

Boston Groundwater Trust

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January 28, 2013

Mr. Gerald Autler, Senior Project Manager
Boston Redevelopment Authority
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201-1007

Subject: Northeastern University

Dear Mr. Autler:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Institutional Master Plan Notification Form filed by Northeastern University. The Boston Groundwater Trust was established by the Boston City Council to monitor groundwater levels in sections of the city where the integrity of building foundations is threatened by low groundwater levels and to make recommendations for solving the problem. Therefore, my comments are limited to groundwater related issues.

As stated in the IMPNF, most of Northeastern's campus is located within the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District established under Article 32 of the Zoning Code. Projects that are subject to the GCOD are required to show that they cannot cause a reduction in groundwater on site or on adjoining lots and also to provide the prescribed recharge of precipitation.

The IMPNF states that "As appropriate, IMP project filings will include analysis of potential impacts of groundwater and mitigation to be provided." As was discussed during the scoping session, this would not meet the GCOD standards outlined above. I appreciate the commitment made at that session by the proponent to meet the Article 32 standards and look forward to that commitment being memorialized in the Institutional Master Plan when it is filed.

The University is well aware, because of repairs they have had to make to some of their structures, of the high costs that can be incurred because of low groundwater levels in areas where buildings are supported on wooden pilings. I look forward to working with the proponent and the Authority to assure that the projects contemplated in the IMPNF can only have positive impacts on area groundwater levels.

Very truly yours,

Elliott Laffer
Executive Director

Cc: Kathleen Pedersen, BRA
Maura Zlody, BED