

Aquilini group sees cash in burning garbage

Proposal by energy subsidiary would create incinerator

BY SANDOR GYARMATI, DELTA OPTIMIST DECEMBER 17, 2009

The owner of the Vancouver Canucks is eyeing the chance to build a garbage incinerator on Tsawwassen First Nation land.

Aquilini Renewable Energy, owned by Vancouver Canucks owner Francesco Aquilini, is part of the privately-held Aquilini Investment Group.

It's looking for opportunities in green energy, including waste-to-power and wind power, said energy company president John Negrin, who confirmed it is looking at the possibility of building a modern waste-to-energy facility at the TFN.

"We've had some preliminary discussion with the Tsawwassen First Nation and we're a company like the other competitors out there that's looking to pursue the opportunity should it present itself," he said.

Metro Vancouver has been looking at various waste-to-energy technologies, including what's in place in Sweden. Negrin said what his company is looking at is a mass-burn technology, which can already be seen at the waste-to-energy plant in Burnaby.

"Over the years, much to Metro's credit, they kept advancing the technology and incorporating energy from it, because originally it was just a garbage incinerator," he said.

"The ones we're looking at worldwide, not just in Sweden but elsewhere where these technologies are in operation, are very commercially operational and safe. They're mass-burn as well."

Terry Baird, vice-president of construction for the TFN's economic development corporation, said the band has talked about the possibility of building a plant with Aquilini Renewable Energy, saying the technology is remarkably clean with little particulate matter ending up in the atmosphere.

Baird said several companies interested in building a waste to-energy plant have approached the TFN. He said the band needs to find ways to provide power for major developments.

"It's still early and if we decide to go forward with this we're going to grind this along with our neighbours and not want anybody unhappy. We wouldn't build anything horrible in our own backyard, so we're doing our due diligence to make sure all the facts are correct," said Baird.