

Boston Groundwater Trust

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February 23rd, 2017

Phil Cohen, Project Manager
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201-1007

Subject: 1000 Boylston Street Project Notification Form

Dear Mr. Cohen:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 1000 Boylston Street project notification form (PNF) located in the Back Bay. The Boston Groundwater Trust was established by the Boston City Council to monitor groundwater levels in sections of Boston 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.

The project is located in the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District (GCOD) established under Article 32 of the Zoning Code. As stated in the PNF and confirmed at the scoping session the project is proposed to be designed and constructed to comply with the requirements of Article 32. Also stated in the PNF and confirmed at the scoping session, due to the limited amount of terra firma the proponent will request a license from the Public Improvement Commission for maintenance of a portion of a recharge system beneath the city street.

Also stated in the PNF and confirmed at the scoping session compliance with the GCOD requires both the installation of a recharge system and a demonstration that the project cannot cause a reduction in groundwater levels on site or on adjoining lots. The PNF states that the proposed new building will be supported on rock socketed drilled shaft (caissons and load bearing elements) with total lengths in the range of approximately 150 to 200 feet. Deep foundation construction will utilize drilling methods that do not generate vibrations. No pile driving is planned. No below grade basement levels are planned and excavation for construction will be limited in depths needed to construct shallow pile caps and pits or below grade vaults.

Temporary support of excavation will be installed where needed based on site constraints. A soldier pile and lagging system can be used for the shallow excavations.

The PNF also states that construction will be above area groundwater levels and no temporary or permanent groundwater pumping will be required. Geotechnical instrumentation and monitoring program will be developed prior to final design to monitor adjacent structures and mitigate potential impacts.

Before the GCOD zoning approval can be put in place, the proponent must provide the BPDA and the Trust a letter stamped by a professional engineer registered in Massachusetts that details how it will accomplish what is stated in the PNF and meets the GCOD requirement for no reduction in groundwater levels on site or on adjoining lots.

I look forward to continuing to work with the proponent and the Agency to assure that this project can have only positive impacts on area groundwater levels.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christian S. Simonelli".

Christian Simonelli
Executive Director

CC: Kathleen Pederson, BPDA
Maura Zlody, BED