

BOSTON GROUNDWATER TRUST (BGwT)  
BOARD MEETING  
September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014

The Board of Trustees of the Boston Groundwater Trust held its meeting in room #303 of the Boston Common Hotel & Conference Center. The Executive Director posted a meeting notice at City Hall in accordance with provision of the Commonwealth's Open Meeting Law. Mr. Mitchell, co-chair, called the meeting to order at 4:07 pm. The following trustees were present:

Mr. Tim Mitchell, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay  
Mr. Peter Shilland, Ellis Neighborhood Association  
Ms. Janine Commerford, Greater Boston Real Estate Board (GBREB)  
Mr. Greg Galer, the Boston Preservation Alliance  
Mr. Brian Swett, Chief of Environment & Energy (City of Boston)  
Mr. Aaron Michlewitz, North End Waterfront Neighborhood Council

Also present:

Elliott Laffer, BGwT Executive Director; Christian Simonelli, BGwT Technical & Recharge Coordinator; Mr. John Hemenway, Beacon Hill Civic Association; Mohona Siddique, City Councilor Josh Zakim's Office; Ms. Van Du, Environment & Energy (City of Boston); Mr. James Lambrechts, Wentworth Institute of Technology; Mr. Kevin Stetson, Sanborn, Head & Associates

**1. Adoption of the minutes of the July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014 Meeting**

Minutes were previously electronically distributed to board members for review. Discussion followed.

Ms. Commerford, Trustee, moved to adopt the minutes; Mr. Galer, Trustee, seconded the motion.

**Voted:** To accept the minutes of the July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014 meeting.

**2. Financial Report**

In lieu of Ms. Sherden, Trustee, (absent) Mr. Laffer reviewed the BGwT financial reports. Mr. Laffer noted that the Trust has received its annual funding from the city. Discussion followed.

**3. Transition and Appointment of New Executive Director**

Mr. Mitchell, co-chair, updated the board on staff meetings that he and Mr. Saunders, co-chair, have had with Mr. Laffer and Mr. Simonelli. Mr. Mitchell reviewed the progression of the professional staff transition of the Trust over the past months. He noted that Mr. Laffer is set to retire and that Mr. Simonelli is set to become the Trust's new executive director. Discussion followed.

Mr. Mitchell moved that Mr. Simonelli become Executive Director and that Mr. Laffer become Chief Strategy Officer; Mr. Shilland seconded the motion.

**Voted:** That Mr. Simonelli become Executive Director and Mr. Laffer become Chief Strategy Officer.

**4. Election of New Treasurer**

Mr. Laffer noted that board member and Treasurer Ms. Molly Sherden, is leaving the Board and that the Beacon Hill Civic Association has recommended Mr. John Hemenway as their new representative on the Trust Board. Mr. Hemenway has been appointed to the Trust by the Mayor of the City of Boston, but he has not yet been sworn in. Discussion followed.

Mr. Galer, moved to elect Mr. Hemenway Treasurer effective upon his swearing in as Trustee; Mr. Shilland seconded the motion.

**Voted:** To elect Mr. Hemenway Treasurer effective upon his swearing in as Trustee.

**5. Porous Alley Project Update**

Mr. Simonelli updated the Board on the completed Porous Alley Project in Alley 543 located in the South End. Discussion followed.

**6. Update on Underpinning Projects and Pile Cut-offs**

Mr. Simonelli updated the Board on the current underpinning projects taking place in the city. Discussion followed. He also reviewed the location on the Trust website where pile cut-off information can be found. Discussion followed.

**7. Executive Director's Report**

BGwT Executive Director Mr. Elliott Laffer distributed his report. Discussion followed. Refer to the attached *Executive Director's Report: September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014* for a complete list of all activities.

**8. Technical & Recharge Coordinator's Update**

BGwT Technical & Recharge Coordinator Mr. Christian Simonelli reviewed his activities since last meeting. Discussion followed. Refer to the attached *Technical & Recharge Coordinator's Update BGwT Meeting: September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014* for a complete list of all activities.

