

VILLAGE OF CROTON ON HUDSON
DRAFT MINUTES OF WATER CONTROL COMMISSION
Wednesday, June 21, 2023

PRESENT:

Mr. Stuart Greenbaum, Chairman
Mr. Mark Goldfarb
Mr. Leo Wiegman
Mr. William Pfrang
Mr. Richard Wetherbee

ALSO PRESENT: Daniel O'Connor, Village Engineer
Len Simon, Village Board Liaison
Ann Gallelli, Village Board Liaison

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Greenbaum opened the meeting at 4:31 p.m.

2. NEW BUSINESS

a) Lewis, Thomas, Agent for Trillium Invasive Species Management, Inc, --Application for renewal of a Wetland Activity Permit for a multi-year herbicide application project to control phragmites australis and knotweed (invasive species) in Croton Landing Park (Sec. 67.19 Block 5 Lot 1), Senasqua Park (Sec. 78.12 Block 1 Lot 1), Duck Pond Park (Sec. 79.09 Blk. 10 Lot 1), Kaplan's Pond (Sec. 67.16 Blk. 2 Lot 22), and Gouveia Park (Sec. 67.14 Blk. 3 Lot 11).

PRESENT: Thomas Lewis, Agent for Trillium Invasive Species Management, Inc.

Chairman Greenbaum welcomed everyone to the meeting and then invited the applicant to come forward to speak about their wetland permit application.

Mr. Lewis began by providing a brief background of the ongoing work that Trillium Invasive Species Management, Inc. has been conducting at various Village owned properties. Mr. Lewis explained to the Board that several years ago in 2017, they started working on fighting invasive species in several Village-owned parks in which they targeted phragmites and knotweed. Mr. Lewis stated that as time has gone by, it was necessary to do spot applications and now they will perform more targeted treatments such as herbicide applications via cut stem treatment. Mr. Lewis stated that the treatments were outlined in the present wetland permit renewal application that is before the Board.

Mr. Lewis stated that they have had great success in the management of these invasive species and shared specific findings for several of the parks. The applicant stated that Gouveia Park had just a few stems of phragmites remaining, Duck Pond Park had approximately 2 years of not seeing any phragmites, Kaplan Pond Park had a few phragmite stems left and there was Knotweed present of which Mr. Lewis explained is a persistent plant. Mr. Lewis further explained that they will have to go back several times to fight it because Knotweed is very hard to eliminate and that it has been the most difficult species to combat. The applicant then stated that at Senasqua Park there was Knotweed present in the rip-wrap that they had been going through to do cut stem treatments. Mr. Lewis stated that at Croton Landing Park

Porcelain Berry was found as a new species they adopted and are treating. Mr. Lewis explained that when they first came into the park, it was taking over many of the trees. The applicant shared that they typically control the growth and spreading with cut stem treatments. Mr. Lewis stated they have been working there for several years and they have seen a significant decrease in all populations.

Furthermore, Mr. Lewis stated that at Croton Landing Park there are the 3 wetlands and at the 2 smaller wetland areas he believed there were no phragmites present and at the larger there was “a needle in a haystack” situation where they are still chasing some phragmites in that area. Mr. Lewis also noted that the Knotweed at Croton Landing Park is very persistent, specifically in the area in the embankment between the railroad, the right of way, and the park.

The Board asked the applicant if the Knotweed in that area grew faster because of the amount of water present. Mr. Lewis stated that the Knotweed was not exactly in the wetland area but rather uphill. Mr. Lewis explained that however, when there is a lot of water present it is harder to control growth (using the phragmites at the back of Kaplan’s Pond Park as an example). Mr. Lewis elaborated that when there is so much water in the system, the pesticides do not travel as well through the roots therefore making it harder to get a translocation through the whole area.

The Board noted that Black Rock Park was not included on the application and if that was an oversight. Mr. Lewis stated it may have been an oversight but believed that the treatment area in Black Rock Park was outside of the wetland buffer area. Mr. Lewis then referred to Village Engineer, Dan O’Connor for clarification. Mr. O’Connor stated that Mr. Lewis had submitted a letter with the application that stated the treatment area is 140’ft from the Croton River. Therefore, it is outside of the 120’ft wetland buffer area at the park and did not need to be included on the application. Mr. Lewis followed-up stating that the boundaries never change but the density of the plants do.

The Board stated that they were surprised there were no phragmites in the Croton River at Black Rock Park. Mr. Lewis responded stating that there are no phragmites there because they had never been introduced to the area noting that phragmites are often only introduced via soil.

Chairman Greenbaum then asked the Board if they had any further questions and/or comments for the applicant. Mr. Goldfarb made an observation that the phragmites treatments were very successful but seemed that for the Porcelain Berry and Knotweed there would be a more of a gradual outcome, asking the applicant if it would be more of a battle to treat these species.

Mr. Lewis explained that the phragmites had been more successful with treatments and Knotweed is a challenge to eliminate adding that Porcelain Berry is also difficult to combat as it has a very good seed production and therefore will require an ongoing maintenance plan. Mr. Lewis added that there are other species coming in to the park such as Yellow Flag Iris which they should keep their eye on.

Mr. O’Connor then mentioned a letter written by Carrie Andrews to the editor in the Gazette that talked about Croton Landing Park and how enjoyable the park now is. Ms. Andrews acknowledged the good efforts that were made to remove phragmites from the park and how new birds are now showing up.

Chairman Greenbaum shared that there was the old saying “better living through chemistry” and that this is one case in which the use of herbicides over the long run has been very beneficial.

Chairman Greenbaum stated they were ready to look at the draft resolution making a correction to fix spelling of Kaplan’s Pond. Mr. O’Connor noted that this is a 3-year permit renewal adding that Mr. Lewis would prefer to end in the month of October making the permit expiration 10/31/25.

MOTION: Mr. Wiegman made a motion to pass the Resolution and approve the renewal of the Wetland Activity Permit for a 3-year herbicide application project to control phragmites australis and knotweed (invasive species) in Croton Landing Park (Sec. 67.19 Block 5 Lot 1), Senasqua Park (Sec. 78.12 Block 1 Lot 1), Duck Pond Park (Sec. 79.09 Blk. 10 Lot 1), Kaplan's Pond (Sec. 67.16 Blk. 2 Lot 22), and Gouveia Park (Sec. 67.14 Blk. 3 Lot 11). Seconded by Mr. Wetherbee. All in favor 5-0. Roll Call: Mr. Wiegman, yes. Mr. Wetherbee, yes, Chairman Greenbaum, yes, Mr. Goldfarb, yes, Mr. Pfrang, yes.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Water Control Commission approved the minutes of the WCC meeting of March 30, 2023 as amended by a vote of 4-0 (Mr. Wetherbee, abstained).

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Water Control Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 4:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Stefanie DeMattia
Secretary to the Water Control Commission