

Boston Groundwater Trust

229 Berkeley St, Fourth Floor, Boston, MA 02116
617.859.8439
www.bostongroundwater.org

Board of Trustees

Gary L. Saunders
Tim Ian Mitchell
Co-Chairs

Janine Commerford
Greg Galer
John Hemenway
Peter Shilland
Amelia Croteau
Daniel Manning
Andre Jones
Aaron Michlewitz
Angie Liou
Ed Flynn
Christopher Cook

Executive Director

Christian Simonelli

October 29th, 2018

Michael Rooney, Project Manager
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201-1007

Subject: Boston University Data Sciences Center Project Notification Form
(PNF) Comments

Dear Mr. Rooney:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Boston University Data Sciences Center Project Notification Form (PNF) located in the Fenway. The Boston Groundwater Trust was established by the Boston City Council to monitor groundwater levels in sections of Boston where the integrity of building foundations is threatened by low groundwater levels and to make recommendations for solving the problem. Therefore my comments are limited to groundwater related issues.

The project is located in the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District (GCOD) established under Article 32 of the Zoning Code. As stated in the document and confirmed at the scoping session, the project will be designed and constructed to comply with the requirements of Article 32.

As stated in the document the Project will include one basement level with a similar footprint to the ground floor. An additional level of sub-basement will be located on the west side of the Site. The 5-story building podium will either be supported on a soil bearing mat foundation or, if the basement is reduced or eliminated in this area, the foundation will consist of pressure-injected-footings. The proposed tower levels atop the podium on the west side of the Site will be supported on a soil bearing mat foundation bearing in the marine deposits (clay). All basement walls that extend below the groundwater level, and also the mat slab, will be fully waterproofed. The structure will not cause the groundwater to raise, pond, or be lowered in the surrounding area.

The document also states that a temporary lateral earth support system will be required to complete the excavation for the below grade space. The earth support system will be a relatively impermeable wall such as continuous interlocking steel sheet piles. The excavation support wall will extend into the underlying marine deposits (clay) to create a groundwater barrier around the perimeter of the Site. Temporary construction dewatering will be required inside the limits of the excavation support wall.

The document also states the Project design will comply with GCOD and City standards by establishing design and construction methodology that protects groundwater. An engineer's certification report will be submitted to demonstrate that the standards have been met and that the Project will have no negative impacts to groundwater levels. Methods include use of fully waterproofed basement (walls and mat slab) for the portion of the structure that extends below groundwater levels. The Project will have no long-term groundwater pumping.

The document also states that a geotechnical monitoring program will be implemented prior to and during construction and will likely consist of settlement monitoring of adjacent buildings. A program of monitoring existing observation wells located on and in the vicinity of the Site will also be conducted prior to and during construction. The Proponent will coordinate with the Boson Groundwater Trust (BGwT) regarding groundwater monitoring prior to and during construction. One groundwater monitoring well may be installed to document existing groundwater levels and hydrogeologic conditions. If required, the new well will be installed prior to the start of construction and will be installed in accordance with City and BGwT standards for permanent monitoring wells. The well will be installed at a location where it will be accessible for long term monitoring. In addition, the proponent will ensure BGwT observation well #23H-2374 (located in the sidewalk at the corner of Commonwealth Avenue and Granby Street) will be accessible when feasible during construction and will be preserved throughout the construction process.

The document states that Sidewalks surrounding the site will be improved in accordance with Boston Complete Streets guidelines, including new street lighting and new street trees where feasible. At the scoping session the proponent committed to exploring pervious paving materials for Sidewalks surrounding the site.

I look forward to continuing to work with the proponent and the Agency to assure that this project can have only positive impacts on area groundwater levels.

Very truly yours,



Christian Simonelli
Executive Director

CC: Kathleen Pederson, BPDA
Maura Zlody, EEOS