

BOSTON GROUNDWATER TRUST (BGwT)
BOARD MEETING
May 29, 2008
The Lenox Hotel – Patriot Room

The meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Boston Groundwater Trust was called order at 4:04 pm in the Patriot meeting room. The meeting notice was posted at City Hall in accordance with provision of the Commonwealth's Open Meeting Law.

Trustees in attendance, comprising a quorum, were:

Mr. Tim Mitchell, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay
Mr. Gary Saunders, Boston Back Bay Association
Mr. Galen Gilbert, Fenway Community Development Corporation (CDC)
Mr. Peter Sherin, Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce
Mr. Michael Nairne, Ellis Neighborhood Association
Mr. Jim Hunt, Mayor's office
Ms. Nancy Grilk, Mayor's office
Ms. Nikko Mendoza, Mayor's office
Mr. William Moy, Chinatown Neighborhood Council
Ms. Mary Hall, Greater Boston Real Estate Board

Also present were:

Elliott Laffer, BGwT Executive Director; Christian Simonelli, BGwT Technical Coordinator; Anne M. Pistorio, North End Water Front Residents Association (NEWRA) Groundwater Working Group;

1. Adoption of the minutes of the March 27, 2008 Meeting

Minutes were distributed to board members for review. Discussion followed.

Trustee Mitchell moved to adopt the minutes. Trustee Nairne seconded the motion.

Voted: To accept the minutes of the March 27, 2008 meeting.

2. Finance Report

Because Trustee Sherin was not yet in attendance, Mr. Laffer reviewed the BGwT *Financial Report and Reconciliation Detail*. Mr. Laffer noted that he and Trustee Sherin met with the BGwT's accountant and corrected the balance. A note was added to the finance report to reflect this. The finance report now is through the same date as the account statement to make sure that they both reconcile. Discussion followed.

3. Strategic Planning Retreat

Mr. Laffer reviewed the proposal from Ann Donner for a second BGWT Strategic Plan Retreat. Discussion followed.

Trustee Gilbert questioned if the BGWT should plan another retreat since some of the goals put forth at the last retreat have not yet been met. Discussion followed.

Trustee Saunders noted that the BGWT's main goal of getting all the major players to the table that are responsible for groundwater, was reached with the formation of the City/State Groundwater Working Group. Discussion followed.

Trustee Saunders suggested Mr. Laffer circulate a list of the initial goals put forth to the board via email. Discussion followed.

The board decided to table the scheduling of a second retreat until the initial list of goals is reviewed by the board members.

4. Neighborhood Focus: North End

Mr. Laffer reviewed the current dynamics of the North End area of the city. He noted the following:

- BWSC's ongoing efforts of inspecting their infrastructure in the area. Also, the dye test in the Fulton St. parking lot has yielded results, with dye showing up in manholes of the CA/T tunnel. BWSC is working with the Turnpike Authority to film their infrastructure to determine the location of any intrusion and how it should be treated. Discussion followed.
- Commercial St. OW indicates a potential low spot which the BWSC will look at. Discussion followed.
- Noted the CA/T's groundwater equalization chambers. Discussion followed. Mr. Laffer will look into obtained invert elevations of the structures.

Trustee Hunt noted that in recent significant rain events some residents of the North End have had active sump pumps. Discussion followed.

Trustee Gilbert questioned if the BGWT has looked at obtaining information on dry air space below the groundwater table. Mr. Laffer explained the information that he has been able to get. Discussion followed.

Trustee Gilbert suggested the BGWT look into adding a representative from the North End Neighborhood to the board. Discussion followed.

Trustee Gilbert moved and Trustee Sherin seconded that the Board seek a representative from the North End neighborhood be and that Mr. Laffer work with the city to investigate an organization to nominate an appropriate candidate from the North End Neighborhood. Motion passed.

Trustee Gilbert suggested that the South End be the next neighborhood to focus on. Mr. Laffer will pull the information together for the next board meeting in July.

5. Recharge and Porous Paving

Mr. Laffer discussed his visit to the University New Hampshire's storm water labs. He looked at the University's demonstration of porous asphalt. Discussion followed.

