

February 29, 2008

Ms. Kristin Kara, Project Manager  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
One City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201-1007

Subject: 49/51/63 Melcher Street

Dear Ms. Kara:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Project Notification Form for 49/51/63 Melcher Street. The Boston Groundwater Trust was established by the Boston City Council to monitor groundwater levels in sections of the City where the integrity of building foundations is threatened by low groundwater levels and to make recommendations for solving the problem. As such, my comments are restricted to groundwater related issues.

As the proponent acknowledges in the PNF, the project is located in the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District. For projects located in the Fort Point Channel area, the GCOD requires that the project cannot cause a reduction in groundwater levels on the site or on adjacent lots. Although the proponent indicates in the PNF that this determination will be made by the Boston Water and Sewer Commission, Article 32, which establishes the GCOD, states that “The Applicant shall demonstrate that the Proposed Project meets the requirements of this section by certification from a Massachusetts registered engineer or other expert or authoritative body recognized by the Board of Appeal”. I am pleased that the proponent agreed during the scoping session to submit this certification.

Because the structures to be renovated themselves are, according to the PNF, supported on wood pilings, I am confident that the proponent recognizes the importance of maintaining adequate groundwater levels. I look forward to working with the proponent and the Authority to assure that the project will meet these requirements.

Very truly yours,

Elliott Laffer  
Executive Director

Cc: Kathleen Pedersen, BRA  
Maura Zlody, BED