yes."

It's something the Municipality should do, Coun. Foster said.

"I don't know how we can say we're concerned for our residents, concerned for the health of our residents, but every time we try to do something for them, we throw up hurdles," he said.