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## Pressure K.E.E.P.s up on plant.

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The group battling plans to locate a tire-to-energy plant in Erie has a new ally -- Lawrence Park Township.

Township commissioners stated their concerns and opposition to the proposed \$150 million plant in an open letter to Erie city and county officials.

Tim Reim, chairman of the Green Party of Erie County and media coordinator for the opposition group Keep Erie's Environment Protected said Lawrence Park is the first municipality to join the group's battle against the proposed plant, but said he does not believe it will be the last.

"We believe we will get letters of the same nature from other communities," Reim said.

Lawrence Park commissioners said they were concerned about the possible health hazards from airborne emissions from the plant that would be located on the former International Paper property -- which is less than a mile from their community.

They also said they worried about the plant's possible impacts on Lake Erie, tourism, property values and traffic congestion.

The company that wants to build the plant -- Erie Renewable Energy -- has repeatedly denied that its plant would represent a threat to health or the local environment, and instead would give the area an economic boost.

The company is now in the process of selecting a vendor for the technology that it plans to use.. Company officials said details on air quality, emissions and other aspects of the plant will be made public when the company applies for air quality permits in December.

But Lawrence Park Commissioners were not convinced and not waiting.

"The Board of Commissioners wishes to make their voices heard by stating strongly that we are against the proposed tire plant," the board said in its letter.

Commission chairwoman Kathleen Jackson said the five commissioners were unanimous in the decision to oppose the plant and send the letter.

"We are all on the same page," Jackson said. "We are showing unity on this one."

Commission Vice Chairman Tom Renshaw said there are too many unanswered questions.

Commissioners said the decision came after they heard concerns voiced by residents and presentations from K.E.E.P. representatives and biologist Jeanette Schnars.

Schnars is one of four speakers on tap for the K.E.E.P meeting scheduled for 7 p.m. today in City Council Chambers at Erie City Hall.

Schnars is a doctoral candidate in Wildlife & Fisheries Science at Penn State Behrend and natural history collections manager at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center.

Others listed as speakers are: Sherri A. Mason, an associate professor of chemistry and environmental science program coordinator at the State University of New York-Fredonia; Michael A. Parker, policy and outreach coordinator with the Pittsburgh-based Group Against Smog and Pollution; and Dr. David Eibling, an ear, nose and throat specialist.

Jackson, meanwhile, said she expects at least two and possibly as many as four of the township commissioners to attend the K.E.E.P. meeting today.

"That is how strongly we feel about it," she said.

*Jim Carroll*