

GROUNDWATER and The North End



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Why are low groundwater levels a problem?

Construction Techniques of Properties Built Before 1925, With Some Exceptions

- Many foundations were supported by wood pilings designed to be submerged/preserved in groundwater.
- Wood pilings were cut off at elevations of 5' – 7' above Boston City Base.
- When groundwater levels are low, pilings can become exposed to air and can deteriorate over time.

Implementation Steps

1. Boston Groundwater Trust

- City Council created in 1986
- Mayor expanded to all neighborhoods in 2005
- Installs wells, collects data, and provides public information

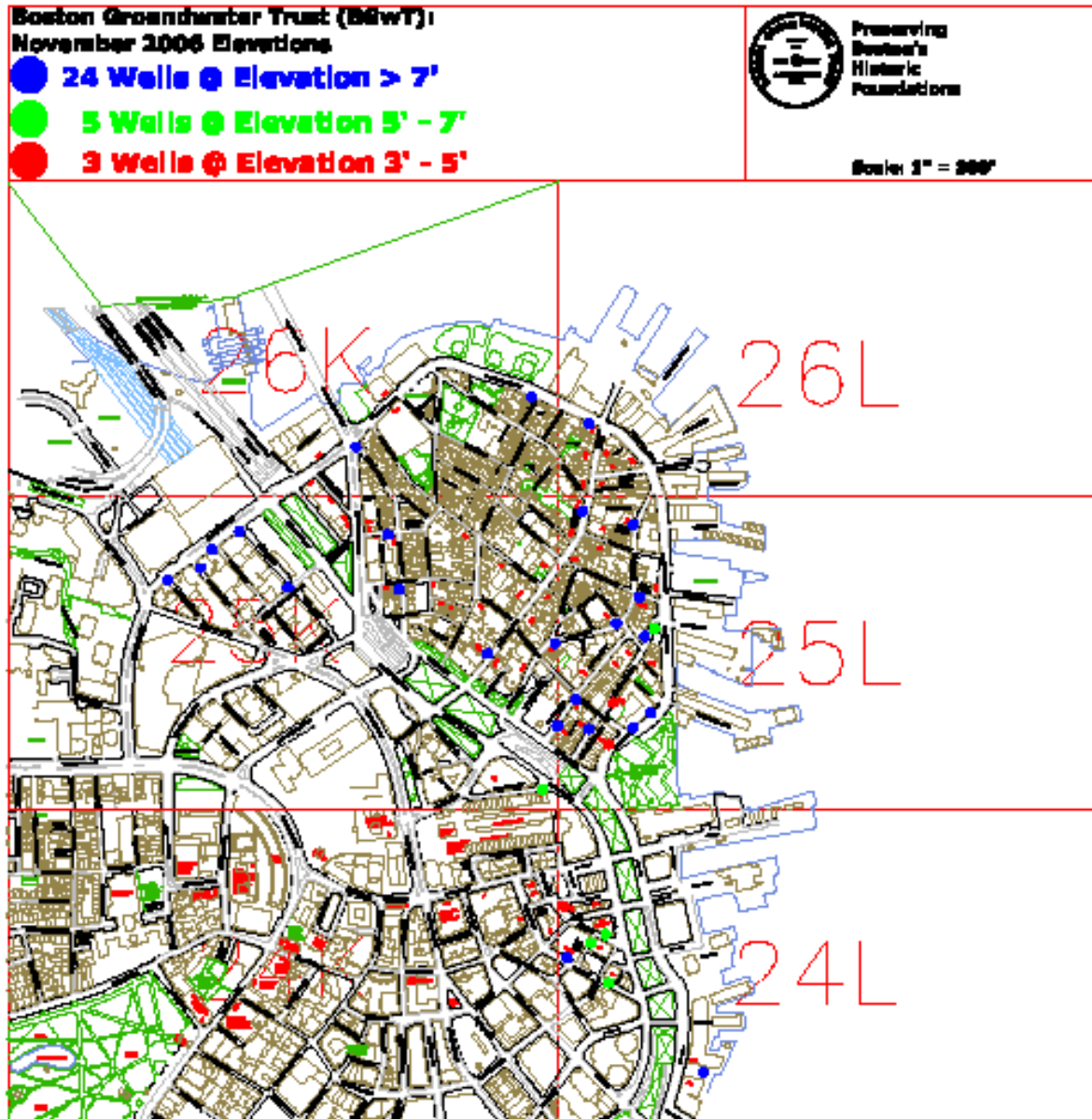
2. City/State MOU signed 2005

- Share information
- Identify problems
- Develop solutions

Groundwater Monitoring Well Network

- The City secured \$2 million to install a network of monitoring wells by the Boston Groundwater Trust.
- 800 well network completed June 2006.
- 26 installed in the North End.

North End Well Network



Proposed Groundwater Overlay District Expansion



Proposed North End GCOD Thresholds

- Any project that involves:
 - 1) Construction below Elevation 7 Boston City Base;
 - 2) New surface coverage of an additional 50 square feet or more.

Projects will a require conditional use permit from the Board of Appeals that demonstrates the proposed project will have no adverse impact on groundwater levels.

Next Steps for the North End

1. January: Receive input from local elected officials;
2. January 25: Receive community input;
3. March 8: Present Draft Proposal for approval of the BRA Board. If approved;
4. March 28: Present to the Zoning Commission for final approval and enactment.