

BOSTON GROUNDWATER TRUST (BGwT)
BOARD MEETING
November 30, 2006
The Lenox Hotel – Copley Room

The meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Boston Groundwater Trust was called order at 4:05 pm in the Copley 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. Peter Sherin, Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce
Mr. Galen Gilbert, Fenway Community Development Corporation (CDC)
Ms. Nancy Grilk, Mayor's office
Ms. Nikko Mendoza, Mayor's office
Mr. Paul Chan, Greater Boston Real Estate Board
Mr. Michael Nairne, Ellis Neighborhood Association

Also present were:

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

1. Adoption of the minutes of the October 26, 2006 Meeting

Minutes were distributed to board members for review.

Trustee Chan moved to adopt the minutes. Trustee Grilk seconded the motion.

Voted: To accept the minutes of the October 26, 2006.

2. Finance Report

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

Trustee Gilbert noted that bank statements are currently sent to the Trust office and questioned whether they should be sent to Trustee Sherin address since he is treasurer. Mr. Laffer noted he receives statements but is not authorized to open them. Trustee Sherin is comfortable with the current setup and feels no need for a change.

Discussion followed.

3. Retirement Savings Plan

Mr. Laffer reviewed the Retirement Contribution Plan. Refer to the attached *Boston Groundwater Trust: Retirement Contribution Plan* for a complete outline of the plan. Discussion followed.

Trustee Sherin moved to accept the Retirement Contribution Plan. Trustee Chan seconded the motion.

Voted: To accept the Retirement Contribution Plan.

4. Build Boston Panel

Mr. Laffer noted that the Build Boston panel was well received. He said while the crowd was small, those who did attend were very engaged. Refer to the attached *Executive Director's Report: November 30, 2006*, for a summary of the event.

5. State Building Code Modifications

Mr. Laffer noted that Citywide GET had proposed amendments to the State Building Code to provide protections for wood piling supported structures. While the proposed amendments were offered nearly a year ago, a hearing on them was held on November 14. Mr. Laffer reviewed the proposals and spoke in favor of them at the hearing, supporting Peter Pogorski of Citywide GET. See the attached Executive Director's Report for more details.

Trustee Nairne inquired about the BGwT's role in governing the pumping of groundwater. He suggested the board make a recommendation in reference to this. Trustee Gilbert suggested that a tax be imposed on those who do pump and that the BGwT should be the entity who enforces it. Trustee Sherin indicated that a system needs to be established to calculate the flow rates of the pumping in order to impose a tax. Discussion followed.

Mr. Laffer suggested that the board move to make a recommendation on this issue. Trustee Mitchell indicated that much work has been done and that the establishment of a committee can help the BGwT going forward with this issue. Discussion followed.

Trustee Nairne and Trustee Gilbert will form a committee to address the issue.

6. Groundwater Conservation Overlay District (GCOD)

Mr. Laffer updated the BGwT on the workings of GCOD. Discussion followed. Refer to the attached *Executive Director's Report: November 30, 2006*, for a summary of the meeting.

Trustee Nairne noted that a comment was made at a recent Ellis Neighborhood in regards to the 303 Columbus Avenue not being sensitive about groundwater. Mr. Laffer noted that they are making readings and that he receives them.

Trustee Mitchell noted that the City is in the process of deciding whether to expand the GCOD and asked Ms. Celano whether she thought the North End should be included. Ms. Celano suggested that the North End should be included and that the North End Water Front Residents Association (NEWRA) Groundwater Working Group is actively pursuing it with the help of local representatives.

7. Public Improvements Commission (PIC)

Mr. Laffer reviewed a meeting he had with the PIC in regards to the drafting of a standard agreement for recharge systems installed beneath public ways. Discussion followed. Refer to the attached *Executive Director's Report: November 30, 2006*, for a summary of the meeting.

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: November 30, 2006*, for a complete list of all activities.

Trustee Gilbert inquired about state funding for the underground wall around the St. Charles/Cazenove Street neighborhood. Trustee Grilk noted that the funding is currently on hold. Trustee Gilbert suggested that the Boston Public Works Department should be in charge of construction. Discussion followed.

Mr. Laffer noted that the Back Street sewer repair has started and that Mr. Simonelli has met with the contractor and provided him with a map of all wells located in Back Street to ensure that wells are not destroyed. Mr. Simonelli noted that the extent of their work does not look like it will affect the BGwT wells. Trustee Sherin suggested that the BGwT keep track of the groundwater levels in the area. Mr. Simonelli suggested that the BGwT make weekly readings in and around Back Street. The board agreed.

