The purpose of this research is to study community participation in environmental pollution control activities in SendangMulyo village (Kelurahan Tembalangsubdistrict(Kecamatan), Semarang city. The reason for selecting this location is due to the fact that KelurahanSendangMulyo is located within Babon river basin area (middle stream of the river) and produces a great amount of domestic waste. The methodology applied was qualitative research with Critical Theory paradigm through which the researcher critizing as well as proposing a new transformation of community participation related to their social and economic structure as well their culture.

The result of the study shows that the local community has shown their participation in the form of playing the role of communicators in disseminating information and environmental awareness message, observing environmental problems, participating in the decision making process, as well as implementing and controlling government policy. The level of participation is different according to the local situation (social, economic and culture). Economic aspect has little influence on the participation. However social and culture aspect have significant influence upon community participation. Despite the geographical condition of a “Urban area”, social interaction tends to be a “gemenschaft” relationship in which interpersonal, emotional, and togetherness dominate. This pattern of relationship contributes to the positive value of community participation in pollution control.

It is expected that through a partnership approach, community participation in environmental management can be strengthened. It is future recommended that the government of the City of Semarang is to: 1) create local communicator, 2) implement a partnership approach in managing community based domestic wastewater treatment, 3) formulate government policy concerning with domestic waste and 4) set up an environmental management section within the exciting village organizational structure.

Key Words: public participation, The flow of the river babon, environmental sustainability.