

Stormwater Pond Inspection July 30, 2020 - 9:30 AM

On 7.30.20, Board members Ron Oronzio and Jim Carroll met with Greg Blackham, Aquatic Specialist with Solitude Lake Management, to review Solitude's assessment of the health of the Reserve at Pilottown stormwater pond.

Greg was briefed regarding periodic inhouse inspections made by the board, particularly after significant rain events. He said our pond is one of the shallowest in the area because it was not designed to hold large amounts of water runoff, and he reported the pond was in very good shape. He cited the growth of macroalgae (Charo) at the pond's bottom which is very beneficial for water clarity and wildlife.

We discussed sediment in the inflow pipes, the buffer areas, invasive and aquatic plants.

As he said in the past, Greg said ideally it would be best to have a wider buffer around the pond. As we walked around the pond, some areas of the top berm were far wider than the buffer system. Greg said that as heavy mowers continually get close to the edge of the buffer atop of the berm, they can eventually cause damage to the sidewalls of the pond. A discussion took place about the possibility of widening the buffer area approximately 4 ft wider than it currently is on the sides and rear of the pond. We also discussed his spring recommendation to reseed parts of the berm top. It was believed that if the buffer was widened some of the top might not need reseeding.

Regarding phragmite invasion and control, Greg reported he routinely removes any phragmite evidence around the pond or buffer area when it is observed. He also treats the phragmite at the back side of the outflow area during the fall. He said this process holds the phragmite at bay but it does not eradicate them. Phragmite roots can travel more than sixty (60) feet per plant.

As far as the three inflow pipes, Greg again believed Harry Caswell would be the likely contractor to jet out the pipes. He believed they could do it without dewatering the pond or killing off wildlife. He opined it should be done within the next one to five years. Greg believed the pond did not need any attention at this time such as excavation for sediment removal purposes.

Asked to rate the pond in terms of a grade, Greg opined the pond was a 'B'. Asked what would be needed to make the pond an 'A' grade, Greg said our pond being shallow prohibits its depth from entertaining more wildlife and some useful plants. Widening the buffer area would elevate its grade and keep the pond in very good shape for a long time.

The assessment lasted for nearly one hour. Greg Blackham was thanked for his assistance.

Jim Carroll