Trustee Gilbert noted the upcoming construction of the MBTA Blue/Red line stations. He inquired about the BGwT's role (if any) in it. Discussion followed. Mr. Laffer noted that in the area of the proposed MBTA Blue/Red line stations there is not much on woodpiles but that he will monitor the project closely.

Trustee Mitchell inquired about the research project for East Boston Foundations. Refer to the attached *Executive Director's Report: November 30, 2006*, for a summary of the potential project. Discussion followed.

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 & Installation Report BGwT Meeting: November 30, 2006* for a complete list of what was presented.

Mr. Simonelli suggested that the BGwT purchase new water level indicators. He provided a quote from Solinst Canada Ltd. In the amount of \$826.00. Discussion followed. Trustee Sherin suggested we obtain quotes from some other vendors before purchasing the indicators. Mr. Simonelli agreed.

Trustee Gilbert motioned to approve the purchase of new water level indicators not to exceed \$900.00, Trustee Mitchell seconded.

Voted: To approve the purchase of new water level indicators not to exceed \$900.00.

The meeting adjourned at 5:32 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: January 18, 2007 @ 4:00 pm at the Lenox Hotel.

Notes submitted by Christian Simonelli, BGwT Technical Coordinator, on 12/04/06.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Galen Gilbert". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned centrally on the page.

Galen Gilbert, Secretary

BOSTON GROUNDWATER TRUST
RETIREMENT CONTRIBUTION PLAN

The Boston Groundwater Trust has established a Simplified Employee Pension – Individual Retirement Accounts (SEP-IRA) Contribution Agreement. Details of the agreement are as follows:

ELIGIBILITY

All Trust employees are eligible for contributions provided that they are at least 21 years old and have been a direct employee of the Trust for at least three of the five years preceding the year in which a contribution is made.

CONTRIBUTION AMOUNT

The amount of the contribution, if any, will be determined by the Trustees at a meeting prior to the end of the calendar year preceding distribution of the contribution. The contribution will be a percentage of the eligible employee's gross pay in the preceding year, as reported to the IRS.

CONTRIBUTION TIMING

Contributions will be made in the first calendar quarter.

IRA-SEP ACCOUNT

Each eligible employee is responsible for establishing an IRA-SEP account into which contributions will be made directly. Failure to establish an eligible account will disqualify the employee from participation in the distribution.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT
November 30, 2006

1. **Zoning** – I have attended several meetings convened by Jim Hunt to discuss whether to extend the GCOD into some or all of the study areas outlined in the original presentation. Jim expects to make a recommendation to the BRA for the Zoning Commission before the end of the year, as he promised. The Board of Appeals has been firm in applying the GCOD requirements, with no variances requested or granted.
2. **Public Improvement Commission** – The PIC is developing standard agreement language for recharge systems installed beneath public ways. There has been one meeting to discuss what should be in the agreement and some draft language has been circulated.
3. **State Building Code** – Citywide GET filed amendments to the State Building Code that would set requirements for construction in groundwater sensitive areas. I testified in favor of the amendments at the Board of Building Regulations and Standards. The Board will be taking comments for 30 days after the hearing. While I'm not familiar with this board's operations, the members seemed to be favorably impressed with the presentation by Peter Pogorski of Citywide GET and with my comments. The amendments would largely require pumps or foundation drains in any buildings in areas where wood pilings can be affected to discharge to recharge systems. It should be a complement to the GCOD zoning.
4. **BWSC** – The Back Street sewer repair repair/replacement got under way this week. The project includes relining the sewer from Massachusetts Avenue to Exeter Street (with some small reconstruction) and replacing the sewer from Exeter Street to Embankment Road, including a recharge system with the new sewer. The BWSC project to video all of their low sewer and drain lines continues and will inform their repair projects going forward.
5. **DCR** – The EIR process for the Storrow Drive tunnel project continues, with studies ongoing to determine which of the alternatives to pursue to more detailed design. Timing of the project relative to the other major DCR projects at the Longfellow and BU Bridges is still to be determined.
6. **MBTA** – The T has installed the two recharge and one observation wells for the St. Charles Street area groundwater improvement project. The recharge system on Cazenove Street was turned on Tuesday; they want to see the impact of this system before turning on the one on Berkeley Street in the next week or two. They are also conducting frequent readings of our observation wells in the area; we are providing them with readings from our data loggers in selected wells. We participate in the monthly task force meetings to assess the data and develop a recommendation to the T's general manager on how to proceed. The recommendation is due in late March. The Secretary of EOEA has responded to the Notice of Project Change filed by the T for Silver Line Phase III; the groundwater related comments largely agree with our comment letter and tell the T to coordinate with the Trust on the required groundwater monitoring program.
7. **MTA** – The MTA has completed the repairs to the pipe in the Harrison Ave/Herald Street bridge over the Pike. We'll be looking to see if this helps raise the low groundwater readings in the immediate area.
8. **MWRA** – The MWRA has issued purchase orders for two line repairs along Porter Street that we hope will help eliminate the low groundwater elevations in that area. While doing the repairs in those locations, they will also conduct a more detailed inspection of the pipes to determine if any additional repairs are necessary.
9. **East Boston** – Our latest readings in East Boston have indicated some further spread of the low water level area near Porter Street. There were also some new low readings along Bremen Street that we cannot yet explain. The low well on Maverick Street

