

August 8, 2008

Secretary Ian Bowles
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
MEPA Unit – Attn: Deirdre Buckley
EOEEA #4325
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Subject: Tunnel Drainage System Notice of Project Change

Dear Secretary Bowles:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the NPC for the Central Artery/Tunnel drainage system. 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. Therefore, my comments are limited to groundwater related issues.

As noted in the NPC, the MTA met with the Trust to discuss whether recharge of the drainage water would be potentially useful in the effort to raise groundwater levels in areas of concern. While the referenced memo from Tetra Tech Rizzo found that in most cases the surrounding was not in need of water, in my meeting with the MTA we identified three areas where recharge could be useful if it was technically feasible. These three areas, identified in the NPC, are the North End (from LPPS #8), Chinatown (from LPPS #12), and the Leather District (from LPPS # 4&5).

I appreciate the commitment of the MTA to examine further the engineering feasibility of recharge at these sites and to coordinate their efforts with the Trust. I look forward to working with them as we determine whether this is a feasible way to help raise area groundwater levels.

The MTA has been an active member of the City-State Groundwater Working Group which is cochaired by EOEEA. I appreciate the efforts of all of the members to raise groundwater levels and reduce the harmful impacts of low groundwater levels on older buildings in much of Boston.

Very truly yours,

Elliott Laffer
Executive Director