

## **Update on Bright Feeds' Efforts to Address Odor and Noise Concerns in Berlin, CT**

Bright Feeds, a Berlin, CT-based food recycling business, has been actively working with the Town of Berlin and the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to address concerns regarding odors and noise emanating from its facility. As an interim measure to mitigate odors, Bright Feeds sought to erect a taller exhaust stack, aimed at dispersing the odors at a higher rate of speed and altitude.

However, to proceed with the stack's height increase, Bright Feeds was required to request a variance from the Berlin Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). To expedite the process due to ongoing resident complaints about odor issues, a special ZBA meeting was scheduled.

At the special ZBA meeting held on December 12, 2024, the Board voted unanimously to deny the variance request submitted by Smart Feed Tech, Inc. The variance would have allowed for the construction of an 85-foot exhaust chimney stack, which is taller than the 40-foot building on-site, exceeding the 55-foot height limit for chimneys and mechanical appurtenances as stipulated by Berlin Zoning Regulations §IV.A.10. a.i.

Bright Feeds intends to proceed with the installation of a thermal oxidizer, which is expected to be operational by February or early March 2025.

In response to ongoing noise concerns, the Town has taken additional steps to ensure compliance with its noise ordinance. The Police Department recently acquired sound measurement equipment, and an independent contractor, SH Acoustics LLC, has been retained by the Town to examine data collected to date and to conduct further noise testing. The noise evaluation will proceed in two phases and include:

- Review of all relevant acoustic data, including the specifics of measurement times, locations, and other pertinent factors.
- Provide a summary report with expert findings on compliance with the ordinance.
- Conduct on-site noise surveys using a professionally calibrated measurement system to assess the level, tonality, and directionality of the noise.
- Evaluate the noise sources in collaboration with Town representatives and discuss the industrial operation's noise mitigation strategies.
- Analyze the collected data and provide a report with potential solutions to mitigate the noise, along with recommendations for further information or action.

The Town and Town Council remain committed to addressing these issues and will continue to monitor the situation closely. Efforts will remain focused on ensuring compliance with both odor and noise regulations for the benefit of the community.