

GLENCOE NEWS

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2013 in review: Water plant will command attention in 2014



Village of Glencoe Water Plant Superintendent Tom Weathers at the Lake Michigan shoreside Glencoe (Beach) Water Filtration and Pumping Station. Officials are considering whether to replace the ageing plant. | File

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One of the bigger stories that emerged at the end of 2013 is likely to become an even larger issue in 2014 as Glencoe looks to deal with its aging water filtration plant.

The plant was constructed in 1928 and village officials believe it is time to start planning for a new chapter.

In October, the Village Board received a presentation from staff about building a new plant to the north of the existing location on the Glencoe beach. Since then, village personnel under the direction of Board President Larry Levin have continued to look at all alternatives for the future of the village water supply. According to a November letter Levin sent to residents, renovating the existing facility or building a new plant could emerge as possibilities to produce enough water for the future.

Many tentacles have emerged, complicating the matter.

First, the village can't move forward on a unilateral basis because there is beachfront property near the plant that was donated to the village in 1967 with covenants that the property may only be used for recreation and boating, and that the views of the home may not be impaired.

The owners of the property – Jay and Tamara Dempsey – have retained legal counsel to protect their interests. There has been some heated, public rhetoric between Levin and the Dempseys, and there may be many legal hoops to jump through before any decisions can be finalized.

That comes into play if the village opts to build on property owned by the Glencoe Park District, and there has been talk of a land swap between the two entities. The Park District has taken a wait-and-see attitude until the village comes forward with a plan.

Yet another factor is the Northwest Water Commission, which supplies water to many suburbs. That organization may be looking at some type of collaboration with Glencoe.

There have been initial conversations among representatives of all three governmental bodies, but Levin emphasizes no decisions have been made.

Meanwhile, Glencoe Village Manager Phil Kiraly has been on the job for less than a month, so he is still acclimating himself into the issue.

Levin predicts a preliminary staff analysis could be delivered to the board by early 2014.