

Boston Groundwater Trust

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Elliott Laffer

February 16, 2012

Mr. Erico Lopez
Boston Redevelopment Authority
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201-1007

Subject: Ink Block

Dear Mr. Lopez:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Expanded Project Notification Form for the Ink Block project. The Boston Groundwater Trust was established by the Boston City Council to monitor groundwater levels in sections of Boston where the integrity of building foundations is threatened by low groundwater levels and to make recommendations for solving the problem. Therefore, my comments are restricted to groundwater related issues.

I appreciate the acknowledgement, at multiple points in the PNF, that the project is located in the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District established under Article 32 of the Zoning Code and the stated commitment to meet the standards required in the GCOD. On page 5-4 of the document, there is a table indicating that the recharge capacity would be slightly below that mandated by the Code; I appreciate the proponent's commitment, in a subsequent email, to modify the design so that it will be completely compliant.

While the project includes a parking garage in a portion of the existing building basement, I note that the PNF shows that the parking level is at Elevation 8.7 BCB; this was confirmed during the scoping session, as was the information that the project would not include perimeter drains or underdrains. The proponent confirmed that they would provide the required letter from an engineer registered in Massachusetts showing how the proposed project cannot cause a reduction in groundwater levels on site or on adjacent lots before the project goes before the Board of Appeals.

I note as well the proponent's assertion of the value of the recharge system to be installed under the GCOD in reducing stormwater flow into the BWSC system, helping to meet state and federal clean water requirements. I also appreciate the proponent's efforts to reach out to the Trust earlier in the process to make sure that they would meet all groundwater related requirements.

I look forward to continuing to work with the proponent and the Authority to assure that the project can have only positive impacts on groundwater levels in this section of the South End.

Very truly yours,

Elliott Laffer
Executive Director

Cc: Kathleen Petersen, BRA
Maura Zlody, BED