

BOSTON GROUNDWATER TRUST (BGwT)
BOARD MEETING
January 16th, 2020

The Board of Trustees of the Boston Groundwater Trust met in the Heritage Room at the Lenox Hotel located at 710 Boylston Street, Boston, MA. The Executive Director electronically distributed the meeting notice and agenda to the City Clerk at Boston City Hall in accordance with the provisions of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Open Meeting Law. Mr. Mitchell, co-chair, called the meeting to order at 3:02 pm. The following trustees were present:

Mr. Tim Mitchell, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay
Ms. Amelia Croteau, City of Boston, Conservation Commission
Ms. Janine Commerford, Greater Boston Real Estate Board
Ms. Angie Liou, Asian Community Development Corporation
Mr. Peter Shilland, Ellis Neighborhood Association
Mr. Greg Galer, Boston Preservation Alliance
Ms. Leah Camhi, Fenway Community Development Corporation
Mr. Robert Whitney, Beacon Hill Civic Association

Also present:

Mr. Christian Simonelli, Executive Director; Mr. Rory Cuddyer, Chief of Staff, City of Boston, Office of Environment, Energy, & Open Space; Mr. Patrick Lyons, Director of Constituent Services for Representative Aaron Michlewitz

1. Adoption of November 12th, 2019 Board Meeting Minutes

Board Meeting minutes were previously emailed to Board members for review. Discussion followed. Mr. Galer, Trustee, moved to adopt the minutes. Ms. Liou, Trustee, seconded the motion.

Voted: To accept the Board Meeting minutes of the November 12th, 2019 meeting.

2. Financial Report and Election of New Treasurer

Mr. Simonelli noted that board member and Treasurer Mr. John Hemenway has stepped down from the Trust. The Beacon Hill Civic Association has nominated Mr. Robert Whitney as their new representative on the Board. Mr. Whitney has been appointed to the Trust by the Mayor and has been sworn in by the City Clerk. Mr. Whitney has indicated his willingness to serve as Treasurer of the Boston Groundwater Trust. Discussion followed.

Mr. Galer, Trustee, moved to elect Mr. Whitney as Treasurer. Ms. Commerford, Trustee, seconded the motion.

Voted: To elect Mr. Whitney as Treasurer of the Boston Groundwater Trust.

Mr. Simonelli reviewed the Trust's financial reports. Discussion followed.

3. Distribution and Review of Annual Report

Mr. Simonelli reviewed the annual report prepared by Raphael & Raphael. He noted that new presentation requirements are in effect for the current year and that he reviewed those with Raphael & Raphael. Discussion followed.

4. Annual Personnel Review Process

Mr. Mitchell, co-chair, reviewed a 16 December 2019 letter from the BGwT's CPA firm, Raphael & Raphael, which analyzes the BGwT's 2019 Executive Director compensation agreement, along with a 15 May 2019 promissory note, and described Raphael & Raphael's recommendation to align the Executive Director's annual personnel review and compensation evaluation to coincide with the Board's fiscal year (July 1 through June 30), and not with the calendar year. Discussion followed.

5. Discussion of the presentation made to the Board in November on Wood Piles and Sea Level Rise

The Board reviewed and discussed the presentation on wood piles and sea level rise. Mr. Mitchell, co-chair, expressed concerns about bacterial decay and its potential effect on existing buildings. Discussion followed. Mr. Simonelli conveyed comments from members of the BGwT Technical Advisory Committee to the Trustees. Discussion followed. The Board instructed Mr. Simonelli to explore potential areas of research such as identifying the types of bacteria found in the various filled areas of the city. Discussion followed.

6. Executive Director presentation on proposed changes to Article 32 Groundwater Conservation Overlay District (GCOD) Zoning

Mr. Simonelli reviewed proposed revisions to Article 32 (GCOD) of the City of Boston's zoning code. The proposed revisions focused on:

1. Updating the zoning code language to be consistent with Boston Water & Sewer Commission requirements for groundwater recharge.
2. Updating the "no-harm" elevation threshold based on foundation information that the Trust has compiled.
3. Updating the areas of coverage to reflect updated stratigraphic, groundwater, and building foundation information.

Discussion followed. Refer to the attached Article 32 Zoning Modification Proposal for additional details.

Mr. Galer, Trustee, moved to adopt Proposed Change #1 and Proposed Change #2 in their entirety, and Proposed Change #3 as amended. Proposed Change #3 originally removed from GCOD coverage certain upland areas on original land, and certain wharf areas abutting Boston Harbor. Ms. Liou, Trustee, seconded the motion.

Voted: To adopt the Article 32 proposed revisions as amended: No areas to be removed from GCOD coverage; all areas currently subject to GCOD requirements would continue to be covered by the GCOD.

7. Executive Director's Report

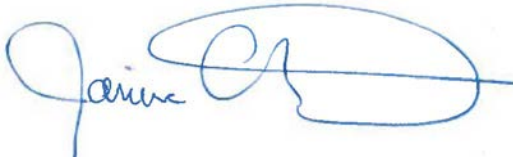
BGwT Executive Director Mr. Christian Simonelli distributed his report. Discussion followed. Refer to the attached *Executive Director's Report January 16th, 2020* for a complete list of activities.

The meeting adjourned at 4:41 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: March 19th, 2020 @ 4:00 pm, at the Lenox Hotel.

Notes submitted by Christian Simonelli, BGwT Executive Director, on 1/27/2020.

