

BOSTON GROUNDWATER TRUST (BGwT)  
BOARD MEETING  
November 20, 2008

The Board of Trustees of the Boston Groundwater Trust held its meeting in Boston City Hall in the Mayor office in the Eagle meeting room. The Executive Director posted a meeting notice at City Hall in accordance with provision of the Commonwealth's Open Meeting Law. Mr. Saunders called the meeting to order at 4:03 pm. The following trustees were present, and the Chairman declared that there was a quorum:

Mr. Gary Saunders, Boston Back Bay Association  
Mr. Tim Mitchell, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay  
Mr. Galen Gilbert, Fenway Community Development Corporation (CDC)  
Mr. Jim Hunt, Mayor's Office  
Mr. Michael Ross, City Council District 8  
Mr. Aaron Michlewitz, North End Waterfront Neighborhood Council  
Ms. Nancy Grilk, Mayor's office  
Ms. Nikko Mendoza, Mayor's office  
Mr. William Moy, Chinatown Neighborhood Council  
Ms. Molly Sherden, Beacon Hill Civic Association  
Ms. Mary Hall, Greater Boston Real Estate Board

Also present:

Honorable Mayor Thomas M. Menino; Elliott Laffer, BGwT Executive Director; Christian Simonelli, BGwT Technical Coordinator; Professor James Lambrechts, Wentworth Institute of Technology; Anne M. Pistorio, North End Water Front Residents Association (NEWRA) Groundwater Working Group

**1. Adoption of the minutes of the September 25, 2008 Meeting**

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

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

**Voted:** To accept the minutes of the September 25, 2008 meeting.

**2. Report to Mayor and Photograph**

Honorable Mayor Thomas M. Menino expressed his gratitude toward the BGwT for its hard work and positive results. Discussion followed. Mayor Menino also went on to say that he prefers the BGwT remain an outside entity. He feels this is the best way for the BGwT to operate. Mayor Menino noted that the team effort has been crucial to the BGwT's success and that must continue. Discussion followed.

Mr. Saunders, Trustee, expressed his gratitude toward the Mayor and the City for their continued support. Mr. Saunders noted that BWSC has been great and extremely responsive in working with the BGwT. Discussion followed.

Mr. Laffer noted that the City/State Groundwater Working Group has among the best and most productive meetings he has ever been to. He also thanked the Mayor for helping bring together all of the entities that participate in the meeting. Discussion followed.

Mr. Hunt, Trustee, noted the great working relationship between the City and State officials at the City/State Groundwater Working Group meetings. Mr. Hunt also noted the smooth transition when Governor Patrick was elected. Mr. Hunt noted that the efforts of the BGwT have been outstanding. Discussion followed.

Mr. Mitchell, Trustee, expressed his gratitude toward the Mayor and the City in regards to the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District (GCOD). Mr. Mitchell noted the over 100 recharge systems that have been approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Discussion followed.

Mr. Gilbert, Trustee, expressed his gratitude toward the Mayor along with City and State officials for addressing the groundwater issue. Discussion followed.

Mr. Ross, Trustee, noted that the BGwT board and its staff are comprised of great people who have done and continue to do outstanding work. Mr. Ross also thanked the Mayor for his attention to the groundwater issue. Discussion followed.

### **3. Finance Report**

Because of Mr. Sherin's, Trustee, absence Mr. Laffer reviewed the BGwT *Financial Report and Reconciliation Detail*. He noted that the Certificates of Deposit (CD) are now 100% insured by the FDIC. Discussion followed.

Mr. Laffer also noted the BGwT received the FY09 operating funds from the city. Discussion followed.

### **4. Meeting Dates for 2009**

Mr. Laffer proposed meeting dates for 2009. *See the attached list of dates.*

Mr. Moy moved to adopt proposed meeting dates for 2009. Ms. Mendoza, Trustee, seconded the motion.

**Voted:** To accept the proposed meeting dates for 2009.

### **5. Potential Research Project**

Mr. Laffer reviewed a proposal submitted by Tufts University for Trend Detection and Attribution for Boston Groundwater Levels. Discussion followed.

Mr. Gilbert noted that he liked the response of the BGwT to look into this. He also questioned if the BGwT would own the database and the procedures that would be used by Tufts. Discussion followed.

Mr. Mitchell suggested a joint proposal with BWSC would make him find it to be more acceptable to approve the research project. Discussion followed.

Mr. Saunders felt that the \$39,189 price tag was outrageous and did not see a justification for the spending. Discussion followed.

Mr. Moy felt that there are too many variables which were not accounted for in the proposal. Discussion followed.

Ms. Hall, Trustee, felt that approving for the full \$39,189 would be a mistake. Ms. Hall felt that approving the money in stages would be the best way to go. Discussion followed.

After discussion, it was the consensus that the project not go forward at this time and that Mr. Laffer work with the researchers at Tufts to address the concerns of the trustees.

