

August 9, 2005

Mr. Mark McGowan
Boston Redevelopment Authority
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201-1007

Subject: 601-603 Albany Street

Dear Mr. McGowan:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Application for Small Project Review for this project. The Boston Groundwater trust was established by the Boston City Council to monitor groundwater levels in sections of the City where wooden piling building foundations are threatened by reduced groundwater levels and to make recommendations for solutions to the problem. As such, my comments are limited to groundwater related issues.

The project is located on what we believe to be filled land near what are probably wood pile supported buildings. However, it is impossible to directly comment on the proponent's plans since there is no mention of geotechnical issues or foundation design, other than to note the presence of a geotechnical engineer on the project team.

For any project located in a groundwater sensitive area, we must have more of an idea of what the developer is planning. We have in the past seen foundation designs that use underdrains to remove groundwater to the BWSC system and would tend to lower groundwater levels in the surrounding area. We have also seen plans that pave over an existing pervious surface and reduce natural recharge.

I believe that it is important that project approvals not be granted until these groundwater related issues are resolved. I look forward to working to working with the proponent and the Authority to reach a satisfactory resolution.

Very truly yours,

Elliott Laffer
Executive Director

Cc: John Walser, BRA
Maura Zlody, BED