

BOSTON GROUNDWATER TRUST  
TRUSTEE MEETING  
March 22, 2006  
The Lenox Hotel – Patriot Room

The meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Boston Groundwater Trust was called order at 4:06pm in the Patriot Room at The Lenox Hotel. The meeting notice was posted at City Hall in accordance with provision of the Commonwealth's Open Meeting Law.

Trustees in attendance, comprising a quorum, were:

Mr. Tim Mitchell, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay  
Mr. Gary Saunders, Boston Back Bay Association  
Mr. Peter Sherin, Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce  
Mr. Galen Gilbert, Fenway Community Development Corp.  
Mr. Jim Hunt, City of Boston  
Ms. Nancy Grillk, Mayor's office  
Ms. Nikko Mendoza, Mayor's office  
Mr. Michael Nairne, Ellis Neighborhood Association

Also present were:

Elliott Laffer, BGwT Executive Director; Christian Simonelli, BGwT Technical Coordinator; James Lambrechts, BGwT Technical Committee; Tammy Shoham, MIT

**1. Adoption of the minutes of the February 15, 2006 Meeting**

Minutes were distributed to board members for review.

Trustee Sherin moved to adopt the minutes. Trustee Grillk seconded the motion.

**Voted:** Motion passed.

**2. Finance Report**

Trustee Sherin reviewed the BGwT *Financial Report and reconciliation detail*. Discussion followed.

**3. Executive Director's Report**

BGwT Executive Director Mr. Elliott Laffer distributed his report and reviewed his activities since the last meeting. Discussion followed. Refer to the attached *Executive Director's Report: March 22, 2006*, for a complete list of all activities. Discussion followed.

**4. Technical Coordinator's Report**

BGwT Technical Coordinator Mr. Christian Simonelli presented his activities of the past month. Discussion followed. Refer to the attached *Technical Coordinator's Well Monitoring & Installation Report BGwT Meeting: March 22, 2006* for a complete list of what was distributed and presented.

**5. Long Term Funding Committee**

Mr. Laffer reported on the meeting of the committee. Discussion followed.

Trustee Hunt expressed interest in evaluating models used for funding from various outside entities. Discussion followed.

The board recommended that the committee look into models used for funding from various outside entities.

**6. Foundation Repair Assistance Committee**

Mr. Laffer reported on the meeting of the committee. Discussion followed.

Trustee Gilbert emphasized his desire to have the committee develop a plan to help save buildings.

Trustee Hunt noted that the BGwT needs to research and present all options that are available to the public. He also noted that the BWSC should be consulted on these issues.

**7. Reporting Groundwater Pumping**

Trustee Gilbert moved that the BGwT shall request all major underground infrastructure owners and agencies to calculate and publish the quantity of groundwater they are pumping. The Executive Director shall suggest a uniform format and method for such reporting. Trustee Mitchell seconded. Discussion followed.

Trustee Gilbert also noted that he would like the BGwT to publish the data on their website.

Trustee Hunt moved to amend the motion so that the BGwT, in conjunction with their participation in the City-State Groundwater Working Group, request whatever pumping data exists from the agencies that participate in the working group. Discussion followed. This amendment was not accepted by the maker of the original motion. Trustee Hunt withdrew his amendment after discussion.

**Voted:** Motion passed.

Trustee Nairne moved to adjourn the meeting, Trustee Gilbert seconded the motion.

