



LAKE • GEORGE
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December 23, 2009

Mr. Keith Hanchett, Chairman
Town of Lake George Planning Board
Old Post Road
Lake George, NY 12845

Re: Blue Lagoon Resort (225.12-1-15)
Site Plan Review 41-2009

Dear Mr. Hanchett:

The above referenced site plan review application was personally reviewed in my capacity as a licensed professional engineer and the Lake George Waterkeeper. Although I do not have any objections to the proposed accessory structure, there are concerns about the negative impacts from the new stormwater management system that does not appear to be constructed according to the approved plans. It has been stated the stormwater management system is still under construction, but this statement does not make sense. If this is the case, then the applicant should provide a status of the system, what remains to be completed, and how it has been stabilized for the winter months. I would like to offer the following comments and concerns to the Board for its consideration:

ADVERSE IMPACTS TO THE ENVIRONMENT

The Blue Lagoon Resort site plan for the parking lot and stormwater management system was approved by the Town of Lake George Planning Board on June 9, 2009. The stormwater management plan consisted of a wet pond with approximately 2.4 feet of freeboard between the permanent pond elevation and the emergency spillway. The discharge for the pond was a 6" pipe located approximately 10" above the permanent pool elevation. However, the wet pond currently has been altered with a standpipe in the middle of the pond that raises the permanent pool elevation. Currently the permanent pool elevation (which is frozen) is approximately 6" below the emergency spillway elevation.

- 1. The current pond is not constructed as per the approved plans.** Measures to protect water quality must be constructed as per the approved plans to prevent environmental impacts. The Lake George Waterkeeper maintains our opinion that wet ponds, which cannot infiltrate stormwater, do not meet the post-construction volume reduction requirements of the Town of Lake George Code despite the signoff by the Town Engineer. The failure to construct the system according to the approved plans further increases negative impacts to the environment.



2. The stormwater management facility will be greatly impacted by cold climate conditions resulting in negative impacts to water quality. Wet ponds are significantly impacted by cold climate conditions through freezing of the permanent pool elevation, resulting in ice accumulation that reduces the storage volume available. Storage volume is reduced to a point where no storage is available and therefore, there is no stormwater management. In northern climates, this can result in no stormwater management for periods of 4-5 months. The wet pond at the Blue Lagoon Resort has already developed ice within 6" of the emergency spillway elevation. Please refer to the attached photograph. In addition, please refer to a group of photographs demonstrating the volume reduction from ice buildup over the winter of a wet pond in the Town of Hague.

The Lake George Waterkeeper recommends the Town of Lake George Planning Board condition the site plan with a requirement for further review of the stormwater management facility that will also manage stormwater runoff from the accessory structure, specifically to require a certification of construction and evaluate increasing the level of stormwater treatment and management. This will improve water quality from the impervious surfaces located adjacent to a tributary in close proximity to Lake George. Any revisions to a major stormwater management plan should be required to resubmit plans to the Planning Board.

We look forward to continuing to work with the Town of Lake George Planning Board to defend the natural resources of Lake George and its watershed. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Christopher Navitsky, P.E.
Lake George Waterkeeper

cc: Michael White - Lake George Park Commission
Tom Wessling – Blue Lagoon Resort



Photograph of wet pond constructed at the Blue Lagoon Resort. Note the standpipe on the left side of the pond and the ice elevation which reduces the ability for stormwater management.



Photograph of wet pond - Town of Hague subdivision taken on January 30, 2008. Note the freeboard height of the standpipe above the ice elevation.



Photograph of same wet pond – Town of Hague subdivision taken on March 20, 2008. Note that there is no freeboard on the standpipe above the ice resulting in direct discharge of runoff without management or treatment.



Photograph of same wet pond taken on March 11, 2009 during rain event. Note the lack of freeboard on standpipe resulting in direct discharge of runoff during rain event show in adjacent photograph.