

ILLINOIS POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD  
June 26, 1975

VILLAGE OF CERRO GORDO )  
 )  
 ) Petitioner, )  
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 )  
 ) v. ) PCB 75-183  
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 ) ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, )  
 ) Respondent. )

INTERIM OPINION AND ORDER OF THE BOARD (by Mr. Dumelle):

Petition for Variance from Rules 203(c), 402 and 404(f) with regard to phosphorus was filed with the Board on April 30, 1975. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Recommendation was filed on June 3, 1975. No public hearing was held.

The Village of Cerro Gordo, population 1,368, located in Piatt County, has no public sanitary sewer system or treatment plant. Present sewage disposal is to individual septic tanks and tile fields, some of which are connected to Village storm sewers.

The Agency has made a grant offer totalling \$1,541,900 to Cerro Gordo for a combination project to install both sewers and a treatment plant. The grant offer, made April 1, 1975, requires a variance from the phosphorus standard before it can be executed. The standard is contained in Rule 203(c) and limits phosphorus to a total value of 0.05 mg/l in any stream at the point where it enters any reservoir or lake.

Cerro Gordo's proposed three cell aerated lagoon facility would be located northwest of the Village. It would discharge to an unnamed creek which in turn flows into the Sangamon River. The Sangamon River averages 0.237 mg/l phosphorus at a bridge 3.1 miles south of Cisco (Agency letter of April 16, 1975 attached to Petition). Lake Decatur water averages 0.127 mg/l phosphorus according to the same letter. The standard set by Rule 203(c) is 0.05 mg/l. No map is included and thus we do not know if the bridge sampling site is above or below Cerro Gordo.

The Petitioner asserts that a phosphorus removal system (to 1.0 mg/l) would cost the annual equivalent of \$34,444. This is projected to raise the monthly user charge from \$9.90 to \$14.87 for an increase of \$4.97 or \$59.16 per year. The statement is made that "it is almost certain... the proposed improvement program would be abandoned for economic reasons: if phosphorus removal were required. No substantiation is given for this statement.

An alternate of land irrigation is costed out at an annual equivalent cost of \$36,342 and is also said to be "prohibitive". But no comparative costs are given for the recommended lagoon facility and thus no comparison can be made by the Board.

The State Water Survey is quoted as estimating a daily input of total phosphorus via the Sangamon River as 3,380 lbs/ day compared to Cerro Gordo's estimated discharge of 6.7 lbs/ day. A statement is given that phosphorus removal at Cerro Gordo would have "an insignificant effect on the water quality of...Lake Decatur". However, nowhere in this record is any statement made as to the present effects, if any, of phosphorus upon Lake Decatur. We do not know if algae blooms now occur and whether blue-green algae add taste and odors to the public water supplies using Lake Decatur.

Thus the existing record is simply inadequate upon which to grant this variance. We are told that phosphorus removal is not needed but we are not told the present condition of Lake Decatur as regards algae blooms. We are told that phosphorus treatment is inordinately expensive but no comparative costs are given to back up this assertion.

We are mindful of the need for speedy action in this matter if Cerro Gordo is to finally get a public sewer collection system.

We remand this case to the parties to provide by July 10, the information which is lacking as more fully set out in the Order below. It is the Board's intention to decide this cause on July 10 or July 11, 1975 if timely submission of adequate information is made by the parties.

#### ORDER

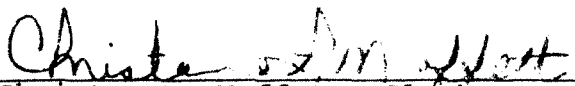
The parties are ordered to provide, in any suitable form, by July 10, 1975 the information as delineated below:

1. Comparative costs for the recommended lagoon treatment alternative exclusive of the sewage collection system costs. These costs to be computed in the same manner as those listed in the Petition.

2. The extent, if any, of algae blooms on Lake Decatur and any problems of taste and odors in water supplies caused by these blooms.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

I, Christan L. Moffett, Clerk of the Illinois Pollution Control Board, hereby certify the above Opinion and Order were adopted on the 26<sup>th</sup> of June, 1975 by a vote of 4-0.

  
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Christan L. Moffett, Clerk  
Illinois Pollution Control Board