**6. ISD**

Mr. Gilbert moved that the BGwT ask ISD to provide information about historic pile cutoff elevations of woodpiles and repaired cutoff elevations of woodpiles on projects that have been underpinned. Discussion followed.

Mr. Saunders seconded the motion.

**Voted:** To accept Mr. Gilbert's motion.

**7. Strategic Planning Retreat**

Mr. Laffer noted that excellent turnout at the retreat and thanked those who attended. Discussion followed.

**8. Executive Director's Report**

BGwT Executive Director Mr. Elliott Laffer distributed his report. Discussion followed. Refer to the attached *Executive Director's Report: November 20, 2008*, for a complete list of all activities.

Trustee Gilbert wanted to know the status of the Recharge Coordinator position. Mr. Laffer noted that the position will be formalized with Mr. Simonelli assuming the responsibilities of the position. Mr. Gilbert asked that the Recharge Coordinator job description be brought to the trustees for approval. Discussion followed.

**9. 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: November 20, 2008* for a complete list of all activities.

**The meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.**

**NEXT MEETING: January 29, 2009 @ 4:00 pm at the Lenox Hotel.**

**Notes submitted by Christian Simonelli, BGwT Technical Coordinator, on 11/21/08.**

Respectfully submitted,



Galen Gilbert, Clerk

**PROPOSED 2009 TRUSTEE MEETING DATES**

January 29

March 26

May 28

July 30

September 24

November 19

All meetings would be on Thursdays at 4:00. Meetings in January and July are week after City-State Groundwater Working Group meets.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**  
**November 20, 2008**

1. **City-State Groundwater Working Group** – The group will meet again in January.
2. **MTA** – The MTA hopes to make the repairs to the pipe near Clarendon St in December.
3. **MBTA** – We met with the MBTA and their consultant at Cazenove Street last week. The recharge well was putting approximately 7.5 gallons per minute into the ground. Unfortunately, that water was being rapidly withdrawn and levels were at a low point. The withdrawal may be related to underpinning work underway at a location nearby. This project is to be completed in December, and we will continue to have data loggers in the wells on Cazenove Street that we will monitor closely to see if the levels increase. I appreciate the cooperation of the T in trying to understand the problem.
4. **BWSC** – BWSC has found two leaks near where the liner installed last year in the West Side Interceptor under Beacon Street meets some cross connections. These could be the cause of recent low water readings in the area of Dartmouth and Beacon Streets. BWSC will shortly be contracting for a diver to make these repairs as well as to inspect and repair a possible leak in a sewer under Commercial Street that could be causing the low water levels near Richmond Street and Atlantic Avenue.
5. **GCOD** – Compliance with GCOD continues to be excellent. I recently met with a professor at Tufts about a potential research project to determine how much effect the systems installed so far have had on groundwater levels. We have received a proposal for conducting the project.
6. **Website** – Traffic has dropped slightly this month. We will soon be making some improvements to the website that should make it a little cleaner and easier to navigate. One anticipated new feature will be a list of most recent additions, allowing visitors to rapidly find anything new on the site.
7. **Meetings** – I met with a resident at Trinity Place to discuss ways in which that condominium building can help raise area groundwater levels.
8. **Comment Letters** – I filed a comment letter on the Maverick Street Apartments project in East Boston. It is, as always, posted on our website.

**TECHNICAL COORDINATOR'S  
WELL MONITORING UPDATE  
BGwT Meeting: November 20, 2008**

WELL MONITORING

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

There are currently 718 wells in the West network. Wells were read between October 4-31, 2008. Of the 718 wells read:

- 150 wells @ elevation >7'
- 302 wells @ elevation 5'- 7'
- 199 wells @ elevation 3'-5'
- 41 wells @ elevation <3'
- 2 wells @ Dry
- 24 wells @ no reading

We have read 85 wells in the East network (East Boston Area). Wells were read in East Boston on October 3&4, 2008. Of the 85 wells read:

- 48 wells @ elevation >7'
- 12 wells @ elevation 5'- 7'
- 8 wells @ elevation 3'-5'
- 11 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 Thursday November 6, 2008.

## LEVELOGGERS

- We continue to upload dataloggers at the following locations on a weekly basis:
  - 2 on and around Saint Charles St. and 2 on Cazenove Street
  - 5 on Beacon St., in the Berkeley to Clarendon St. block
  - 2 at the corner of Charles St. South and Melrose St.
  - 3 in the North End around Fulton and Commercial Streets
  - 5 wells installed along the Back Bay Station Railroad alignment
  - 1 adjacent to Trinity Church

## NEW PART-TIMER

- I will be conducting interviews for a new part-timer for the winter reading period. All three applicants are from Wentworth Institute of Technology.

## ISD REASEARCH

- We continue to look for building permits and any underpinned buildings.
- The search engine server has appears to have been updated and is now pulling information much faster.