

BOSTON GROUNDWATER TRUST (BGwT)
BOARD MEETING
May 28, 2009

The Board of Trustees of the Boston Groundwater Trust held its meeting in the Heritage meeting room of the Lenox Hotel. The Executive Director posted a meeting notice at City Hall in accordance with provision of the Commonwealth's Open Meeting Law. In lieu of a chair presence, Mr. Gilbert called the meeting to order at 4:11 pm. The following trustees were present, and Mr. Gilbert declared that there was a quorum:

Mr. Galen Gilbert, Fenway Community Development Corporation (CDC)
Mr. Jim Hunt, Mayor's Office
Ms. Nancy Grilk, Mayor's office
Ms. Nikko Mendoza, Mayor's office
Mr. Peter Shilland, Ellis Neighborhood Association
Mr. William Moy, Chinatown Neighborhood Council
Ms. Mary Hall, Greater Boston Real Estate Board

Also present:

Elliott Laffer, BGwT Executive Director; Christian Simonelli, BGwT Technical Coordinator; Anne M. Pistorio, North End Water Front Residents Association (NEWRA) Groundwater Working Group

1. Adoption of the minutes of the March 26, 2009 Meeting

Minutes were distributed to board members for review. Discussion followed.

Mr. Hunt, Trustee, moved to adopt the minutes. Mr. Moy, Trustee, seconded the motion.

Voted: To accept the minutes of the March 26, 2009 meeting.

2. Finance Report

In lieu of Mr. Sherin, Trustee, who was absent, Mr. Laffer reviewed the BGwT *Financial Report and Reconciliation Detail*. Discussion followed. Mr. Laffer noted that the BGwT purchased a laptop and that is reflected under the Executive Director's expenses. Discussion followed.

3. Pending Legislation Analysis

Mr. Gilbert, Trustee, reviewed the committee's consensus on 13 points about legislation. Discussion followed. Mr. Gilbert noted that the legislation is trying to minimize and regulate pumping within the city, which he feels is a great thing. Discussion followed.

Mr. Tim Mitchell, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay arrived.

The chair was passed to Mr. Mitchell, Co-Chair, at 4:37pm

Mr. Gilbert and Mr. Hunt both felt that the BGwT should use the points as a basis for a letter to the legislative committee but not support or oppose pending legislation. Discussion followed. Mr. Hunt feels that the BGwT should continue to offer technical expertise on the groundwater issue. Discussion followed.

Mr. Hunt moved to have Mr. Laffer draft a letter explaining the role of the BGwT and its analysis of the pending legislation. The letter will be circulated to the committee and co-chairs for review. Mr. Shilland seconded the motion. Discussion followed.

Voted: To approve the motion.

4. Role of Trust and Other Entities on Groundwater

Mr. Laffer reviewed the "Who Does What?" list which describes the roles of various agencies and groups. Discussion followed.

Mr. Hunt asked Mr. Laffer to explain the role of the BGwT Technical Committee. Discussion followed. Mr. Laffer noted how informative and important this committee is to the BGwT. Discussion followed.

5. Executive Director's Report

BGwT Executive Director Mr. Elliott Laffer distributed his report. Discussion followed. Refer to the attached *Executive Director's Report: May 28, 2009* for a complete list of all activities.

Mr. Laffer noted that the BGwT was a brief participant in Dig Safe System, Inc. However, due the high volume of tickets that were generated over the first 3 days of membership, it was not feasible for the BGwT to continue its membership in the service. Discussion followed.

Mr. Laffer and Mr. Hunt updated the board on the MBTA's long term solution in the Ellis Neighborhood area. Discussion followed.

Mr. Gilbert asked if Mr. Laffer had received any pumping data. Mr. Laffer noted that he had received some pumping data from the MBTA. Discussion followed.

6. Technical Coordinator's Report

BGwT Technical Coordinator Mr. Christian Simonelli presented his activities since last meeting. Discussion followed. Refer to the attached *Technical Coordinator's Well Monitoring Update BGwT Meeting: May 28, 2009* for a complete list of all activities.

7. Other Business

Mr. Gilbert suggested that Mr. Simonelli undertake the following activities:

- 1.) Conduct a survey of all the paved areas throughout the city of Boston, concentrating on the largest ones.
- 2.) Quantify the GCOD data to see how much water is going into the ground
- 3.) Develop expertise on the technology of recharging through Porous Pavements
- 4.) Work on Engineered sidewalks with the city

Discussion followed.

Mr. Gilbert suggested that the activities of the Recharge Coordinator be put on the next meeting agenda and reported on at each meeting. Mr. Laffer said this could be part of his Technical Report.

Mr. Gilbert suggested that the BGwT revisit presenting specific neighborhoods at board meetings. Discussion followed. Mr. Gilbert also noted that he received an award from the Fenway CDC for his 20 yrs. of service on the groundwater issue.

Mr. Laffer noted that the Mayor has level funded the BGwT in the FY 2010 budget filed with the City Council. This would represent an increase in the City funding from that included in the BGwT budget adopted in March. If the higher funding is in the budget adopted by the Council, BGwT will address its budget again in the July meeting. Discussion followed.

The meeting adjourned at 5:58 .m.

NEXT MEETING: July 30, 2009 @ 4:00 pm at the Lenox Hotel.

