

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

November 29, 2007

1. **City-State Groundwater Working Group** – The Working Group is scheduled to meet again on January 24.
2. **DCR** – The DCR continues to study the issues surrounding the Storrow Drive tunnel reconstruction along with those involving other DCR bridges and roadways in the Charles River Basin area. We have been told that the budget for interim repairs at the Storrow Drive tunnel includes funding for the interim recharge system, but its inclusion will not be committed until the budget and funding is clearer.
3. **MBTA** – The engineers have filed their letter recommending the steps to be taken for the long term solution to low groundwater levels in the area of the South End near Back Bay Station. The plan includes installation of a multipoint recharge system fed by the water currently being pumped away from the Follen Street Pump Station, along with design and cost estimate for a barrier wall cutting off groundwater flow heading toward the low point under the tracks near the end of Chandler Street. The barrier wall would be installed if the recharge system does not adequately raise groundwater levels in the designated zone. The proposal will soon be brought to a combined meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee to the City-State Groundwater Working Group and the project's Action Team. If those groups concur, it will then be presented at a public meeting. This will be followed by a formal presentation to the MBTA's General Manager. After his approval, a design engineer will be selected.
4. **BWSC** – The two wells that were damaged during installation of the Back Street sewer project have been replaced by BWSC. Unfortunately, the first readings from the new wells, taken this week, do not show any significant benefit from the recharge system to which they are almost adjacent. However, based on the extended period before there was any apparent benefit from the recharge system installed in the alley behind Hemenway Street, we may need to be patient.
5. **MTA** – The Turnpike is still awaiting turnover of the remaining groundwater equalization systems along the Artery. They may want our assistance in surveying elevations of the system inlets.
6. **GCOD** – The Board of Appeal and BRA continue to require complete compliance with the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District rules. Only one variance has been granted in the nearly two years since the GCOD was adopted, and it was clearly justified (and well documented) by specific conditions that would not allow recharge. We are in discussions with BWSC on the best way to develop a clear set of ground rules for the information that applicants must provide them to allow BWSC to confirm that the recharge system is properly sized and designed. We hope to have something that can be posted on both our and their websites.
7. **North End** – We have encountered some unanticipated delays in the installation of the injection well in the parking lot at Fulton Street. Our first attempt literally struck an underground brick wall. Christian identified a nearby site which was vacuumed yesterday. The injection well is scheduled to be installed tomorrow.

- 8. Prudential Center** – It appears that the only feasible location for recharge associated with the two new buildings proposed for the Prudential Center is in Exeter Street. As the project proceeds, there will likely be a meeting including the proponents and their engineers, BWSC, DPW, BGwT, and possibly BTB to work out the issues involved.
- 9. New Well** – The new well on Exeter Street near the Lenox Hotel, to be paid for by the hotel, has been installed.
- 10. Website** – Traffic to the website has declined substantially since the summer. It's not clear what has caused this. One group of IP addresses that had accounted for many of the visits in previous months has been absent for the last few. Since the addresses are unidentifiable, it is impossible to understand what caused the change.
- 11. Research Projects** – We continue to work with DND, the designated developer, and his architects to define exactly how we will proceed on the alternative foundation repair project in East Boston. The design continues to be developed by Jim Lambrechts and his team at Wentworth. We will be working with the Environment Department on a contract to fund the Trust for the installation work. We are still awaiting a formal report from Northeastern on the remote sensing project; it doesn't look like there has been any additional indication of success.
- 12. Comment Letters** – I have filed comment letters on the Boston East, Oxford Ping On Affordable Housing, and Boston Conservancy projects. I expect to file additional projects shortly on the 120 Kingston Street project. We have just received filings for projects at the Gardner Museum, 585 Commercial Street, and Bulfinch Triangle Parcel 1 projects, all of which may require comments. As always, comment letters are posted on our website.