

Executive Director's Report

Nov. 3, 2004

Annual Report – The annual report was hand delivered to the City on Monday, Nov. 1. The report sets a template that we can use in future years.

Parallel Organization – We have engaged Bruce Wickersham of Piper Rudnick as our pro bono attorney as we explore the best way to structure this. We are staying in contact with the City to make sure that what we do does not interfere with our current relationship in any way.

Office – Our new office is open at 234 Clarendon St. Phone lines, email, and computer are up and running. We have held several small meetings there. The space is working out very well.

Budgeting – We are beginning the process of establishing a budget tracking system that will allow us to run multiple open contracts at once without losing control.

Web Site – The web site has been somewhat cleaned up. We are working with our host to improve billing arrangements for both hosting and development work.

Publicity – The Trust was featured in a very positive column by Tom Keane in the Herald. I was interviewed on BNN-TV. I did an interview with The Sampan in Chinatown that will run shortly.

BWSC – The Commission shared with us, subject to an agreement not to remove them from our offices, the calculated contour maps that they develop from our well readings. These can be very helpful in graphically pointing us toward suspected “hot spots”. Based on our data, the BWSC located a “hot spot” at the corner of Dartmouth and Beacon Streets. They have determined it is caused by a leaking deep sewer and will be repairing it shortly. They have also determined that their sewer under Back Street needs to be repaired. This major project will be designed in 2005 and built the following year. In the meantime, they have pledged to repair any leaks causing groundwater drawdown. Maps based on the September well readings are now being prepared; we should receive them within the next week or so.

DCR – We will be jointly reading both our wells and theirs on November 10. This was to happen in October, but was thrown off by some communications difficulties.

BRA – I met with Rick Shaklik on Oct.29 to review the BRA's current thinking on a zoning amendment. They are planning a zoning overlay district in which they will attempt to capture runoff for recharge when currently permeable surfaces are covered and will impose restrictions on construction below the groundwater table. Such construction will be a conditional use, requiring approval by the Board of Appeals. They hope to have draft language complete in November, then circulate it to us and others for comment. A

public meeting will follow before submission to the Zoning Commission. If measure is adopted, we will plan a meeting the Board of Appeal to educate them on the importance of enforcing the restrictions imposed. In addition to my meeting with Rick, I have been participating in the BRA scoping sessions under Article 80 for projects in the area of concern.

DPW – I will be sitting down with Para Jayasinghe on Nov. 5 to bring him up to date on what has been happening with the Trust. Para has been the first to raise groundwater issues at the BRA scoping sessions that I have attended and has made it clear that groundwater depletion must be prevented.

Project Comments – Filed formal comments on groundwater issues regarding the The Clarendon project planned for the Back Bay post office site and adjacent parking lot and for the Forsyth Institute expansion project in the Fenway. We will be filing comments this week on the Emerson Place project, probably next week on the Hamilton Towne Gate project.

BRA Scoping Sessions – Participated in scoping sessions for the Copley Residences project at 441 Stuart Street and the Hamilton Towne Gate project in the South End.

MEPA Scoping Session – Participated in the MEPA scoping session on the Forsyth Institute expansion project.

BRA Article 80 Public Meeting – Attended the public meeting on the Copley Residences project.

City Councilors Meeting – Gary Saunders, Tim Mitchell and I met with City Councilors Ross, Kelly, and McDermott, as well as staff members for several other council members, to update them on the work of the Trust. We had a very positive interchange and began discussion on our budget requirements going forward. Councilor Kelly was particularly supportive about the importance of our work.

Technical Advisory Committee – The Technical Advisory Committee met in our office on Oct. 29. We reviewed the contour maps provided by BWSC and discussed where we might need more information. We agreed on sites where wells still need to be located; Christian was charged with developing the locations so that we can begin the permitting process. We also discussed how best to structure the request for quotations on the EPA funded wells so that we meet the federal government's contracting requirements. Also discussed was potential access to data from existing wells in the Fort point Channel area.

Repayment For Destroyed Wells – We received payment from the BRA to replace the well that was destroyed during the Boylston Street Improvement Project in July. We have also received a commitment to pay for a new well to replace one destroyed during work at the Park Street Children's School on Beacon Hill.