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Mother sobs as votes are tallied

By Katie Strachan
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“My children deserve to breathe what little air there is left to breathe,” shouted Coleen Fodor, the tears streaming down her face. She pauses to gather herself and wipes the tears from her cheeks. A photograph of her four children is plastered on the projection screen in the Durham Region council chambers. Tears filled the eyes of many in the crowd and frustrations seemed to boil over as one-by-one Durham Regional councillors stood and declared their position on the Durham/York Energy From Waste (EFW) facility.

After more than 55 delegates rose in front of council expressing their concerns for the facility, council voted in favour of the proposed Clarington incinerator just after 2 a.m. Thursday morning, more than 16 hours after the meeting began. For Fodor, it was all too much. The mother of four children, two of which have severe asthma, passionately shared her stories of waking up in the middle of the night hearing her children screaming, “I can’t breathe,” in front of the 28 members of council. “My two youngest children are five and eight. I never know when they’re going to have an asthma attack so I always have to be on guard,” she says, dumping out a number of inhalers, puffers and asthma medications on the table in front of councillors. “My children can’t play as long as their peers. Imagine living your life as if you were breathing through a straw.”

Residents continued to express their concerns that the facility would have on the health of both humans and animals.

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Coleen Fodor
Mother of four