

# Boston Groundwater Trust

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## Executive Director

Elliott Laffer

March 17, 2011

Mr. Gerald Autler, Senior Project Manager  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
One City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201-1007

Subject: Grandmarc at Northeastern

Dear Mr. Autler:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Project Notification Form for Grandmarc at Northeastern. 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.

I am pleased that the proponent recognizes that the project is located in the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District and pledges to comply with the requirements imposed in that area. According to the PNF, the basement walls and mat slab will be fully waterproofed; no underslab drains, perimeter drains, or permanent dewatering systems will be installed. I am pleased with these commitments; in addition, it is critical that the project be designed and constructed so that there is no path created for water to drain from the critical trapped upper aquifer to a lower level.

The proponent has committed to installing the required recharge system. It is tentatively planned to be installed under the private portion of St. Botolph Street. In addition, the proponent has pledged to monitor groundwater levels in the vicinity before and during construction to assure that they are not dropping below acceptable limits. While the proponent has offered to share the data with City agencies and the Trust on request, this data should be provided to the Authority and the Trust on a regular basis, at least monthly before construction and during non-critical phases and weekly when construction that has the highest potential to cause a reduction in levels is underway. In addition, Northeastern has promised, in an earlier meeting, to give the Trust access to three groundwater observation wells located on its property near the project site and to allow us to incorporate them into our network; I appreciate the offer and look forward to using these wells to improve our understanding of what is happening to groundwater levels in the Fenway.

As noted in the PNF, this project is located in a particularly sensitive area for groundwater related issues. The New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall, the remaining YMCA facility, and Northeastern's own Cullinane Hall, all at least partially supported on wood pilings according to the PNF, are immediately adjacent to the project site.

I have appreciated the efforts of the proponents in proactively reaching out to the Trust while preparing the PNF and the commitments they have made in the document and during the scoping session and other meetings. I look forward to continuing to work with them and with the Authority to assure that the project can have only positive impacts on area groundwater levels.

Very truly yours,

Elliott Laffer  
Executive Director

Cc: Kathleen Pedersen, BRA  
Maura Zlody, BED