

BOSTON GROUNDWATER TRUST (BGwT)
BOARD MEETING
March 22, 2007
The Lenox Hotel – Patriot Room

The meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Boston Groundwater Trust was called order at 4:05 pm in the Patriot meeting room. 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 Corporation (CDC)
Mr. Paul Chan, Greater Boston Real Estate Board
Ms. Nancy Grillk, Mayor's office

Also present were:

Elliott Laffer, BGwT Executive Director; Christian Simonelli, BGwT Technical Coordinator; Anne Pistario, North End Water Front Residents Association (NEWRA) Groundwater Working Group;

1. Adoption of the minutes of the February 15, 2007 Meeting

Minutes were distributed to board members for review.

Trustee Mitchell noted that his motion proposed under item 3 (Expansion of GCOD), paragraph 2, be amended. He recommended that "accept" be changed to "support" in the motion.

Discussion followed.

Trustee Grillk moved to adopt the minute as amended. Trustee Sherin seconded the motion.

Voted: To adopt the minutes as amended.

2. Finance Report

Trustee Sherin reviewed the BGwT *Financial Report and Reconciliation Detail*. He noted that under Cash Outflows, in line item Research Projects, the \$25,000 reflected the BGwT's membership in CenSSIS. Also under Outstanding obligations, in line item Outstanding Invoices, the \$2,264.28 reflected the workers comp correction, health insurance, and Executive Director's Expense. Discussion followed.

Trustee Saunders questioned if there were any other projected FY07 income for the BGwT. Mr. Laffer said that the projected contribution from Columbus Center was still anticipated. Discussion followed.

Trustee Saunders questioned why the majority of the BGwT's money is in a Money Market and not Certificates of Deposit. Trustee Sherin noted that the rate in the

Money Market is ½% lower than in the Certificates of Deposit, but it gives us significant flexibility at a modest reduction in earnings. The amount to be included in the CD will be examined again as it comes due this summer. Discussion followed.

3. Expansion of GCOD

Mr. Laffer reviewed the expanded Groundwater Conservation Overlay District (GCOD) in the North End and Fort Point Channel. He noted the expansion has been endorsed by the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) and that it will go before the Zoning Commission for adoption on March 28, 2007. Discussion followed.

4. Draft Policy Recommendation on Pumping and Draining Groundwater

Mr. Laffer updated the BGwT on the policy. He noted that the BWSC and ISD have reviewed that language and are willing to participate in it. Discussion followed. Mr. Laffer noted that the policy was tabled at the last BGwT meeting and inquired if a vote needed to be taken on the policy. Discussion followed.

Trustee Chan moved to adopt the Draft Policy Recommendation on Pumping and Draining Groundwater. Trustee Saunders seconded the motion. Discussion followed.

Voted: To adopt the Draft Policy Recommendation on Pumping and Draining Groundwater.

Trustee Gilbert suggested that the policy be included in a press release. Trustee Sherin inquired where the document will go. Discussion followed. Trustee Grilk and Mr. Laffer will look into issuing a release and how best to distribute the document.

5. Back Bay Station Area Update

Mr. Laffer updated the BGwT on the recharging efforts of the MBTA along Cazenove and Berkeley Street's. Discussion followed. He noted that two proposals are currently on the table for long-term solutions. Discussion followed. Mr. Laffer noted that a consensus has not yet been reached and that the Technical Advisory Committee to the City-State Groundwater Working Group will meet on April 6, 2007 at 10:30am to review both proposals and try to come to a consensus. Discussion followed.

6. Storrow Drive Update

Mr. Laffer updated the BGwT on the Storrow Drive Project. Discussion followed. The Technical Advisory Committee to the City-State Groundwater Working Group will meet on April 23 to discuss proposals for recharging water pumped from the rebuilt tunnel and also whether recharge can be accomplished before the construction work on the main project. Discussion followed.

7. Research Projects

Mr. Laffer noted that the BGwT has become a member of CenSSIS. He reviewed what the BGwT's membership fee was and what CenSSIS is about. Professors from two of the CenSSIS universities, Northeastern and B.U., will be working on the project to determine whether a less invasive and expensive method of determining pile cutoff locations can be developed. Discussion followed.

Mr. Laffer noted that Jim Lambrechts is finalizing his proposal for a study on alternatives to underpinning and that the BGwT should be receiving it shortly. Discussion followed.

8. 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, 2007*, for a complete list of all activities.

Trustee Gilbert suggested that Mr. Laffer look into updating the technical section of the website to include more reports that have been written on groundwater and rotting pilings. Mr. Laffer agreed and will look into it.

9. 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 Update BGwT Meeting: March 22, 2007* for a complete list of all activities.

The meeting adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: Tentatively scheduled for April 24, 2007 @ 4:00 pm at the Lenox Hotel.

Notes submitted by Christian Simonelli, BGwT Technical Coordinator, on 3/23/07.