appears to have stabilized at the very low level it reached last time; we are still trying to determine a likely cause.

10. **303 Columbus Avenue** – The project at 303 Columbus Avenue is reading several of our wells on a frequent basis and forwarding readings to us. They have not yet installed the well in front of the adjacent property. Many of the levels are low, but they do not appear to have changed significantly during construction.
11. **Columbus Center** – I continue to receive updates on groundwater readings from the project. Because of construction delays, it is now likely to be Spring before the wells along the railroad track bed are installed.
12. **The Clarendon** – The project has cleared its regulatory hurdles and will demolish the post office building in December. Construction is expected to begin as soon as there is no frost in the ground in the Spring. We continue to receive the baseline information from the observation wells that they are reading.
13. **Museum of Fine Arts** – Construction has begun on the addition to the Museum. We are getting regular updates on groundwater levels. These have so far remained above levels that would cause significant concern, but reduced elevations in a couple of the wells will be watched closely.
14. **Website** – Traffic on our website declined significantly during November, probably because of the approaching holidays. Even so, we are still averaging over 170 visits per day.
15. **St. Botolph Neighborhood Association** – I spoke to a capacity crowd at the November 1 meeting of the St. Botolph Neighborhood Association. There were many questions from the audience and much appreciation that the Trust was keeping them up to date on the issue. I expect to make several similar presentations in the new year.
16. **Potential Research Project** – I have spoken with Jim Lambrechts about having Christian do some research work under his guidance toward developing a less costly foundation repair system for lighter structures such as those in East Boston. It is likely that we will be able to get funding for this from the U.S. EPA grant to the City.
17. **Press** – There are new articles from the Boston Courant and the Back Bay Sun posted on our website.
18. **Comment Letters** – I filed comments on Silver Line Phase III, Wheelock College, and 585 Commercial Street projects. All are posted on the website. I expect to file comments on several projects in December.
19. **Build Boston** – Our presentation at Build Boston was very well received. Although the crowd was smaller than we might have liked, all who attended were very engaged and represented people for whom this was an important facet of future projects. I received several compliments about the presentation. Thanks to our excellent presenters, Jim Lambrechts, Jim Hunt, Rick Shaklik, and Peter Nichols.

*TECHNICAL COORDINATOR'S
WELL MONITORING & INSTALLATION UPDATE
BGwT Meeting: November 30, 2006*

WELL MONITORING

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

There are currently 709 wells in the West network. Wells were read between Nov. 6–21, 2006. Of the 709 wells read:

- 185 Wells @ elevation >7' (26%)
- 309 wells @ elevation 5'- 7' (44%)
- 178 wells @ elevation 3'-5' (25%)
- 28 wells @ elevation <3' (4%)
- 9 wells @ no reading (1%)

We have read 89 wells in the East network (East Boston Area). Wells were read in East Boston from November 6-7, 2006. Of the 89 wells read:

- 45 wells @ elevation >7' (51%)
- 14 wells @ elevation 5'- 7' (16%)
- 11 wells @ elevation 3'-5' (12%)
- 19 wells @ elevation <3' (21%)
- 0 wells @ no reading (0%)

NOTE: Percentage numbers reflect the percentage of well elevations in proportion to the number of wells in each network.

LEVELLOGGERS

- Group 4 dataloggers have been installed in 20 wells. Data is scheduled to be uploaded the second week in December.
- As per agreement with GEI Consultants Inc., loggers (there are a total of 4) installed in and around Cazenove St. are 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.