



EAST PROVIDENCE WATERFRONT DISTRICT COMMISSION

Waterfront Commission Meeting Minutes Thursday, November 18, 2021 – 6:30 PM

Commissioners present:

William Fazioli, Chair
David O’Connell
Tim Conley, Vice Chair
Steve Hardcastle
Peter Willey
Manny Barrows

Rick Lawson
Jennifer Griffith

Voting Members Absent:

Luis Torrado, DRC Chair
David Sluter
Dominic Pontarelli

Staff present:

Chris Martin, Executive Director
Amy Goins, UTR Legal Counsel

Hanna Wells, Waterfront Staff

1. **CHAIRMAN’S OPENING REMARKS** The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:19 PM. The Executive Director then conducted a roll call to confirm quorum of voting members.
2. **OLD BUSINESS**
 - A. **VOTE:** The motion by Mr. Lawson to approve the minutes of September 23, 2021 was seconded by Mr. Hardcastle and passed by a unanimous voice vote.
3. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. **Panel Public Hearing**

VOTE: To consider adoption of the Hearing Panel advisory opinion to the Waterfront Commission to grant indoor agriculture, excluding plants with THC, as a conditional use requested by Rhody Farms for Building 14 at Phillipsdale Landing.

Project: East Point
Applicant: Rhody Farms,
Owner: Bourne Holdings, LLC
Address: 310 Bourne Ave
Assessor’s: Map 302, Block 1, Parcel 3
Zoning: Phillipsdale Sub-District

Chair Fazioli confirmed quorum had been reached with eight voting members present. The chair also asked for a motion to include into the record, the testimony given by the applicant at the Hearing Panel hearing. Mr. Hardcastle moved to accept this motion, and Mr. Lawson seconded the motion. All approved.

The applicant gave a brief overview of the application—to use Building 14 in Phillipsdale Landing as an industrial hemp growing and extraction facility. The proposed facility would take up the entirety of Building 14 in Phillipsdale Landing—a total of 29,656 square feet of space. The

operation would include the growing and extraction of hemp plants for production and wholesale to outside vendors. There will not be any on-site retail component to the operation.

On a motion by Mr. Hardcastle, seconded by Mr. O’Connell, the Waterfront Commission voted 8-0 to approve the Hearing Panel advisory opinion to grant indoor agriculture, excluding plants with THC, as a conditional use requested by Rhody Farms for Building 14 at Phillipsdale Landing, based on the findings in the applicant’s application, dated October 19, 2021, applicant’s testimony, the Executive Director’s November 15, 2021 memo, comments from City staff and findings that the project is in conformance with the reviewing criteria set forth in section 19-477 of the East Providence Zoning Ordinance and the purposes of Article IX, “Waterfront Special Development Districts” regulations of the East Providence Zoning Ordinance.

Present and Voting:

William Fazioli, Chair—Aye
Tim Conley, Vice Chair—Aye
David O’Connell—Aye
Steve Hardcastle—Aye

Peter Willey—Aye
Manny Barrows—Aye
Rick Lawson—Aye
Jennifer Griffith—Aye

B. DISCUSSION: East Point TIF

Richard Baccari and Josh Berlinsky, representing the applicant, Noble Development, LLC presented an overview of the potential TIF request for East Point to the Commission. The 392 unit residential development was approved by the Waterfront Commission in July 2021. The developer is requesting an amendment to the Project Plan for the East Point TIF. The Waterfront Commission is being requested to provide an advisory opinion to recommend the adoption of the project plan. The requested TIF would provide funding for horizontal development costs in the area of \$16-\$18 million and would be structured as a 25 year bond with twenty four months of capitalized interest. Horizontal costs include public utilities and infrastructure, stormwater utilities, removal of the existing barge and pier in the Seekonk River, construction of public parking for access to the waterfront, a rail crossing, public paths and a pump station. Development costs to be funded by the developer, estimated at around \$85 million include the cost of constructing the residential units. Approximately 80% of estimated costs will be privately funded. The proposed plan aligns with goals of the East Providence Waterfront Special Development District Plan, including: general land use goals, expand and enhance waterfront public access, enhance waterfront special development district economic development opportunities, enhance attractiveness of the area, and protect and enhance the natural waterfront. The proposed terms and structure are consistent with the TIF approved for the Kettle Point project in the waterfront.

4. STAFF REPORT

Mr. Martin gave a staff update that included the following updates:

- Kettle Point Townhomes by AR Builders (12 units in two buildings--approved in April 2020) expect to start leasing by January 2022.
- Watchemoket Square Sculpture Park RFQ is in process and expected to reach a decision just after Thanksgiving
- Audit is almost final and will be presented in December

- Sutton Ave 36 unit rehab of affordable housing project had a ribbon cutting ceremony on 11/3—The Waterfront Commission granted \$200k of in-lieu funding in March 2021
- RIPTA stop at Bourne/ Roger Williams looks promising for a potential public hearing in March 2022 for implementation by summer 2022.
- 89 Valley Street updates were administratively approved in October for landscaping/ drainage/ bike racks/ parking lot improvements
- Kayak Launch at Bold Point is moving along. Plans have been submitted to be incorporated into the improvements planned there by DPW.

5. VOTE: ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Lawson, seconded by Mr. Barrows to adjourn. On voice vote the Waterfront Commission voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:01 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

CHRIS MARTIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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