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Blue Sphere Corp. breaks ground on waste-to-energy project

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Blue Sphere Corp., a clean energy company that develops, manages and owns waste-to-energy projects, recently broke ground on their waste-to-energy project. The event took place at 293-303 Scituate Ave.

"We welcome Blue Sphere Corp. to the town of Johnston, and we are appreciative of the fact that they have put their faith and trust into our community," said Joseph Polisena, the mayor of Johnston, who attended and spoke at the ground breaking event.

The Blue Sphere facility will produce 3.2 megawatts of clean energy from uneaten food that would normally end up in local landfills. That electricity will then be sold to NG to provide power to local homes and businesses.

This project is a joint venture with an affiliate of York Capital Management to develop, construct and operate a 3.2 MW biogas generation facility under the management of Entropy Investment Management. The National Resource Defense Council estimates roughly 40% of food is wasted in the U.S. every year, amounting to a \$165 billion loss. Blue Sphere said their solution is a win-win for all involved.

"This facility is the ultimate landfill because we take waste in the front end and nothing coming out. There's no smell just electricity and compost," said CEO Shlomi Palas.

Blue Sphere plans to be up and operational by the end of the Q4 2015

DiPrete Engineering, a locally based firm with offices in Cranston, R.I. and Dedham, Mass. led the state and local permitting for the project.

Blue Sphere generates electricity from biogas derived from organic waste, which is mostly food waste, and sells this electricity to leading electric companies through long-term power purchase agreements. Waste-to-energy is one of the fastest growing segments in the renewable energy markets. According to SBI Energy, the thermal and biological segments reached \$6 billion in 2012 and will reach \$29 billion by 2022.

Orbit Energy, Inc., based in Raleigh, NC, co-developed the project. Blue Sphere has made arrangements for the inclusion of two of Orbit's high solid anaerobic digester units to work in parallel with the digesters of Austep S.p.A., the Project's EPC contractor, subject to the fulfillment of certain conditions.

"One of the biggest technical challenges to overcome was obtaining a sewer connection permit for the project," said Chris Duhamel, vice president of DiPrete Engineering. "With instrumental help from the Town of Johnston Mayor Polisena and the Narragansett Bay Commission Executive Raymond Marshall, a solution was achieved for the option to tie Bluesphere into the Narragansett Bay service district."

Sage Environmental, a locally based firm with offices in Pawtucket, R.I. and Taunton, Mass. worked alongside DiPrete to secure air and wastewater permits for the facility.

Blue sphere has committed to compiling a team of locally based consultants and contractors. The project team includes other local such as A-Z Corp, Pare Corporation, and Douglas Construction.

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