9. **Other Business**

Mr. Mitchell acknowledged Mr. Lambrechts, Mr. Stetson, and Mr. Shilland as members of the Trust's Technical Advisory Committee and thanked them for their efforts. Discussion followed.

Mr. Mitchell noted the Board met in executive session on May 15, 2014 to discuss the professional staff transition. Discussion followed.

Mr. Galer moved to adopt the minutes of the May 15, 2014 executive session; Mr. Shilland seconded the motion.

**Voted:** To adopt the minutes of the executive session.

**The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.**

**NEXT MEETING: November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014 @ 4:00 pm at the Lenox Hotel.**

Notes submitted by Christian Simonelli, BGWT Technical & Recharge Coordinator, on 9/19/14.



**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**  
**September 18, 2014**

1. **City-State Groundwater Working Group** – The Working Group will meet again in October
2. **MBTA** – The T has cut back somewhat on the amount of recharge in the new injection well on Appleton St because groundwater levels at the well were approaching the surface. Unfortunately, the level near the corner of Appleton and Tremont Streets has stabilized at a level significantly below what was projected. They will continue to monitor the performance of the system and make adjustments as necessary.
3. **BWSC** – BWSC continues to look for the cause of low groundwater levels near the corner of Commercial and Richmond Streets in the North End; investigations to date have not turned up a cause for the problem. They are coordinating with MassDOT to attempt to understand the cause of low groundwater levels near Blagdon St, Exeter St, and Huntington Ave in the Back Bay. In the South End, the Benjamin Franklin Institute has put their recirculation system into operation, they have not yet agreed to do repairs to reduce infiltration; levels in the well on Berkeley St in front of the Institute have risen significantly, although the effect does not appear to have spread.
4. **MassDOT** – MassDOT has completed repairs to the identified leaks in the drain line from the Turnpike Prudential tunnel. They continue to work with BWSC to make sure that the work has eliminated the drain line as a problem.
5. **Exeter St/Huntington Ave Area** – Most members of the Working Group believe that the most likely cause of the significant reduction in the generally low groundwater levels in the area is dewatering for underpinning at a nearby project. The engineer on that project has raised concerns that might point to another, as yet unidentified cause. Our Technical Advisory Committee will spend much of its meeting later this month trying to help identify the problem.
6. **GCOD** – Efforts are being made to streamline the GCOD process and potentially remove compliant projects that only trigger GCOD requirements because of substantial renovations from the Board of Appeal process. I have shared thoughts on ways to accomplish this with multiple City entities and will continue to work with interested parties to see if there are ways that we can reduce delays while preserving the benefits that compliance with GCOD have brought.
7. **Porous Alley** – Work on the porous alley is substantially complete, with some cosmetic work and installation of plaques still to be done. Because there has been so little rain in the last couple of months, we have not yet been able to see how it handles a storm and what the impact is on groundwater levels. We hope to have a dedication ceremony later in the Fall.
8. **Meetings** – I did a training session on groundwater with one of the aides working under the Mayor's Chief of Staff, after meeting briefly with the Chief of Staff when he visited Back Bay. Christian and I met with the owners of a building in Chinatown, along with other Chinatown officials including our trustee Bill Moy, to discuss potential issues with high groundwater under the building which is undergoing renovation. Christian and I met with the developer of a project on Washington St and his engineer to discuss the likely need for a variance from GCOD requirements.
9. **Comment Letters** – I filed a comment letter on a project at 319 A Street in the Fort Point Channel section of South Boston. As always, this and all comment letters is posted on our website.
10. **Transition** – This is my last Executive Director's Report. As of Oct. 13, I'll be transitioning to a new role as Chief Strategy Officer of the Trust and working on several special projects prior to my retirement in March. I want to thank the trustees, government officials, and all of those who have been so supportive of our work. I look forward to the greater progress that the Trust will make under its new Executive Director, and long-time Technical and Recharge Coordinator, Christian Simonelli. There is no one who could be more prepared and capable to step into this role.

