

VILLAGE OF CROTON ON HUDSON
DRAFT MINUTES OF WATER CONTROL COMMISSION
Wednesday, September 23, 2023

PRESENT: Mr. Mark Goldfarb
 Mr. Leo Wiegman
 Mr. William Pfrang
 Mr. Richard Wetherbee

ABSENT: Mr. Stuart Greenbaum, Chairman

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

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Acting Chairman Goldfarb opened the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

2. NEW BUSINESS

Green, Douglas, Agent for Verizon New York, Inc, --Application for a Wetland Activity Permit for the installation of underground telecommunication cable (utilizing trenchless burial) on Village Property known as Lounsbury Road extension (paper street, no Tax Map number) from the intersection of Lounsbury Road and Fox Road to the dead-end of Glengary Lane which is adjacent to Village-owned Kaplan's Pond (Tax Map #67.16-2-22.1) & Bessemer Wetland (Tax Map #67.16-2-21)

PRESENT: Sprague, John-via Zoom, *Agent for Verizon New York, Inc*

Acting Chairman Goldfarb introduced the application submitted by Douglas Green, agent for Verizon New York, Inc., for a Wetland Activity Permit. The proposed project involved the installation of underground telecommunications cable using trenchless technology on Village-owned property. The proposed route would begin at the intersection of Lounsbury Road and Fox Road and extend to the dead-end of Glengary Lane, crossing Lounsbury Road extension (a paper street). This area runs adjacent to Kaplan's Pond and the Bessemer Wetland. John Sprague, engineer and representative for Verizon New York Inc. presented the details of the application via Zoom.

A map was shared displaying the cable's proposed path through the wooded area between the roads and wetlands. The Village Engineer stated that the proposed project qualified as a Type II action under SEQR regulations explaining that Type II classification exempts the project from environmental and coastal assessment requirements because the method of installation would cause minimal soil disruption. It was emphasized that the vibratory plow to be used was not a traditional excavation device; as it displaces soil without creating large trenches, minimizing environmental impact.

Mr. Sprague provided further details about the project. Upon inspection, Verizon found three existing cables in the area: two inactive and one still in use. Rather than removing and replacing the full system, Verizon opted to retire the inactive cables and replace the active line with a smaller, modern cable. The installation would utilize a Ditch Witch machine along most of the route, but in sensitive areas near the culvert and stream crossings, the crew would hand-dig to prevent sediment from entering the water. The project would also include the removal of four existing utility poles, one of which was broken. The only pole that would remain is the riser pole located on Glengary. The new line would be installed using C-clips along the trail's edge, staying off commonly traveled paths and ensuring minimal disturbance to the natural environment.

During discussion, Mr. Weigman raised concerns about how the poles would be removed along the narrow, unpaved trail with water on one side. Mr. Sprague explained that a track machine specifically designed for pole removal in tight areas would be used. Mr. Wetherbee asked about potential "daylighting" of the cable near water bodies where soil might be exposed during burial. Mr. Sprague clarified that standard practice near water involves hand-digging, which prevents runoff or spoil from entering the stream. He also noted that although the blade on the plow could dig as deep as 12 inches, the expected depth for this installation would be 4 to 6 inches, depending on underground conditions. Once installed, the cable would leave no visible surface markers, but it would be traceable for future access or emergency location.

The Commission discussed whether the motivation behind the project was aesthetic or economic. Mr. Sprague responded that the decision to bury the cable stemmed largely from cost and labor concerns. Replacing four poles and running overhead lines would be more labor-intensive and expensive. Mr. Pfrang asked if damage from nearby trees had been a contributing factor. Mr. Sprague stated he was not involved in the earlier stages of the project but saw no signs of tree-related damage during his walk-through. Mr. O'Connor also noted that the Village's water main in the vicinity would not interfere with the project, as confirmed by the Village Water Foreman during a prior site visit. The Board noted the importance of marking buried lines, and Mr. Sprague explained that Verizon uses bright orange cable covers and that the buried lines are low-voltage and non-hazardous.

The total project timeline was expected to be short: one to two days for the initial cable installation and another one to two days for removing the old cables and poles. It was stated that Verizon would coordinate the work schedule once the permit was issued. It was further noted that there were only three directly abutting property owners.

After discussion and review of the resolution, the Water Control Commission agreed they felt comfortable with voting on the Wetland Activity Permit.

MOTION: Acting Chairman Goldfarb made a motion to approve the Wetland Activity Permit for the installation of underground telecommunication cable (utilizing trenchless burial) on Village Property known as Lounsbury Road extension from the intersection of Lounsbury Road and Fox Road to the dead-end of Glengary Lane, adjacent to Village-owned Kaplan's Pond. Seconded by Mr. Wetherbee. The motion was carried unanimously with a 4-0 vote. Roll call votes were as follows: Mr. Goldfarb – yes, Mr. Wiegman – yes, Mr. Wetherbee – yes, and Mr. Pfrang – yes (Chairman Greenbaum, absent).

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Goldfarb made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2023 meeting as amended. Seconded by Mr. Wetherbee. The motion was carried by a vote of 4-0. Roll Call. Mr. Goldfarb – yes, Mr. Wiegman – yes, Mr. Wetherbee – yes, and Mr. Pfrang – yes. (Chairman Greenbaum, absent).

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Water Control Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 4:59pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Stefanie Correale
Secretary to the Water Control Commission