



# EAST PROVIDENCE WATERFRONT DISTRICT COMMISSION

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## Waterfront Commission Hearing Panel Meeting Minutes Thursday, June 3, 2021 – 6:30 PM

A remote/virtual meeting was held in accordance with Governor Gina Raimondo's EXECUTIVE ORDER 20-46, JUNE 12, 2020, FORTY-SECOND SUPPLEMENTAL EMERGENCY DECLARATION - PUBLIC MEETINGS AND PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS, EXTENDED BY EXECUTIVE ORDER 21-59, MAY 27, 2021, EXTENSION OF EXECUTIVE ORDERS.

*Hearing Panel Commissioners present via video and audio:*      *Voting Members Absent:*

Steve Hardcastle, Hearing Panel Chair

Paul Moura

William Fazioli

Peter Willey

*Staff present via video and audio:*

Chris Martin, Executive Director

Amy Goins, Legal Counsel

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1. **CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS** The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM and gave an overview of remote meeting protocol.
2. **OLD BUSINESS**
  - A. **VOTE:** The motion by Mr. Fazioli to approve the minutes of November 19, 2020 was seconded by Mr. Willey and passed by a unanimous voice vote.
3. **NEW BUSINESS**
  - A. **HEARING PANEL PUBLIC HEARING**

**Applicant:** Fish Head Farms, Inc.  
**Owner:** Bourne Holdings, LLC  
**Address:** 310 Bourne Ave, Building 14, Unit 1  
**Map/ Block/ Lot:** Map 203, Block 1, Lot 3  
**Zoning/ Acreage:** Phillipsdale Sub-District

Mr. Hardcastle, Hearing Panel chair, confirmed quorum had been reached with three members of the Hearing Panel present. David Benharris, applicant and CEO of Fish Head Farms, explained that Fish Head Farms produces a beneficial bacteria and soil conditioner, not a fertilizer—which implies it contains nitrogen and phosphorus, which their product does not contain. Their product, Fish Sh!t, is created by harvesting the manure from 3,000 fish in a closed-loop indoor aquaculture system. This means that all the water used in the system either stays in the system or is bottled with their product, so there is no discharge into public sewer system. The fish are kept in the building in one of three individual 1,000 gallon tanks, equipped with spill guards and ensuring fish don't escape. The applicant is planning to install an aquaculture system on site at Phillipsdale Landing in order to manufacture and bottle the product. Once the aquaculture system is up and running, they would move their shipping and handling department onsite and then their headquarters and offices. Their current shipping/ packaging and office is in Rumford, RI and their farm is located in Rehoboth, MA. If approved, this would move their entire operation to East Providence. The applicant stated that they are working with a master HVAC technician on finalizing an odor mitigation system plan in place for internal and external odors via a negative pressure system with charcoal filters, which are expected

to completely contain the smells within the aquaculture system. The applicant stated that they will be using new fish for their operation at Phillipsdale in order to be in conformance with CRMC requirements that the fish have a health record with the State of RI. The applicant confirmed that the load for the floor in the space is more than double what would be required to hold their tanks. The applicant confirmed that the hours of operation will be 8am to 6pm, M-F. The applicant stated that they ship their product to resellers and through national and international distributors. Mr. Martin shared that he has had conversations with the owner of Phillipsdale Landing and he has stated his support for this tenant and use. Mr. Martin also stated that this use also compliments the other light industrial uses that make up a majority of tenant uses in Phillipsdale Landing. The applicant stated that the lease they intend to sign with Bourne Holdings, LLC will have guarantees and warranties that will not allow smell to impact the other tenants and local area, which will ensure there is an enforcement mechanism in place if there should be issues with any significant odors coming from their operation. The applicant stated that humidity associated with the process will not be an issue once the HVAC system is in place. The applicant stated that they use about 2,000 liters a week on average. The applicant stated that they ship and receive deliveries via UPS/ USPS and occasional larger box trucks for bottle shipments about once a month.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Martin read for the record the findings that were considered for conditional use from his Planner's Report dated May 27, 2021. In addition to these, he also noted that the East Providence Water Department issued a memo after the planner's report was issued that there is no domestic water service to Building 14. Mr. Martin requested that proof of domestic water service to Building 14 be added as a condition of approval.

On a motion by Mr. Fazioli, seconded by Mr. Willey, the Hearing Panel voted 3-0 to send a positive advisory opinion to the Waterfront Commission to grant indoor aquaculture as a conditional use requested by Fish Head Farms, Inc. for Building 14, Unit 1 at Phillipsdale Landing with the following recommended conditions of approval:

1. The applicant submit a site plan showing how domestic water service will be brought to or already exists in Building 14 at Phillipsdale Landing.
2. Applicant provides the HVAC and odor mitigation plan for review by the executive director once it is finalized.
3. Applicant provides spill mitigation plan for review by the executive director once it is finalized.

Present and voting Hearing Panel Members:

Mr. Willey – Aye  
Mr. Fazioli – Aye

Chairman Hardcastle— Aye

#### **4. VOTE: ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Mr. Fazioli, seconded by Mr. Willey to adjourn. On voice vote the Waterfront Commission voted unanimously to adjourn at 6:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
CHRIS MARTIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR