

BOSTON GROUNDWATER TRUST (BGwT)
BOARD MEETING
September 25, 2008
The Lenox Hotel – Heritage Room

The meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Boston Groundwater Trust was called order at 4:07 pm in the Patriot meeting room. The meeting notice was posted at City Hall in accordance with provision of the Commonwealth's Open Meeting Law.

Trustees in attendance, comprising a quorum, were:

Mr. Gary Saunders, Boston Back Bay Association
Mr. Galen Gilbert, Fenway Community Development Corporation (CDC)
Mr. Peter Sherin, Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce
Ms. Molly Sherden, Beacon Hill Civic Association
Mr. Jim Hunt, Mayor's office
Ms. Nikko Mendoza, Mayor's office

Also present were:

Elliott Laffer, BGwT Executive Director; Christian Simonelli, BGwT Technical Coordinator; Professor James Lambrechts, Wentworth Institute of Technology; Karin Mathiesen, Councilor Michael Ross' Office; Anne M. Pistorio, North End Water Front Residents Association (NEWRA) Groundwater Working Group; David Holzman, Fenway CDC

1. Adoption of the minutes of the July 31, 2008 Meeting

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

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

Voted: To accept the minutes of the July 31, 2008 meeting.

2. Finance Report

Mr. Sherin, Trustee reviewed the BGwT *Financial Report and Reconciliation Detail*. He noted that the Certificate of Deposit (CD) of \$400 K has come due. Mr. Sherin and Mr. Laffer are working with Citizens Bank and other financial institutions to find the best way to deposit our funds. Discussion followed.

The funds from the CD have been temporarily placed in our existing Money Market account with Citizens Bank. Mr. Sherin and Mr. Laffer will confer with the BGwT co-chairs to work toward maximizing the security of the funds. Discussion followed.

Mr. Hunt noted that the city of Boston would be happy to assist the BGwT in financial advice about deposit insurance. Discussion followed.

Mr. Hunt moved to authorize Mr. Sherin, Mr. Laffer, and the co-chairs to further seek the maximum amount feasible, in order to provide protection and proper balance of BGwT funds. Mr. Saunders, Trustee, seconded.

Voted: To authorize Mr. Sherin, Mr. Laffer, and the co-chairs to further seek the maximum amount feasible, in order to provide protection and proper balance of BGwT funds. Passed.

3. FY08 Annual Report

Mr. Laffer distributed copies of the annual report for fiscal year 2008.

Mr. Laffer noted the BGwT has received funding from the city in the amount of \$169K for annual operating funds and expenses for fiscal year 2009. Discussion followed.

4. Strategic Planning Retreat

Mr. Laffer noted that the Retreat date has been set for Monday October 27, 2008 from 9am-1pm, tentatively at the Lenox Hotel. Discussion followed.

The Retreat had previously been scheduled to be held at University Club. However, current renovations to the club will not be completed by the 27th. Discussion followed.

Per a recommendation from Mr. Hunt, Mr. Laffer will look into having the Retreat in the basement of Trinity Church. Discussion followed.

5. Neighborhood Focus: Fenway

Mr. Gilbert, Trustee and others reviewed the dynamics of groundwater in the Fenway. They noted the following:

- Low groundwater levels still exist on Hemenway St. Trustee Gilbert believes that it may be due to a deep sewer in Hemenway St. He observed a deep pit of 25' or more in the 1970's which appeared to have a concrete sewer in it. Discussion followed.
- Trustee Gilbert noted that the Muddy River is at elevation 8' (BCB). He proposed investigating the feasibility of pumping water from the Muddy River over to the Hemenway St.area in a recharging effort. Discussion followed.
- Mr. Gilbert stated that he felt the Fenway has lost more housing due to low groundwater than any other area of the city. Discussion followed.
- Mr. Gilbert feels that while the recharge system installed in Public Alley No. 807 appears to be raising the groundwater levels in the area somewhat, they remain well below where they would be in the absence of a source of drawdown. Therefore, the BWSC needs to start over in finding the source of drawdown in the area. Discussion followed.
- Mr. Laffer noted that the West Fens historically has higher groundwater levels than the East fens. Discussion followed.
- Professor Lambrechts noted that the Muddy River water is too silty to use as recharge. Discussion followed. He also noted that multiple historical barriers exist underground in the East Fens and that these are the greatest unknowns. Discussion followed.
- Mr. Hunt noted that the current dredging efforts of the Muddy River will make the Muddy River cleaner. However, that won't be for some time. Discussion followed.

6. Executive Director's Report

BGWT Executive Director Mr. Elliott Laffer distributed his report. Discussion followed. Refer to the attached *Executive Director's Report: September 25, 2008*, for a complete list of all activities.

7. 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: September 25, 2008* for a complete list of all activities.

8. Other Business

Mr. Gilbert moved that BGWT board and staff pose for a picture with Mayor Menino. Discussion followed.

Mr. Hunt noted that a motion is not needed since Mayor Menino would like to meet with the BGWT. Discussion followed. Mr. Laffer noted that he will work with Ms. Grilk, Trustee, and will aim for the November BGWT board meeting.

After a discussion among the Trustees, Mr. Gilbert withdrew his motion.

Mr. Gilbert would like to have all the following polices listed below on the website be incorporated in to the by-laws:

- Conflict of Interests
- Expense Procedure
- Press Contact Policy
- Policy Recommendations of the Boston Groundwater Trust On Pumping/Draining Groundwater
- Policy for Acceptance of Observation Wells
- Timesheet and Expense Policy

Mr. Sherden noted that will require some thought and that polices simply cannot be added to the by-laws. Discussion followed.

After a discussion among the Trustees, Trustee Gilbert withdrew his motion. Mr. Gilbert will draft a motion and send via email to the Trustees.

The meeting adjourned at 5:37 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: November 20, 2008 @ 4:00 pm at the Lenox Hotel.

Notes submitted by Christian Simonelli, BGWT Technical Coordinator, on 9/26/08.

Respectfully submitted



Galen Gilbert, Clerk

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT
September 25, 2008

1. **DCR** – The recharge system to be installed as part of the interim repair project at the Storrow Drive Tunnel is expected to be connected to the recharge galleries on Back Street early this fall. There is a public meeting on Storrow Drive this evening at which I hope to get additional information.
2. **MTA** – The MTA has done a partial inspection of the tunnel section between Berkeley and Clarendon Streets and found dry weather flow coming from a reinforced concrete pipe section; they anticipate that the repair will be straightforward and will schedule it shortly. They will be inspecting the drain line flowing from the Prudential tunnel eastward shortly for possible dry weather flow. Repair work in the North End is nearing completion.
3. **MBTA** – I met with the T to discuss in more detail their plans for Silver Line Phase III and information that they will be preparing to update the public on groundwater related issues. We also discussed the potential for recharging the seepage water that would otherwise be discharged to the BWSC sewer system.
4. **BWSC** – BWSC has reinspected the repairs at the manhole at Beacon and Dartmouth Streets, and they appear to be holding. However, groundwater readings taken this month still did not show improvement. BWSC plans a television inspection of their lines in the area to look for a problem.
5. **Funding** – We have received our FY09 funding from the City, including the inflation adjustment from FY08.
6. **Bay Village** – At his request, Christian and I met with Lenny Snyderman who has installed one of the first recharge systems in Bay Village and wanted to show us how it works.
7. **GCOD** – We continue to have excellent compliance with the GCOD requirements. At almost every session of the Board of Appeals, several new recharge systems are mandated. There have now been 107 recharge systems approved by BWSC. The most systems are in the South End, with the largest overall amount of recharge, taking into account the size of the systems, located in the Fenway.
8. **Website** – Traffic at the website has been uneven in September, although hits are the highest since the Spring. We posted an interesting article from Structure magazine's December 2007 issue on groundwater and wooden pilings (it's posted under news from 2007).
9. **Meetings** – I attended scoping sessions on the Parcel 24 air rights project in Chinatown and the Parcel 7 air rights project near Kenmore Square. I also met with Boston Properties to iron out some of the groundwater issues on the Prudential Center expansion projects on Boylston and Exeter Streets. I discussed the GCOD process with the Condo Owners Group of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay. I also met with staffers from the Boston Preservation Alliance and Historic Boston who are working on a new program for preservation related neighborhood seminars and wanted to better understand the groundwater issue.
10. **Comment Letters** – I filed comment letters on projects at Parcel 7 and Wheelock College. All are posted on our website or will be shortly.

**TECHNICAL COORDINATOR'S
WELL MONITORING UPDATE
BGwT Meeting: September 25, 2008**

WELL MONITORING

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

There are currently 715 wells in the West network. Wells were read between July 27 - August 24, 2008. Of the 715 wells read:

- 199 wells @ elevation >7'
- 299 wells @ elevation 5'- 7'
- 183 wells @ elevation 3'-5'
- 26 wells @ elevation <3'
- 2 wells @ Dry
- 15 wells @ no reading

We have read 85 wells in the East network (East Boston Area). Wells were read in East Boston on July 26 & 27, 2008. Of the 85 wells read:

- 50 wells @ elevation >7'
- 11 wells @ elevation 5'- 7'
- 7 wells @ elevation 3'-5'
- 7 wells @ elevation <3'
- 10 wells @ Dry
- 0 wells @ no reading

NOTE: We are continuously reading the well network and started a new set of readings on Friday August 26, 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
 - 1 at the corner of Charles St. South and Melrose St.
 - 1 adjacent to 211 Berkeley St.
 - 3 in the North End around Fulton and Commercial Streets
 - 4 wells installed along the Back Bay Station Railroad alignment
 - 1 adjacent to Trinity Church