

# Boston Groundwater Trust

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## Executive Director

Elliott Laffer

February 2, 2012

Mr. Erico Lopez  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
One City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201-1007

Subject: Boston University

Dear Mr. Lopez:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Institutional Master plan Notification Form for Boston University. 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.

I appreciate the proponent's commitment, as stated in the IMPNF, to ensure that groundwater levels are not adversely affected by new development projects in areas of filled land and other sensitive locations. As I mentioned in the scoping session, this commitment is required of projects in the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District established in Article 32 of the Boston Zoning Code. As specific projects are brought forth under the IMP for Article 80 review, the proponent will have to furnish a letter stamped by a professional engineer registered in Massachusetts that demonstrates how the particular project will meet this standard. In the IMP, the proponent should commit to providing this information during future Article 80 processes.

I appreciate that the proponent, in section 8.6, acknowledges that a portion of the campus is in a City established groundwater protection zone (the GCOD mentioned above). The IMPNF notes that the University has been recharging roof runoff from new projects to increase groundwater levels. This is another requirement to meet the zoning under Article 32, with a specific amount of capture of rainwater mandated in the GCOD. I am pleased that the proponent verbally committed to meet the requirement during the scoping session. That commitment should be reiterated in the IMP.

I am pleased as well to note that the proponent has been using permeable paving materials to increase recharge in various locations on campus. I appreciate the proponent's offer, made at the scoping session, to share the university's experiences, both good and bad, with the Trust so that we can better advise people on how to implement such system in appropriate locations.

I look forward to working with the proponent and the Authority as individual projects are brought forward to assure that they can have only positive impacts on local groundwater levels.

Very truly yours,

Elliott Laffer  
Executive Director

Cc: Kathleen Pedersen, BRA  
Maura Zlody, BED