

Boston Groundwater Trust

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January 26th, 2018

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

Subject: 1241 Boylston Street Project Notification Form (PNF) Comments

Dear Mr. Czerwienski:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 1241 Boylston Street Project Notification Form (PNF) located in the Fenway. 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 document and confirmed at the scoping session the project is proposed to be designed and constructed to comply with the requirements of Article 32.

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. As stated in the document the below grade parking level is expected to extend up to 15 feet below existing grade, and will bottom out within the fill and/or organic soil layers. The document states that the floor slab and foundation walls will be membrane waterproofed to prevent any negative effects (i.e. lowering) of the surrounding groundwater levels. In addition, the bottom floor slab/structural mat and foundation walls will be membrane waterproofed up to about a depth of approximately two feet below existing grade and damp-proofed from two feet below existing grade to the ground surface. An underdrain and sump system will not be installed beneath the bottom floor slab to relieve hydrostatic pressures because the Project is in the GCOD and adjacent to structures that are supported on timber piles. An excavation support system and groundwater cutoff likely consisting of interlocking sheetpiles will be installed to construct the below-grade garage space. The sheetpiles will extend into the impervious clay to provide groundwater cutoff, which will significantly reduce the amount of construction dewatering and potential for lowering the surrounding groundwater levels.

The document also states that in meeting the requirements of Article 32, the Proponent will coordinate with the BGwT. 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 document 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, EEOS