Notes submitted by Christian Simonelli, BGwT Technical Coordinator, on 5/28/09.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Galen Gilbert".

Galen Gilbert, Secretary

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT
May 28, 2009

1. **City-State Groundwater Working Group** – The Group will meet again in July.
2. **MBTA** – The MBTA continues design work on the long term solution for the area of the South End near Back Bay Station. Transfer of the allocated state funds from construction to creation of a maintenance fund for the installation, agreed to in concept by both the City and the BGwT, will require a legislative correction. The T should soon be installing a replacement well for the one that was destroyed during work on Boylston Street across from Copley Square.
3. **DCR** – The connection between the Storrow Drive West Pumping Station and the recharge galleys under Back Street should be completed imminently. There will be a ceremony when the flow is formally turned on.
4. **BWSC** – BWSC expects to repair the leak at Beacon and Dartmouth Streets shortly. The sewer lining project in the South End, Back Bay, and Beacon Hill is under way.
5. **MTA** – The repairs to the MTA drain line near Clarendon Street should be completed this week.
6. **MWRA** – Construction has begun on their project to replace their sewer system in East Boston. As part of this work, they will deactivate and fill the sewer along Porter Street that is in the area of consistently very low readings; the pipe should be filled before the end of 2009.
7. **GCOD** – Compliance with GCOD remains excellent. Although the recession has slowed the number of applications, there still are very few Board of Appeals sessions without at least one GCOD case.
8. **Legislation** – There have been two bills filed with the Legislature that address aspects of the groundwater issue. A hearing on the City's bill to offer tax credits for some groundwater related work was held yesterday. We do not yet know the schedule for a hearing on Rep. Walz's bill to address multiple aspects of governance and other issues related to groundwater.
9. **Website** – Traffic on the website dropped back somewhat in May. We are working on an update to the Wells section, as suggested by Tim Mitchell, that will highlight the need to know piling cutoff elevation as well as groundwater level to really understand the vulnerability of a property. In addition, Christian is gradually going through the building jackets of all properties in the areas of concern to gather data on cutoff elevations and identify buildings in the area that are not on wood pilings; we will post the data on the website.
10. **Research Project** – Christian and I met this week with Professor Rich Vogel of Tufts, who advised the undergraduates who worked on the statistical study reported last month that showed a relationship between GCOD related recharge and increases in groundwater levels. Prof. Vogel introduced us to Brian Thomas, a Ph.D. student who could work on a more in depth study that could confirm the undergraduates' findings and show how they apply across a broader set of wells. The study would require funding from BGwT; I expect a formal proposal in a few weeks.
11. **New Wells** – We will shortly receiving access to wells installed by Berklee College near Massachusetts Avenue. In addition, the project planned for 93 Massachusetts Avenue should soon be installing an observation well near the Eliot Hotel. Installation of these wells was required by the BRA and transfer is required under the City's PIC policy that gives the BGwT the option of taking over any groundwater observation well installed on property over which the Public Improvement Commission has control.
12. **Comments** – I attended a scoping session for a building addition at Children's Hospital and filed comments on the project. The comments are, as always, posted on our website.
13. **Accounting** – I have received the paperwork and will once again be engaging Raphael & Raphael LLP to provide a review of our accounts and prepare an annual report and our tax return. The fee is unchanged from last year.

**TECHNICAL COORDINATOR'S
WELL MONITORING UPDATE
BGwT Meeting: May 27, 2009**

WELL MONITORING

The BGwT's latest set of readings are indicated below.

There are currently 721 wells in the West network. Wells were read between April 5- 30, 2009. Of the 721 wells read:

- 189 wells @ elevation >7'
- 312 wells @ elevation 5'- 7'
- 164 wells @ elevation 3'-5'
- 36 wells @ elevation <3'
- 2 wells @ Dry
- 18 wells @ no reading

We have read 85 wells in the East network (East Boston Area). Wells were read in East Boston on April 2 & 5, 2009. Of the 85 wells read:

- 49 wells @ elevation >7'
- 12 wells @ elevation 5'- 7'
- 8 wells @ elevation 3'-5'
- 10 wells @ elevation <3'
- 6 wells @ Dry
- 0 wells @ no reading

NOTE: We are continuously reading the well network and started a new set of readings on Tuesday May 12, 2009.

NEW PART-TIMER

- I have hired Xavier D'Ambrosio, from Wentworth Institute of Technology. Xavier started reading the BGwT network on Tuesday May 12, 2009 reading.

LEVELLOGGERS

- We continue to upload dataloggers at the following locations on a weekly basis:
 - 1 on and around Saint Charles St. and 2 on Cazenove Street
 - 5 on Beacon St., in the Berkeley to Clarendon St. block
- 10 dataloggers have also been installed in the Back Bay, South End, and the Fenway
- We are experiencing difficulty accessing 3 of the 5 wells along the alignment we received from Columbus Center and are in discussions with the MBTA to resolve the access issue.

CONTOURS

- We now have the ability to generate contours for all areas of our well network. Elliott and I have reviewed them with our technical committee and some minor adjustments need to be made.
- We will continue to receive the contours from BWSC and will be sending them our contours for cross-checking.

ISD RESEARCH

- We continue to look for building permits and any underpinned buildings
- I have completed all of Back Bay and am working with Elliott on the best way post the data on the site.