

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

February 15, 2007

1. **City-State Groundwater Working Group** – Ian Bowles, the new Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs, attended the January meeting of the Working Group and expressed the new administration's support for the group. Last week, Jim Hunt, Nancy Grilks, and I met with Phil Griffiths, the new undersecretary, who will be cochairing the Working Group to update him on how it has been working.
2. **Zoning** – There were public meetings in the North End and Fort Point Channel neighborhoods to discuss extending the GCOD. Because groundwater levels in these areas are generally high, there will be no recharge requirement and the zoning will only apply to those projects digging down below Elevation 7 Boston City Base or covering 50 square feet or more. The zoning is scheduled to go to the BRA Board and then the Zoning Commission in March.
3. **Public Improvement Commission** – The PIC adopted its rules for recharge systems extending under public ways this morning. The rules require that an applicant only use the public space if he cannot install a system on his own property and set requirements for avoiding interference with existing or potential infrastructure.
4. **BWSC** – The work on Back Street continues with continuing praise for the efforts of BWSC and its contractor. BWSC and DCR are studying how to utilize the recharge system being installed in Back Street as part of the recharge requirements for the Storrow Drive Underpass project.
5. **DCR** – I was elected chair of the traffic subcommittee of the Storrow Drive civic review process. The project is studying whether they can install the portion of the recharge system that will utilize BWSC's Back Street system before the rest of the project, now scheduled to begin construction no sooner than 2010.
6. **MBTA** – We continue to work with the T as part of their Action Team deciding how best to remedy the low groundwater problem in the St. Charles/Cazenove Street area. The recharge well at Berkeley Street appears to be having a positive impact on nearby observation wells; unfortunately, that has not yet been true for the recharge well on Cazenove Street. All parties are trying to figure out why. The Action Team is scheduled to recommend a long term solution to the MBTA's General manager at the end of March.
7. **MTA** – The MTA will be inspecting its drains in the area of Exeter Street and Huntington Avenue when the weather warms. There has been a drop in levels at that corner in recent months.
8. **MWRA** – The MWRA repairs completed in December have not yet led to an increase in groundwater levels in East Boston. We will continue to look for causes.
9. **East Boston** – Jim Lambrechts, Nancy Grilks, Christian Simonelli, and I did a walk through of the Paris Flats area of East Boston, where groundwater readings are particularly low, last week to gain a better appreciation for the area and for what steps might be the best to take to address groundwater related problems there. We will have a meeting tomorrow with Jim Hunt to discuss what we have

- found and how best to proceed. There will be a public meeting in East Boston early next month.
- 10. Columbus Center** – Columbus Center will be starting some preliminary work along the Turnpike shortly. It will probably be March or April before they get to the point where they will install the wells along the Turnpike.
 - 11. The Clarendon** – We expect to receive shortly the report the project has commissioned from Haley and Aldrich about why groundwater levels are low in the area. Based on what I have heard informally from H&A, I think that the document will be very thorough.
 - 12. Website** – Traffic on the website picked up in late January and has been very high so far in February, with the highest number of average daily visits that we have ever seen.
 - 13. Potential Research Projects** – We have received a proposal from Northeastern University for a project to determine pile cut off elevations and possibly pile conditions without digging test pits. We have also received a proposal from Jim Lambrechts of Wentworth to develop an alternative method of repairing the foundations of lighter buildings that might have particular application in East Boston.
 - 14. Press** – There are new articles from the Boston Courant posted on our website. The article on extension of the GCOD into the North End from Sunday's Boston Globe will be posted shortly.