# **TECHNICAL & RECHARGE COORDINATOR'S UPDATE**

## **BGwT Meeting: September 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2014**

### **TECHNICAL COORDINATOR DUTIES**

#### **WELL MONITORING (NEW WELL READER)**

Andrew Metropolis started a new set of readings on September 2<sup>nd</sup>. Andrew is a junior at Wentworth Institute of Technology who is majoring in Civil Engineering. He is working 15-20 hrs./week for us on a part-time basis and is a little more than halfway through his first set of readings. I expect him to get two full readings sets (maybe three weather permitting) before he wraps up his time with us in mid-December.

#### **WELL INSTALLATIONS**

Our 11 well installation contract started on Monday July 28<sup>th</sup> and wrapped up on Wednesday August 13<sup>th</sup>. A total of 11 observation wells were proposed for installation. 3 of the 11 intended locations were abandoned due to utility, sidewalk reconstruction, and film production conflicts. The contract had 3 alternate locations proposed and those were used to fulfill the contract of the 11 well installation.

#### **MEETINGS**

- Attended City/State Groundwater Working Group on 7/24
- Met with a representative of the City's DPW to review proper no parking signage language and safety zone setup while working in public ways on 8/6
- Met with Daniel Koh, Chief of Staff for Mayor Walsh, to discuss the role of Trust on 8/22
- Met with Rory Cuddyer, advisor to Daniel Koh, to discuss the role of the Trust on 8/29
- Attended & testified at ZBA hearings on 9/2 in place of Elliott who was on Vacation

### **RECHARGE COORDINATOR DUTIES**

#### **MEETINGS**

- Attended scoping session on 7/25 for 46 Wareham Street Project
- Met with building owners of 77 Harrison Avenue to review potential Groundwater infiltration in their basement on 8/29
- Met with Mark Haley & Lee Vanzler of Haley & Aldrich to review their Groundwater Monitoring plan for 888 Boylston Street Project on 8/4
- Attended a public meeting for the 319A Street Project on 9/4

- Met with representatives of 630 Washington Street Project to review their GCOD applicability on 9/8
- Spoke with residents and developers about the installation of different types of recharge systems that can be installed
- Continued to write comment letter drafts on past projects and review them with Elliott

## **DATA LOGGER LOCATIONS**

### **Ellis Neighborhood (7)**

- 1 at the corner of Berkley & Chandler St.
- 1 on Saint Charles St.
- 2 on Cazenove St.
- 1 at the corner of Tremont & Appleton St.
- 1 on Columbus Ave., adjacent to 75 Clarendon St.
- 1 in front of 41 Berkeley St.

### **Blagden Street (3)**

- 2 from the Exeter – Dartmouth St.
- 1 in front of the Copley Square Hotel

### **North End: Commercial Street (3 Uploaded on a Monthly basis)**

- 1 at the corner of Richmond and Commercial St.
- 1 on Commercial St. in front of 145 Commercial St.
- 1 on Atlantic Ave., in front of 103 Atlantic Ave.

### **Alignment Loggers (3 Uploaded on a Monthly basis)**

- 1 Between Turnpike Crash Wall and the Railroad alignment, underneath the Arlington St. Bridge
- 1 Between Turnpike Crash Wall and the Railroad alignment, underneath the Berkeley St. Bridge
- 1 Adjacent to the alignment, at the rear of 95 Berkeley St.

### **Southwest Corridor: Alley 543, West Canton, & Holyoke Street (6)**

- 2 in Alley 543
- 1 in front of 243 West Canton Street
- 1 in front of 38 Holyoke Street
- 1 in front of 24 Holyoke Street
- 1 @ at the corner of Holyoke Street and Columbus Avenue

### **BU/Audubon Circle (1)**

- 1 in front of 879 Beacon Street