

**BOSTON GROUNDWATER TRUST (BGwT)**  
**BOARD MEETING**  
**March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

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 4:06 pm. The following trustees were present:

Mr. Gary Saunders, Back Bay Association  
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  
Mr. John Hemenway, Beacon Hill Civic Association  
Ms. Kaira Fox, City of Boston, Neighborhood Services  
Mr. Peter Shilland, Ellis Neighborhood 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, Legislative Aide for Massachusetts State Representative Aaron Michlewitz; Mr. Brooks Ferro, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay; Mr. Jesse Morrow, Civil Engineering major from Northeastern University

**1. Executive Session: Personnel Matter**

Mr. Saunders, Co-chair, moved that the Board enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter, and reconvene in open session for the Board meeting upon adjournment of the Executive Session. Ms. Commerford, Secretary, seconded the motion.

**Voted:** Mr. Saunders' motion to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter and reconvene in open session for the Board meeting upon adjournment of the Executive Session was accepted with no abstentions.

Mr. Simonelli exited the room.

2. **Adoption of January 10, 2019 Board Meeting & Executive Session Minutes**

Board Meeting minutes and Executive Session minutes were previously emailed to Board members for review. Discussion followed. Mr. Gary Saunders, Co-chair, moved to adopt the minutes. Ms. Croteau, Trustee, seconded the motion.

**Voted:** To accept the Board Meeting minutes and Executive Session minutes of the January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019 meeting.

3. **Financial Report & FY 2020 Preliminary Budget Discussion**

Mr. Hemenway, Treasurer, reviewed the Trust's financial reports. Discussion followed. Mr. Simonelli stated that he will email a draft of the proposed FY 2020 budget for comment in the next few weeks. Discussion followed. Mr. Mitchell, Co-chair, requested that Trustees provide any comments well before the May meeting, at which time they will vote whether to adopt the budget. FY2020 begins July 1, 2019. Discussion followed.

4. **Review of proposed changes to Article 32 zoning**

Mr. Simonelli reviewed proposed revisions to Article 32 (GCOD) of the City of Boston's zoning code; he discussed the proposed changes with the City of Boston Inspection Services Department on January 30, 2019 and presented them to the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) on February 11, 2019 for their consideration. The purpose of the proposed revisions is to update the zoning code language to be consistent with Boston Water & Sewer Commission requirements for groundwater recharge, update the "no-harm" elevation threshold based on foundation information that the Trust has gathered, and revise the areas of coverage to reflect updated stratigraphic, groundwater, and building foundation information. Discussion followed. Mr. Simonelli noted that the BPDA is currently reviewing the proposal. Discussion followed. Refer to the attached *Article 32 Zoning Modification Proposal* for additional details.

5. **Executive Director's Report**

BGwT Executive Director Mr. Christian Simonelli distributed his report. Discussion followed. Refer to the attached *Executive Director's Report March 14, 2019* for a complete list of activities.

6. **Other business**

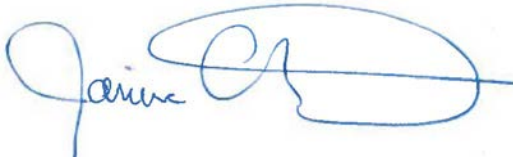
Mr. Cuddyer noted that most Trustee's terms are currently in holdover status. The City has sent re-appointment letters to the appropriate nominating entities for those Trustees. Discussion followed.

**The meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.**

**NEXT MEETING: May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019 @ 4:00 pm at the Lenox Hotel.**

Notes submitted by Christian Simonelli, BGwT Executive Director, on 3/20/2019.

Approved 3 April 2019

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**

- Current zoning drafted in 2005 and adopted in 2006
- BGwT has learned a lot since 2006 in regards to water levels and foundation wood pile cutoff elevations
- Modification necessary to ensure that buildings continue to be protected

### **Propose the following**

- 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 BWSC & EPA consent decree requires all applicants city-wide to capture 1" over the entire lot
- Raise no harm threshold from El. 7' ECB to El. 8' ECB based on existing groundwater levels and pile cut off information
- 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 with no pile supported structures

### **Additional Considerations**

- Include BPDA Smart Utilities Policy for Article 80 Development Review recommendation of 1.25" capture for all projects at or above 100,000 square feet of floor area?
- Does BPDA want to make the policy part of Article 32 zoning?
- Increased load at ZBA and ISD
- Increased load at BWSC who issue approval letters
- Applicants in new overlay unfamiliar with new requirements
  - Along with ISD & BPDA, BGwT can update neighborhoods



## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

### **March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

1. **Readings** – Wrapping up our first set of readings of 2019 and will start the second set this week.
2. **Meetings/Presentations** –
  - I met with State Representative Aaron Michlewitz to discuss the ongoing recharging efforts in the South End Ellis Neighborhood. (1/8)
  - Attended the Citizens Advisory Committee meeting at Saint Cecilia Church (1/9) and the Mass DOT Air Rights meeting for Parcel 12 project at Hynes Convention Center. (1/14)
  - Attended the Mayors State of the City at Symphony Hall. (1/15)
  - I met with Trustee Cook and Chief of Staff Rory Cuddyer to review proposed Article 32 changes, research projects, and discuss additional Trust related items. (1/18)
  - I met with Dan McCormack, CEO BluCloud Inc., to review his proposal for upgrading Project LightWell. (1/22)
  - Attended the City-State Groundwater Working Group. (1/24)
  - I met with ISD Commissioner Buddy Christopher & Kim Thai, ISD Assistant Commissioner of Plans and Zoning, to review the proposed revisions to Article 32. (1/30)
  - I met with new Trustee Kaira Fox and updated her on the efforts of the Trust. (2/5)
  - I met with Commissioner Christopher, Kim Thai, Bryan Glascock, BPDA Deputy Director for Regulatory Planning and Zoning, and Jeffrey Hampton, BPDA Director of Zoning, to review the proposed revisions to Article 32. (2/11)
  - I wrote a comment letter for the Parcel 12 project in the Back Bay. (2/13)
  - I met with Dan McCormack, CEO BluCloud Inc., to review locations for the first of 5 automated reading devices. (2/22)
  - I met with co-chair Mitchell, Gordon Richardson, and Brooks Ferro from the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB) to update them on groundwater levels in the Back Bay. (2/25)
  - Attended scoping session for 12-28 Lansdowne Street (Fenway Theater). (3/6/19)
  - I met with Brian Fairbanks of VHB and Abe Menzin of Samuels & Associates to review their proposed plan for Parcel 12 GCOD compliance. (3/11)
  - I spoke & met with residents & developers throughout the GCOD to discuss ZBA procedures and advised them on what they need to provide us to satisfy the zoning.
3. **MBTA** - Approximately 43 gpm is being injected into recharge wells in the South End Ellis Neighborhood area along Appleton, Berkeley, Saint Charles, Cazenove, and Clarendon Street. In addition to our manual monitoring we have 4 wells in the area with dataloggers recording a water level every 60 min.
  - I continue to work with the MBTA, members of the City-State, residents, and the appropriate elected officials to obtain funds set aside for the ongoing recharge efforts in the South End will be made available to them through the Mass DOT FY2018-2022 Capital Investment Plan and to find a permanent solution for the South End Ellis Neighborhood.
  - Along with Greg Thompson of the MBTA I have scheduled a meeting of the Groundwater Working Group Technical Advisory Committee for early April. The purpose of the meeting will be to review all of the work accomplished so far in addressing the low groundwater levels in affected area and to explore the potential for a permanent solution.

4. **DCR** – Dataloggers are installed in 3 wells to monitor the levels along the Storrow Drive tunnel pump station groundwater recharge system and levels are within 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 plan and is targeted for upgrade. In the short-term cosmetic spot repairs to the underpass will be made in early Spring.
5. **BWSC** – An update on the following:
  - Updated Chief Engineer John Sullivan on current Hot Spots in the Back Bay and South End.
  - In the South End observed areas of infiltration at Dartmouth and Montgomery Street and #30 Montgomery Street were grouted in late December. So far there has been no change to area groundwater levels. Additional inspections have uncovered 3 more areas of infiltration which are scheduled to be grouted this month.
  - Currently investigating if they can implement grout repairs like the ones that have been made along Montgomery Street for repairs along Clarendon & Gray Street in the South End. The primary issue is access since it is a smaller pipe. Contractor currently investigating best options.
  - In the North End areas of infiltration were discovered in the 96" pipe, which runs along Richmond Street. These will also be grouted this month. All pipes along Richmond Street up to North Street will be inspected as well.
  - Stuart Street area of the Back Bay between Berkeley and Dartmouth Streets were televised and some areas of infiltration were grouted up to Clarendon Street. Additional inspections along Stuart Street up to Berkeley Street are scheduled.
  - Saint James Avenue and Providence Street inspections of pipe and manholes indicated no infiltration. Scope along Saint James will be extended west, towards Clarendon Street.
6. **MWRA** – In the spring, the MWRA re-inspected approximately 4,000-ft. of the Boston Marginal Conduit (BMC), which runs along the Storrow Drive embankment. Minor signs of weeping at four locations that were previously discovered during the inspection are still present but have not worsened. No new leaks were observed. Investigations along Maverick Street, between Frankfort and Gove Street's in East Boston, showed no areas of infiltration. Will continue to look at all infrastructure in the area.
7. **MassDOT** - Dry weather inspections of the Pru Tunnel sub-surface stormwater drainage system, which runs parallel along the Turnpike & terminates at the prudential garage, yielded two leaking joints and groundwater infiltration. Will clear remainder of pipe and inspect. Following that will schedule repairs for pipe sometime this Spring. Will also coordinate with DPW and BWSC and follow-up with report to BGwT.
8. **Events** – I was a speaker at the annual conference of the National Academy of Building Inspection Engineers (NABIE) at the Copley Plaza Hotel. (3/2)
9. **Website** – Traffic on the website remains steady. We continue to average 100 visits/day and around 250 page views/day. In addition, each of our 3 informational videos has over 500 views.