**Voted:** To adjourn the meeting.

**The meeting adjourned at 5:59 p.m.**

**NEXT MEETING: Thursday April 27, 2006 @ 4:00pm in the Lenox Hotel.**

**Notes submitted by Christian Simonelli, BGwT Technical Coordinator, on 03/23/06.**

Respectfully submitted

  
Galen Gilbert, Secretary

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

March 22, 2006

1. **City/State Groundwater Working Group** – The Working Group will meet again on April 13. Information continues to be exchanged between meetings.
2. **Zoning** – The BRA is working with the Zoning Board of Appeals to discuss the new zoning requirements. The first projects to be affected by the zoning are working toward the board, including one non-Article 80 substantial renovation (41 Fairfield St), one Article 80 Small Project Review (79 Chandler St), and one Article 80 Large Project Review (285 Columbus Ave). It will be important that these and other early projects establish strong precedents for compliance. The early words from the proponents are encouraging.
3. **BWSC** – They have completed the repair work on St. James Avenue, but our February readings were too soon to show improvement nearby. We'll be looking closely at the next group of readings. We will be looking as well for improvements from the work behind Hemenway St; almost all wells in the area had readings that were modestly higher than December but still quite low.
4. **DCR** – DCR checked into flow readings they had provided to the Working Group for the pumps at the Storrow Drive underpass. These had indicated a drastic reduction in the amount of water pumped starting in August 2004. It appears that this was not what was really happening. An electrical problem caused the pumps to operate very inefficiently for an extended period of time. The readings had been indirect, based on pump operation and a calculated flow. After the problem was fixed, the pumps operated properly, and flow measurement was again accurate. I appreciate the cooperation of DCR in getting this information for us. The next public meetings on the reconstruction of the underpass will take place on March 27 and 29. I'll continue to attend these to make sure that groundwater issues remain high on the list of problems being addressed.
5. **MBTA** – The T has revealed a new portal location for the new Silver Line Phase III tunnel. They presented it to the Trust before it was made public. The new portal and tunnel location appears to be one at which groundwater problems can be minimized. We will continue to work with the T as this goes forward, paying particular attention to potential effects in the nearby Bay Village neighborhood.
6. **MTA** – The Turnpike Authority remains committed to repair of the leak discovered in their drain near Chinatown; a contract should be let shortly. They have completed an analysis of their drains at the East Boston ends of the Sumner and Callahan Tunnels that did not indicate any leakage or dry weather flows. The retaining wall was designed without underdrains. The MTA will be studying the North End connections to those tunnels to look for any potential leak locations.
7. **East Boston** – The first readings from our initial wells in East Boston have revealed very low readings in several areas near Porter Street. The lowest infrastructure in the area appears to belong to MWRA. They are investigating to see if they have any leak problems. I expect to get a report at the Working Group meeting.
8. **St. Charles St** – The supplemental budget is likely to be taken up in the next few weeks. The money for the project remains on track.
9. **Well Installation** – Jim Lambrechts, Christian Simonelli, and I will be meeting with Jim Hunt tomorrow to discuss potential adjustments in well locations that might help in deciding which, if any, of the designated study areas should be included in the GCOD. We will be resuming installations next month, with 137 wells remaining in the contract.
10. **212 Stuart Street** – This project is likely to be substantially modified because of objections raised during the Article 80 process. I'll continue to monitor it to make sure that the promised elimination of foundation underdrains occurs.
11. **Website** – Traffic on the website has been very high all month, with many indicators at their highest levels ever.

12. **EPA Grant** – Nancy Grilk is finalizing the details of the grant application, which should be completed shortly. I've been working with her. It is still the City's intention that the Trust will implement projects funded by the grant.
13. **Press** – There are new stories from the Boston Courant about the GCOD and from the Beacon Hill Times about the outcome of a groundwater related lawsuit posted on the website.
14. **Comment Letters** – There were no new comments filed since the last meeting. I will soon be filing comments on projects at 79 Chandler Street and 285 Columbus Avenue, as well as on the South Station Air Rights project.
15. **501(c)3** – We are still waiting for approval from the IRS on our filing. There has been no comment since we filed our return.
16. **Funding** – We are still awaiting the \$25,000 contribution that we expect from BWSC. In addition, the Columbus Center project has committed to making a \$25,000 contribution and the Clarendon project has committed to a \$75,000 contribution, both expected after the projects get building permits; these contributions will pass through the BRA. Our Long range Funding Committee has been meeting to discuss how best to assure the funding of the Trust's activities over the extended future.
17. **Level Logging Equipment** – We have downloaded the first set of two months data from the first locations in which we installed level logging equipment. Most of the wells showed very steady readings, but some showed substantial variations. The Technical Advisory Committee will be discussing the readings at its meeting on 3/29.
18. **Build Boston** – I filed our application to offer a panel featuring Jim Hunt, Rick Shaklik of the BRA, Jim Lambrechts, and Peter Nichols of the Beal Companies, which I would moderate. We will hear back from the Boston Society of Architects, sponsors of Build Boston, about our acceptance and final schedule in June. We'll then work toward refining our presentation for the event, to be held at the World trade Center Boston November 13-15.
19. **Education** – I met with a student from MIT who is doing a thesis on groundwater issues in Boston. We will likely post her paper if she has interesting findings.

## TECHNICAL COORDINATOR'S REPORT

### WELL MONITORING

The BGwT's latest set of readings were taken from February 6-24, 2006. There are currently 671 wells in the BGwT's network.

Of the 671 wells read:

- 197 Wells @ elevation >7'
- 275 wells @ elevation 5'- 7'
- 115 wells @ elevation 3'-5'
- 31 wells @ elevation <3'
- 53 wells @ no reading

## DATA LOGGERS

24 data loggers were installed in wells designated by the BGwT Technical Committee. The data obtained in these wells will be evaluated by the Technical Committee at our next meeting on 3/29/06.

Some notes:

- Data was collected from January 11 – March 1, 2006
- The majority of the loggers installed showed minor fluctuations in water levels, (+/- 1.00')
- A few of the wells showed major fluctuations and may/may not indicate pump activity. That is to be evaluated by the Technical Committee.
- We recovered one of the data logger's that was lost. It was in a well adjacent to where we originally installed it on Stuart Street. The logger was not damaged and is in good working order.
- We have sent out a different data logger's that was not working properly to Geotech for service. I was unable to establish a connection with the rugged reader. The product is under warranty.

## INSTALLATIONS

- 180 Contract is scheduled to resume in late April 2006
- 137 wells are left to be installed
- Wells will be finalized upon meeting with Jim Hunt, city of Boston, to review proposed locations