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## A mighty victory

Elmira Independent Editorial

That sound you are hearing is the sound of the village of West Montrose celebrating.

That's because the community, which has been dedicated to fighting a below water-table application for a gravel pit just outside of the village, have actually managed to outlast the company that had applied for the pit — Capital Paving.

The group, which has spoken often and eloquently at numerous council meetings, and advocated outside of those same council meetings to anyone who would listen — politicians, local media and interested and concerned citizens — that while aggregate is definitely a need in this province, aggregate need not come from West Montrose.

There were many concerns about this gravel pit — the size, the scope, the potential impact on neighbouring wetlands, as well as the potential to turn the West Montrose Covered Bridge into a quaint tourist attraction that has to compete with the backup beepers of gravel trucks.

The BridgeKeepers, who spent thousands of hours working quietly and steadfastly away on their opposition to the pit, did not listen to naysayers, who said it couldn't be done. Typically, a gravel pit application cannot be stopped. Usually, the most someone can hope for, even if the application makes it all the way to the Ontario Municipal Board, is that the application can be modified, to minimize its potential impact.

That has been the story in Ontario through the past number of years, but if Capital Paving gravel pit application is any indication, that story may slowly be changing.

Capital Paving, of course, did the right thing in formally withdrawing its application. This came shortly after the township officially closed the application, noting there had been no formal activity on the file for more than two years. It seems that the stumbling block might have been the township's pursuit of the Cultural Heritage Landscape — something that had been in the works long before the Capital Paving application came forward, but was still a timely piece of local legislation that makes it much more difficult for any development to come in that would detract from the peace and tranquility of West Montrose.

In the end, this was a fight that was fought with determination, hope and a willingness to keep on going, in spite of the odds stacked against the community.

It's a good reminder that sometimes, the little guy can win, if he has science, reason and perseverance on his side.

editor@elmiraindependent.com

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