Respectfully submitted



Galen Gilbert, Secretary

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT
March 22, 2007

1. **City-State Groundwater Working Group** – The Technical Advisory Committee to the Working Group will be meeting twice in the near future. One meeting will be to evaluate the potential recharge systems to be installed as part of the Storrow Drive reconstruction project and the other to review and advise on alternate proposals for increasing groundwater levels in the South End near Back bay Station. These meetings showcase additional ways in which this City-State collaboration has been critical in addressing the groundwater problem.
2. **Zoning** – The BRA Board has endorsed the extension of the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District in modified form to portions of the North End and the Fort Point Channel neighborhood. The petition will be heard by the Boston Zoning Commission on March 28.
3. **BWSC** – The work on Back Street has resumed after a hiatus during the coldest part of the winter. The video inspection of all of the low sewers in areas of groundwater concern is nearing completion. BWSC is studying how to address an apparent leak in the North End near an area of low groundwater.
4. **DCR** – DCR will be meeting with the Technical Advisory Committee of the City-State Groundwater Working Group to consider possible recharge systems to meet the groundwater recharge commitments they have made for the Storrow Drive reconstruction project. They are looking at ways to utilize the system that BWSC is installing in Back Street. They are also looking at the possibility of installing a recharge system before construction, as either an interim measure or as part of the permanent system.
5. **MBTA** – The Action Team for the T's project to raise groundwater levels in the South End near Cazenove Street, of which we are a part, is trying to decide between two alternate means of addressing the problem. The Technical Advisory Committee of the City-State Groundwater Working Group will be assisting in this process. Both recharge wells installed by the T have raised nearby groundwater levels. The indication of a lack of increase on Cazenove Street turned out to be an instrumentation problem with our data logger which has been corrected.
6. **MTA** – The MTA will be inspecting its drains in the area of Exeter Street and Huntington Avenue when the weather warms. There has been a drop in levels at that corner in recent months.
7. **East Boston** – Groundwater levels in the area of depressed readings along Porter Street and Visconti Road have been increasing slowly for the last few months. Hopefully this is a result of the repairs done by MWRA, with the slowness of the increase due to lack of recharge through the hard surfaces in the area.
8. **Columbus Center** – It now looks like it will be summer before the wells along the Turnpike are installed. Columbus Center has been trying to reactivate one well behind 95 Berkeley Street that would be helpful in understanding what is happening in the Back Bay Station area recharge.
9. **The Clarendon** – We expect to receive shortly the report the project has commissioned from Haley and Aldrich about why groundwater levels are low in the area. Based on what I have heard informally from H&A, I think that the document will be very thorough.
10. **Fort Point Channel Neighborhood** – Our latest readings last week indicated a significant drop in most of the wells along Congress Street, with the biggest drop to the lowest level occurring at a well at Pittsburgh Street. After checking with BWSC, it turns out that a nearby project has been dewatering (with a permit) and has pumped over 3,000,000 gallons since January. This points up the need for the new zoning to require that projects not have a negative impact on groundwater levels in the area.
11. **Neighborhood Meeting** – I met this week with a group of neighbors from Montgomery Street in the South End who are concerned about new very low water levels at a well on the street. We discussed the groundwater problem and potential solutions in general and

also some possible causes of the change on their block. This was a productive small group way to answer neighbors' questions and raise their consciousness about the issue.

12. **Website** – Traffic on the website was very heavy in February and has exceeded those levels so far in March. In fact, so far March is averaging the most daily hits except for April and May of 2005 (right around the groundwater forum) and the most daily visits ever. Video from the September well reading ceremony is now posted to the site.
13. **Research Projects** – We have joined the Gordon Center for SubSurface Sensing and Imaging Systems managed by Northeastern University. The project to investigate remote sensing as a better method to locate pile tops and possibly condition will be conducted this spring, led by professors at NU and BU. We should have a report by June. The Wentworth project to study potential less expensive ways of supporting lighter buildings with rotted pilings, led by Jim Lambrechts, will probably take place during the fall and winter semesters.
14. **Press** – There are new articles from the Boston Globe and South End News posted to the website.
15. **Comment Letters** – I have filed comments on projects at 100 Beacon Street, Wheelock College, and Children's Hospital, all of which are posted on our website. I expect to file comments soon on projects at Waterside Place, 311 Summer Street, and Tufts School of Dental Medicine.

**TECHNICAL COORDINATOR'S
WELL MONITORING UPDATE
BGwT Meeting: March 22, 2007**

WELL MONITORING

The BGwT's latest set of readings are indicated below.

There are currently 708 wells in the West network. Wells were read between Jan 15. – Mar 8., 2007. Of the 708 wells read:

- 160 Wells @ elevation >7'
- 280 wells @ elevation 5'- 7'
- 149 wells @ elevation 3'-5'
- 60 wells @ elevation <3'
- 56 wells @ no reading

We have read 89 wells in the East network (East Boston Area). Wells were read in East Boston on January 16 & 19, 2007. Of the 89 wells read:

- 48 wells @ elevation >7'
- 14 wells @ elevation 5'- 7'
- 8 wells @ elevation 3'-5'

- 19 wells @ elevation <3'
- 0 wells @ no reading

NOTE: We are continuously reading the well network.

LEVELLOGGERS

- Group 5 dataloggers have been uploaded and are posted on the web.
- Group 6 dataloggers will be installed next week. Data is scheduled to be uploaded in May.
- As per agreement with GEI Consultants Inc., loggers (there are a total of 4) installed in and around Cazenove St. continue to be uploaded once a week and sent to GEI Consultants Inc. The purpose is to observe the water levels in the area where the recharge systems have been installed.

ISD Research

- We continue to look for any underpinned buildings. Data continues to be scarce up to this point.