

May 24, 2010

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

Subject: Boston University East Campus Student Center

Dear Mr. Rourke:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the IMPNF for the new student center at Boston University. The Boston Groundwater Trust was established by the 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.

I appreciate the commitment by the proponent in the IMPNF to meet the standards required under Article 32 of the Zoning Code in the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District both in terms of recharge and of designing the project so that it cannot cause a reduction in groundwater levels. I look forward to seeing more details in the Draft Project Impact Report.

The proponent has committed to installing a new groundwater observation well before construction in a location that will be permanently accessible to the Trust so that we can incorporate it into our network. They have also committed to monitor this and other existing wells before and during construction to be sure that there are no reductions in levels. As discussed in the scoping session, and agreed to by the proponent, these readings should be shared on an ongoing and prompt basis with the Authority and the Trust.

In the IMPNF, the proponent has committed to fully waterproofing the basement walls and slab and that there will be no long term groundwater pumping. I look forward to the more detailed engineering certification of how the design meets the criteria in the stamped certification from the engineer.

Since this is an Institutional Master Plan project, it will not go to the Board of Appeals. Therefore, I believe that the engineer's certification and the BWSC approval of the recharge system need to be in place before BRA approval. I look forward to working with the proponent and the Authority to assure that this project can have only positive impacts on area groundwater levels.

Very truly yours,

Elliott Laffer
Executive Director

Cc: Kathleen Pedersen, BRA
Maura Zlody, BED