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# OMB causes costly fights in rural areas

Sat., Feb. 25, 2017

**Re: Contested Development, Feb. 17**

Contested Development, Feb. 17

I am in complete agreement with the Star's position on the current provincial review of the future of the Ontario Municipal Board. The paper's articles concentrated on the adverse effect that OMB decisions have had on development in the city of Toronto, but similar overriding of municipal planning decisions has occurred in the rural areas of Ontario, specifically with respect to applications to establish or expand aggregate extraction pits or quarries.

When an application to amend zoning bylaws or official plans is denied by the municipality on sound land-use planning grounds and immediately appealed to the OMB — sometimes before a decision has been rendered by the municipality — the cost to the municipality and its residents to continue the fight using expert witnesses and legal counsel can run into hundreds of thousands of dollars. Small townships do not have the deep pockets that enable aggregate companies to pursue their profit-taking at the expense of water sources, the environment and the rural quality of life.

Councils are democratically elected to represent the best interests of the tax-paying electorate. An appointed body that can flout official plans, where the only recourse is an expensive, time-consuming court appeal, has no place in Canada.

**Alex Kanarek**, co-chair, Concerned Residents' Coalition, Rockwood, Ont.

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