Trustee Hunt noted that he was also present and was impressed with the University's presentation. He feels that they seem to be a foremost authority on the technology. Discussion followed.

Both Mr. Laffer and Trustee Hunt noted that the technology requires ongoing maintenance and can be used in some areas but not streets, sidewalks, and big parking lots. Discussion followed.

Mr. Laffer indicated that he has and will continue to survey schools within the GCOD who may be willing to serve as a site for a demonstration of porous asphalt. Discussion followed.

Mr. Laffer noted that the Storrow Drive Underpass will be providing recharge to the Back St. recharge galley's as apart of their interim repairs this summer. Discussion followed.

For a complete list of current and future recharge projects refer to the attached *Executive Director's Report: May 29, 2008*.

Trustee Gilbert asked what the status was of his proposal of hiring a full-time Recharge Coordinator. Mr. Laffer noted that this is something he and Mr. Simonelli can work on jointly with the help of BWSC and, that the current BGwT staff is sufficient to handle this position. Discussion followed.

Trustee Saunders wanted to know the status of the BGwT's efforts to obtain pumping data. Mr. Laffer updated the board on the latest data received from BWSC and MBTA. Discussion followed.

6. Research Projects

Mr. Laffer updated the BGwT on finding the tops of woodpiles using radar and acoustics. Discussion followed.

Mr. Laffer noted that Professor Lambrechts will be providing the BGwT with a final report on his proposed Mat-Slab foundation. Discussion followed.

7. Executive Director's Report

BGwT Executive Director Mr. Elliott Laffer distributed his report. Discussion followed. Refer to the attached *Executive Director's Report: May 29, 2008*, for a complete list of all activities.

8. Technical Coordinator's Report

BGwT Technical Coordinator Mr. Christian Simonelli presented his activities since last meeting. Discussion followed. Refer to the attached *Technical Coordinator's Well Monitoring Update BGwT Meeting: May 29, 2008* for a complete list of all activities.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: July 31, 2008 @ 4:00 pm at the Lenox Hotel.

Notes submitted by Christian Simonelli, BGWT Technical Coordinator, on 5/30/08.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Galen Gilbert".

Galen Gilbert, Secretary

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT
May 29, 2008

1. **DCR** – DCR will be holding a public meeting on June 4 to discuss the Storrow Drive interim repair project. That should be an opportunity to pin down when the interim recharge system is expected to be in place.
2. **MBTA** – The MBTA has prepared a Request for Proposals for the designer for the Long Term Solution to low groundwater levels in the Back Bay Station area of the South End. They hope to have the designer under contract by the end of the summer.
3. **BWSC** – BWSC responded rapidly to a low groundwater condition near the corner of Beacon and Dartmouth Streets. They determined that one of their manholes near the intersection of Dartmouth Street and Public Alley 419 was leaking. Repairs were completed last week.
4. **MTA** – The MTA is working on a Notice of Project Change related to the amount of water discharged from the Central Artery and Ted Williams Tunnel to the MWRA system. They have been encouraged by MEPA to work with us on potential recharge at appropriate locations. They will look into potential recharge from low points near Chinatown, the Leather District, and the North End.
5. **GCOD** – Compliance with GCOD standards continues to lead to more recharge systems being installed. It has also caused groundwater issues to be addressed on all projects in the area covered, with proponents offering foundation designs aimed at preventing any reductions in groundwater levels. The Board of Appeals, along with both the BRA and the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services, continues to be completely supportive of what we are trying to accomplish. We have had a couple of cases where projects undergoing Small Project Review under Article 80 did not realize that they needed to file with BWSC prior to going to the Board of Appeals; I hope to work with the BRA to make sure that project managers advise proponents of the need to do so.
6. **Recharge Coordinator** – Following up on the resolution adopted at the March trustees meeting, we have met with John Sullivan and Henry Luthin of BWSC along with Nancy Grilk to discuss how to implement a program aimed at coordinating recharge efforts. BGwT and BWSC will work together to provide these services, with Technical Coordinator Christian Simonelli handling much of the effort for the Trust.
7. **North End** – Dye was discovered in an MTA pumping station near Haymarket. It was traced back to a storm drain in the exit ramp near Fulton and Cross Streets. The MTA is considering what the next step will be to eliminate the groundwater flow to the drain.
8. **Website** – Traffic at the website has in May has continued at the relatively high level that occurred in April. We have been adding new links to recharge
9. **30 North Margin Street** – The BRA is trying to set up a meeting with the developer so that we can discuss our concerns and how they can best assure that the project will not have an adverse effect on groundwater levels in the North End.
10. **Recharge** – Jim Hunt has scheduled a meeting with representatives of the Boston Public Schools on Friday to discuss the possibility of installing porous pavement in one of their parking lots at a school in the GCOD area.
11. **Education** – I wrote a letter in support of a group that is planning a pilot school that would include a middle school level course on the science, technology, history, and civics of the groundwater issue in Boston. If the school is approved, we will be involved in development of the curriculum around groundwater.
12. **Green Alley** – I have had discussions with the Back Bay Architectural College about a project for which they are seeking a grant to turn the alley behind their building on

