

**Pilon, Janet**

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**Subject:** Amalatterra Proposal

**From:** Greg Atkinson

Date: Wed., Feb. 27, 2019, 08:17

Subject: RE: Amalatterra Proposal

To: <maureen.wilson@hamilton.ca>, <john-paul.danko@hamilton.ca>, <

CC: Councillor Danko

CC: Jodi Formosi (email obtained via WHOIS records)

CC: Bill Kelly

Dear Councillor Wilson,

I am a constituent of your ward (42 Purvis Drive, Hamilton, ON). I am aware of the ongoing issues with recycling as a result of China's decision to halt incoming shipments of recycling (project "National Sword"). The implications for Hamilton and municipalities across North America is dire, and I applaud Ms. Formosi for her attempts at bringing creativity and innovation to this challenge.

I encourage elected officials to approach this project with restraint and caution.

1. Having listened to Ms. Formosi's interview on the Bill Kelly show, at no point did she speak to the energy inputs required for this waste conversion process. A fundamental law of physics is that you do not get more energy out of a system than you put in. What are the total emission costs of this activity, in consideration of the recoverable energy?
2. There is a general lack of information available to constituents about this process.
  1. Amalatterra's unprofessional, amateur website does not instill confidence in them as a company, the only email contact I could find is: [REDACTED]
  2. There are no citations or links to scholarly articles to back-up Ms. Formosi's claims. Bradham Energy's website provided little additional information.
  3. The EPA provides details on this process that are not reassuring: <https://www.epa.gov/smm/energy-recovery-combustion-municipal-solid-waste-msw>
3. Councillor Danko is fundamentally correct in his approach to this issue. The problem isn't what to do with non-recyclable waste, it's that we produce such waste in the first place. The City of Hamilton, through our legislative bodies, has the power and opportunity to participate in changing consumer behaviours that drive this trend. The important discussion isn't "should we burn or bury the plastic" rather it's "how do we reduce our dependence on single-use, non-recyclable materials?" This is a challenge I hope you're not afraid of, because it's big and it will pit you against powerful financial interests.
4. Despite Councillor Danko's position, reality is that we will continue to produce non-recyclable waste for some time; his is the ideal long-term solution. What do we do in the interim?

I implore you to make use of the academic resources at your doorstep to evaluate the claims laid forth by Ms. Formosi. I do not claim them as bogus or inaccurate, I believe that she believes wholeheartedly in the claims, but I'm not comfortable with her proposal (right now). Burning waste is not a new idea, and it has proven to be dangerous and expensive. Perhaps Ms. Formosi has the magic recipe, but faith alone is not enough here. We need to make evidence-based decisions when our environmental well-being is at stake. This is obviously a catch-22 for a small business: how do you prove a new technology without a willing partner?

Here's the good news: you have Canada's most research intensive institution in your west end. Why is this a debate among non-experts and industry salespeople? You can bring environmental, engineering and public policy experts to the table. Maybe the city and McMaster can jointly participate in a study to evaluate the efficacy of the systems

being proposed? [https://milo.mcmaster.ca/industry/industry\\_sponsor](https://milo.mcmaster.ca/industry/industry_sponsor) Perhaps these studies have already been conducted? If so, SHARE THEM!!

PS - My sincere gratitude to Bill Kelly for his interview, thank you for continuing to keep Hamilton's voters informed and connected to issues at city hall.

Best regards,

Greg Atkinson