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The R.I. Department of Environmental Management plans new redevelopment for 5 acre Galilee site

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Narragansett, RI The R.I. Department of Environmental Management (DEM) said that none of the bids that were submitted describing plans to redevelop the property occupied by the former Lighthouse Inn in the Port of Galilee were deemed to be viable by a review team, and DEM has ended the request for proposals process. The agency, however, has identified a way forward to make the property more attractive to prospective investors.

The property within the state-owned Port of Galilee consists of three lots that total around five acres. Two of these lots have historically been used for parking and the other contains the Lighthouse Inn structure. Moving forward, DEM will divide the three parcels and terminate the lease for the parcel containing the Lighthouse Inn. DEM envisions that it will demolish the inn, clearing the way for investors that may be interested in establishing a business that further complements and supports Rhode Island's commercial fishing industry and potentially provides some public amenities.

DEM also will negotiate a new lease for the two parcels in the back of the property with PRI X, allowing the current leaseholder to make upgrades to provide public parking to support the almost 200 commercial fishing boats that berth in Galilee, the Block Island Ferry, and other shoreside businesses. The rental for the parking lot lease will be at the current appraised value of rentals in the port and standard terms and conditions required for leases in the Port of Galilee will apply.

"The RFP process gave us valuable feedback and insight into the strengths and, from an investor's point of view, weaknesses of this site," said DEM acting director Terry Gray. "We know that we must invest to make it more viable. We are committed to working on a plan for the property that supports the many commercial fishing crews, seafood processors, and other shoreside businesses that bring fresh seafood to markets locally, nationally, and globally. As we move forward with these plans, we will continue discussions with the Town of Narragansett and other stakeholders on redevelopment options for this valuable property. We appreciate the good-faith proposals made by the three bidders."

A team consisting of employees from DEM and RI Commerce reviewed the bids.

Galilee has earned stature as an economic and jobs powerhouse. RI's commercial fisheries and seafood sector accounts for more than 3,100 jobs and \$538 million in gross sales (2016 numbers per a 2017 URI study). Including spillover effects across all sectors of the economy, the fisheries and seafood industries support more than 4,300 jobs and nearly \$420 million in economic impact.

Although other state ports contribute to these outcomes, Galilee – as the biggest port in RI and one of the busiest ports on the Atlantic Coast – contributes by far the most. In 2019, landings at Galilee totaled 48 million pounds and were valued at more than \$68 million.

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