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## Concerns voiced on tire plant

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Chuck Steinhauser stood in front of a room full of strangers and, on an aerial photograph, pointed out the house where his grandchildren live.

He said he didn't want them to get sick from the particles released into the air by a proposed tire-to-energy plant that will be on the former International Paper Co. property.

Steinhauser, of Fairview, was one of about 100 concerned residents who on Thursday attended an informational public meeting at East High School about the plant.

"If you want this in your backyard in an urban area, you're nuts," Steinhauser said.

Biology students, environmental activists and worried neighbors were included in the stream of people who took the microphone to question officials hired by Erie Renewable Energy LLC, which is undertaking the estimated \$100 million project.

Planning officials gave an overview of the plant and offered some details as to its environmental soundness at the beginning of the hour-and-a-half session. They assured the crowd that the plant would not have any significant effect on the environment.

That did little to soothe the crowd, which erupted into applause when people took turns at the microphone to blast the proposed plant.

The plant will generate electricity by using fluidized-bed technology to convert tire chips at high temperatures into gas to create steam that will drive steam engines.

David Agresti, an Erie lawyer who is managing partner of the local investor group involved in the project, said the company was interested in hearing community reaction to its plan.

"We're going to take all their questions to heart," Agresti said.

The company hopes to start building in June 2008 and be in operation about a year later. The project will create 200 construction jobs and the plant will employ 60 full-time workers.

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