

Green Energy Company Continues Forward Progress

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MOXEE -- Representatives of Organic Energy Conversion Co. of Tacoma made their case for city approval of an environmentally controversial plant that would convert solid tires to a variety of byproducts including diesel fuel and steel.

"We are an energy company, not a tire company," said Organic Energy's senior vice president for global business development, John Harkins, at a hearing at Moxee City Hall. "We have a group of technologies that convert feedstocks to beneficial, reusable, green energy. This plant has nothing to do with tires."

The land-use hearing concerned the company's potential \$25 million private investment on industrially zoned land at 8100 Postma Road. The process the plant would use, known as pyrolysis, heats tires in an enclosed chamber that converts the rubber to a vapor and a commodity known as carbon black. The vapor is then distilled into lesser grades of diesel. The other byproduct is the steel in the tires.

There was no organized community opposition to the plant proposal Wednesday, and the city said it received few public comments on its last environmental review. No appeals were filed to the city's environmental decision. Hearing Examiner Phil Lamb will make a recommendation to the Moxee City Council, which plans its own hearing Nov. 8.

The company, a joint venture between Organic Energy and an Australian company, expects to employ 60 people in round-the-clock shifts. Harkins told Lamb his firm will have no problem selling the byproducts. "We have agreements that will take every piece of material we produce," Harkins said.

Harkins said the new plant would put Moxee on the map. He told Lamb that Moxee was chosen because Organic Energy has an office in Tacoma, the city is centrally located, and the state has a good supply of waste tires to feed the plant.