Approved 5 February 2020

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. Commerford". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

J. Commerford, Secretary

Boston Groundwater Trust (BGwT): Article 32 Zoning Modification Proposal

Purpose of Proposed Changes

- Current zoning drafted in 2005, adopted in 2006, and last amended in 2007
- Since then BGwT has compiled more information on water levels and wood pile cutoff elevations
- Add areas with wood pile supported structures, currently not in the GCOD, into the GCOD

Propose the following

Proposed Change #1: Update 1" Capture Requirements

- Update language in *SECTION 32-6 Standards* to bring zoning up to speed with BWSC 1" capture requirements
 - Current zoning requires that recharge must be designed to capture 1" over the area of the building
 - BWSC requires that recharge must be designed to capture 1" over the entire lot
 - 2012 EPA consent decree requires all applicants city-wide to capture 1" over the entire lot

Proposed Change #2: Raise No Harm Threshold

- Update language in *SECTION 32-4 Applicability* to raise no harm threshold from El. 7' BCB to El. 8' BCB
 - Based on existing groundwater levels and pile cut off information
 - Not all buildings constructed at the same time with the same pile cut off elevations
 - Variability in some areas of the City, throughout the same block

Proposed Change #3: Update Map and Coverage Areas

- Remove no harm only overlay areas and make them just overlay areas
- Include Audubon Circle area, Central Waterfront, South End west of Mass. Ave. and sections of East Boston
 - These areas not initially included because BGwT had little groundwater and foundation information
- ~~Remove upland areas on original land~~
 - ~~Mid-Town Cultural district, small areas east of Charles Street, and Wharfs along Commercial Street~~
 - ~~Original land and overwater~~

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

January 16th, 2020

1. **Readings** – Hired a new field engineer and started our first set of readings of 2020.
2. **Meetings/Presentations** –
 - a. Wrote comment letters for the Fenway 1252-1270 Boylston Street (11/14/19) and 282-308 Breman Street (11/20/19) projects.
 - b. Attended Citizens Advisory Committee meeting for the Back Bay/South End Gateway project. (11/19/19)
 - c. Attended webinar on Utility Action for Climate Resilience in Cities. (12/3/19)
 - d. Met with City Councilor Lydia Edwards to review groundwater levels in East Boston. (12/09/19)
 - e. Attended scoping session (12/6/19) and wrote a comment letter (12/11/19) for the Boston Medical Center Institutional Master Plan.
 - f. Attended the Mayors State of the City at Symphony Hall. (1/7/20)
 - g. Met with members of the Boston Water & Sewer Commission (BWSC) to review locations of low groundwater levels throughout our monitoring area. (1/10/20)
 - h. Spoke & met with residents, engineers, & developers throughout the GCOD to discuss ZBA procedures and advised them on what they need to provide us to meet the zoning.
3. **BluCloud** – Our automated readings project has hit a bit of a technical snag. A new Board has been designed and currently being tested in a controlled environment. I met with Blu Cloud and received an update on when a unit will be deployed into the field for testing and also discussed the possibility of developing an app for field readers. (12/17/19)
4. **LightWell** - I met with Michelle Laboy from team LightWell to review 2020 Project LightWell relaunch. (12/13/19)
5. **MBTA** - Approximately 45.1 gpm is being injected into recharge wells in the South End Ellis Neighborhood area along Appleton, Berkeley, Saint Charles, Cazenove, and Clarendon Streets. In addition to our manual monitoring we have 4 wells in the area with dataloggers recording a water level every 60 min.
 - a. The MBTA has committed to continue funding the current recharge well solution for the next 10 years and have assured me that funding will be provided beyond the 10 years if this current solution is still in place.
 - b. In an effort to conserve water and limit operational costs, flow rates are slowly being reduced.
 - c. MBTA consultant exploring the feasibility of installing a jet grout barrier wall as discussed at the April, 2019 MBTA technical advisory committee meeting.
6. **DCR** – Dataloggers are installed in 3 wells to monitor the levels along the Storrow Drive tunnel pump station groundwater recharge system and assure that they remain in their usual range. The DCR and their consultants continue to work with the DOT on traffic studies in support of a redesign effort for the underpass. Recharge will be part of that redesign and is targeted for upgrade. Potential for a DCR and DOT partnership for repairs. DOT would do construction and then give back to DCR upon completion.
7. **BWSC** – An update on the following:
 - a. In the South End, additional CCTV inspections have shown new areas of infiltration in sewers, manholes, and laterals. They have submitted these findings to their internal engineering design team and to include the repairs in their 2019-2021 Capital Improvement Program (CIP).
 - b. In the North End, at the corner of Richmond and Commercial Streets, repairs were made to manholes but so far no bump in water levels. Additional CCTV inspections in Richmond & Commercial Streets & Columbus Park are planned.
 - c. In the Stuart Street area of the Back Bay, between Berkeley and Dartmouth Streets, sewers and manholes indicated areas of infiltration. Repairs were made in mid-June but no change has been observed in the groundwater levels. BWSC to follow-up with additional CCTV inspections. In addition, they will coordinate with building owners in the area to conduct on-site inspections.

- d. In the Fenway, at Boylston and Kilmarnock Streets, infiltration was observed. BWSC to has filed change work order to current construction contract to push up the repair and have it included in their 2019-2021 CIP.
8. **MWRA** – CCTV inspections indicated infiltration at the intersection of Breman and Porter streets in East Boston. MWRA is coordinating with BWSC on the next steps to divert flow and inspect the entire regulating structure at this intersection.