

March 13, 2007

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

Subject: Wheelock College

Dear Mr. Autler:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Institutional Master Plan for Wheelock College. The Boston Groundwater Trust was established by the Boston City Council to monitor groundwater levels in sections of the City where the integrity of building foundations is threatened by lowered groundwater levels and to make recommendations for solving the problem. As such, my comments are limited to groundwater related issues.

As noted on page 4-6 of the IMP, the Wheelock campus is located within the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District. I am pleased to see, on that same page, that Wheelock intends to incorporate systems into its IMP projects that meet the GCOD standards. This is the minimum that should be required for any of these projects to be approved.

On page 9-5, in the section on Stormwater Retention/Treatment/Reuse and Groundwater Recharge, there is no mention of structured recharge. There is reference to an increase in the quality of runoff because roof water is considered to be cleaner than that drained from parking lots, as well as mention of the possible use of green roofs. The GCOD, under Article 32, calls the ability of the recharge systems to capture a specific minimum amount of water. The proponent should commit to meeting this standard before the approval of the IMP. If projects approved under the IMP will not have to get Conditional Use Permits to meet GCOD requirements, then an alternate procedure should be spelled out that will assure that the standards are met.

I look forward to working with Wheelock and the Authority to craft the necessary standards and to making sure that the projects envisioned in the IMP will make a positive contribution to helping to solve the groundwater problem in Boston.

Very truly yours,

Elliott Laffer
Executive Director

Cc: Maura Zlody, BED