

**On Wednesday, May 5 Assemblyman Jeffrey Klein was interviewed on *BronxTalk AM* by host Gary Axelbank. Their discussion included dialogue about the water filtration project. Here's a transcript of that segment:**

**Gary Axelbank:** This other obvious issue that's on our table is about the water filtration project. The Irish Echo had a story about people in Woodlawn opposing the plant in the Bronx, which would make up to five Bronx communities who have weighed in against it: Norwood, Van Cortlandt Village, Bedford Park, Kingsbridge Heights, and now Woodlawn. I have editorialized enough about it. It seems to me that Bronx elected officials are going against the wishes of their own constituents in supporting this. What is your position on this at this particular point?

**Jeffrey Klein:** My position is the same as it was before. There needs to be a lot of questions answered. It's incumbent upon DEP to sell this to the community. I represent areas in Van Cortlandt Village and Bedford Park. I want to have DEP explain the project to my constituents who are going to have be impacted and I want them to decide.

**GA:** It's now May 5th. When would that happen?

**JK:** We're trying to set these up over the next couple of weeks.

**GA:** The students from the Bronx H.S. of Science were here yesterday. They were wholly dissatisfied with the DEP commissioner's visit to that school. The Riverdale Press had said that you were talking about building a running track around the reservoir. The DEP commissioner talked about air conditioning in that building. Their attitude was, "No deals. We really think that Eastview is the best site." If the DEP commissioner is going to come and meet with people, he'd better do it pretty soon.

**JK:** I'm not a member of DEP staff. I hope that the commissioner is doing this because it's incumbent upon him to sell this project or at least get some criticism and see if there are ways that we can minimize the impact on the community. That's what has to be done. This is not a done deal. That's the purpose of having an environmental impact statement, to figure out what the burden is on the surrounding community, whether or not this is the cheapest site, whether or not this is the most viable site.

**GA:** At what point do you definitively weigh in or other elected officials definitively weigh in, especially if it's going to mean getting the DEP or the city to change its mind? One would think you and others would want to weigh in pretty soon.

**JK:** I don't think it is pretty soon because the legislature is going to have a say. The speaker has to sign off on the memorandum of understanding before anything moves ahead even if, indeed, the final environmental impact statement chooses the Van Cortlandt site. There's a lot that has to go on there. Thank God the legislature is going to have the final say here.

**GA:** What would you recommend that community members do in those five communities to help convince you or some of your colleagues?

**JK:** If they do build this filtration plant at the Van Cortlandt site, I'd like to see a way that they bypass Jerome Park. I'm not sure if this can be done. These are the types of things that they have to show us definitively. I'm not an engineer, but hopefully there is a way that they can bypass Jerome Park altogether. It doesn't make sense, logistically, that you actually build something in Van Cortlandt and still need to pipe water back and forth from Jerome Park. The purpose of building in Van Cortlandt in the first place was a direct line for the Croton system. Let's see if that's feasible.

**GA:** Have you been up to see that site in Eastview?

**JK:** No.

**GA:** It's a pretty amazing thing when you see it. There's nothing there.

**JK:** I'm not denying that there is or there isn't. My understanding is that it's an industrial site and not a residential site, which is a good thing. About a month ago, I went out with DEP and they showed me what was going to be a burden on the surrounding community, meaning the Jerome Park community. They showed me the exact spot where the hole is going to be dug across from Bronx H.S. of Science. They explained all the logistics. They took me around to different gate houses that were going to be upgraded and rehabilitated.

**GA:** Your thoughts on what you saw?

**JK:** It's going to be a burden on the community, temporary, but still a burden. I'm not a construction person either, but when you dig a 25-foot hole it's going to take a while to do and there will be some burden on the surrounding community. No doubt about it.

**GA:** Thank you for your time this morning, and we'll continue the dialogue on all the issues facing the people in the Bronx.

**JK:** Okay.