Newbury Street into a green alley with porous pavement. We filed a letter in support of their grant application.

- 13. Public Meeting** – I attended both a public meeting and a BRA scoping session for the new office building planned for 212-222 Stuart Street. The developer was responsive to the issues that we raised and appears to have a proposal that will meet GCOD standards.
- 14. Comment Letters** – I filed comment letters with the BRA for the projects at 30 North Margin Street and 212-222 Stuart Street. As always, they are posted on our website.
- 15. Training Session** – At their request, I conducted a training session on groundwater issues for the agents at Hammond Real Estate who work in the GCOD area. There were agents from offices in South End, Back Bay, Beacon Hill, and Charlestown. It was an excellent opportunity to get the message out, and I was able to answer many of their questions.

**TECHNICAL COORDINATOR'S
WELL MONITORING UPDATE
BGwT Meeting: May 29, 2008**

WELL MONITORING

The BGwT's latest set of readings are indicated below.

There are currently 714 wells in the West network. Wells were read between Apr. 2 – May 2, 2008. Of the 711 wells read:

- 174 wells @ elevation >7'
- 316 wells @ elevation 5'- 7'
- 154 wells @ elevation 3'-5'
- 40 wells @ elevation <3'
- 0 wells @ Dry
- 27 wells @ no reading

We have read 85 wells in the East network (East Boston Area). Wells were read in East Boston on Mar. 26 & 30, 2008. Of the 85 wells read:

- 46 wells @ elevation >7'
- 12 wells @ elevation 5'- 7'
- 8 wells @ elevation 3'-5'
- 10 wells @ elevation <3'
- 7 wells @ Dry
- 2 wells @ no reading

NOTE: We are continuously reading the well network and started a new set of readings on Monday May 12, 2008.

Additional Wells

- Incorporated 5 Columbus Center wells in the public sidewalks and will incorporate an additional 5 wells

installed along the Railroad alignment once data is obtained from H&A.

- Performed a site walkover with Ryan Boudreau of H&A and visited all 5 Columbus Center datalogger locations. H&A will provide us with current data and observation well installation reports.

LEVELOGGERS

- We continue to upload dataloggers at the following locations on a weekly basis:
 - 2 on and around Saint Charles St. and 2 on Cazenove Street
 - 5 on Beacon St., in the Berkeley to Clarendon St. block
 - 1 at the corner of Charles St. South and Melrose St.
 - 1 adjacent to 211 Berkeley St.
 - 3 in the North End around Fulton and Commercial Streets

ISD REASEARCH

- ISD continues to tweak their site. I periodically continue my research for buildings that have been underpinned when the site is usable
- I have worked with Nancy Grilk and provided some suggestions on how the site could be updated to better serve the user

NEW PART-TIMER

- Peter Luciani from Wentworth Institute of Technology has started reading our well network on a part-time basis.