

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

APRIL 2021

The following summarizes Economic Development Division activities for April 2021.

Additional news specific to Groton Economic Development is found here:

<http://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/news>

### Economic Development Activities:

- COVID-19 (General Response): Staff continues to use the ExploreMoreGroton Business Assistance web page <https://bit.ly/GrotonBizRecovery> to distribute key government and industry guidance specific to COVID. CT will relax more restrictions throughout May. May 1st will allow increased business activity and hours. May 19th will remove all remaining restrictions with the exception of face masks. Groton staff is preparing to address the receipt of American Rescue Plan funding. An application process will be used to review requests for projects that adhere to state and federal guidance.
- IEDC Economic Development Week: The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) has designated May 9 -15, 2021 as Economic Development Week. A Town of Groton Proclamation signed by the Mayor has been prepared and will be read on May 4<sup>th</sup> to celebrate the initiative. OPDS staff has been preparing to promote a social media campaign to raise awareness of the value of economic development. Support from elected and appointed officials plus the public is appreciated. Specifically, people can support this initiative by following the Groton Economic Development Facebook page and engaging with the posted media (liking, commenting and sharing with your networks). Staff will be linking to informational videos that we have created in earlier campaigns and we plan to focus on the following topics:
  - Overview/What Is Economic Development
  - The Importance of Small Businesses
  - Quality of Life/Workforce Attraction & Retention
  - Business Support & Growth
  - BlueTech/Diversifying Industry Sectors
- Marketing/Initiatives: Staff launched the Groton “BlueTech” web page <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/bluetech-company-thayermahan-experiences-meteoric-eisenbeiser-aicp/>. Golden Shovel Agency wrote the article and helped run a promotion to increase exposure to our BlueTech web pages. The BlueTech Marketing Campaign was developed during the Strategic Action Plan process as a method of supporting a key emerging industry in our area, BlueTech. The BlueTech industry sector represents the combination of advanced technology industries that are related to marine uses, including Offshore Wind and Underwater Unmanned Vehicles.
- Wayfinding Sign Program: Staff continues to coordinate with BETA for future bid and implementation. First phase implementation will include a portion of downtown Mystic and also the intersection of Poquonnock/North Road including the North Road corridor. Additionally, there has been coordination with the Chamber regarding the Bank Street Books outdoor kiosk location. The Groton Rotary Club donated \$1,000 towards the project.
- Neighborhood Assistance Act (NAA): Staff has been coordinating the submittals of four NAA proposals for state grant funding. These include Sacred Heart School for \$120,867; Odd Fellows home of CT for \$117,590; The Avery-Copp Museum for \$19,600; and the Riverfront Children’s Center for \$56,116. The Town Council will hold a public hearing on May 4<sup>th</sup> to address these.

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### Public Property Redevelopment:

- Public Property Redevelopment (Mystic Education Center): The “Mystic River Bluffs” project continues to advance. See the link for more project information where more information has been uploaded <https://resplerhomes.com/mystic-river-bluffs/>. Coursey and Company is actively conducting public outreach on behalf of the Respler Homes development team. Recent news coverage in the The Day addressed developer history. Groton’s Planning & Zoning Commission continues to address the draft zoning district creation. The Commission is focused on creating the appropriate zoning regulation to match appropriate future development on the 80+ acres of property. Half the total land area will be developed and half will be protected as public open space. Additional private property has been acquired by the developer for roadway access and additional residential use. The state, as the property owner, has been closely following this project and inquires about its progress.
- Public Property Redevelopment (Groton Heights): Staff and ThayerMahan are working on the final option agreement to be addressed by the Town Council by summer. The building has experienced increased vandalism over the past weeks. ThayerMahan has grown from three to over 60 employees in three years. They are committed to the project in making this their future world headquarters. <https://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/project-updates>
- Public Property Redevelopment (517/529 Gold Star Highway): Staff coordinated the completion of final legal agreements for such property. PJ&A and Lennar will develop approximately 300 apartments on 17.75 acres encompassing four lots (two town owned and two private owned). Anticipated tax benefits will be in the order of \$1 million annually. <https://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/project-updates>
- Public Property Redevelopment (Seely School): Staff met on site with the developer to view ongoing demolition of the existing single-story school building. Construction for the “Triton Square” project will begin in 2021 for the 308-unit multi-family apartment development. Targeted future tenants are young professionals and “empty-nesters.” Anticipated future property tax revenue is in the magnitude of \$1 million annually. <https://www.seelyschool.com/>
- Public Property Redevelopment (Colonel Ledyard School): Staff is coordinating final agreements. Bellsite, LLC (Bill Bellock) is eager to move this multi-family residential project forward. Bellsite submitted a zoning amendment application to the City of Groton’s Planning and Zoning Commission. Phase I will consist of converting the existing school building into between 14-20 apartments. Phase II will include new buildings and apartments (less than 60 apartments) on the rear of the site. <https://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/project-updates>
- Public Property Redevelopment (Pleasant Valley School): Staff is coordinating the public disposition process with the RTM. Additionally, staff will begin discussions with the Council about next steps in the selection process. The Committee determined a recommended “preferred developer.” Discussions are ongoing with this developer. <https://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/project-updates>

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### Economic Development Metrics:

#### Trade Name Metrics:

- There were 6 trade name certificates this month in the Town of Groton.

#### Social Media Metrics:

- 728 Facebook followers, negligible change  
\*\* Please follow the Facebook page and share our posts to your network:  
<https://www.facebook.com/GrotonEconomicDevelopment/>
- 75 LinkedIn page followers, negligible change  
\*\* Please follow the LinkedIn page and share our posts to your network:  
<https://www.linkedin.com/company/groton-economic-development/>  
\*\* Please like and SHARE posts on social media to expand the reach!

#### Website Metrics: (March 30, 2021 – April 29, 2021) [www.exploremoregroton.com](http://www.exploremoregroton.com)

- Total Sessions: 2,193 (1,820 new/373 returning), up 50 percent
- Pages per session: 1.86, down 3 percent
- Total Page Views: 4,079, up 51 percent
- Average Time Duration: 1 min 10 sec, up 15 percent
- 503 subscribers on the Newsletter Mailing List, up 3 percent  
Email addresses collected from meetings and events are added to the mailing list.  
(<http://www.exploremoregroton.com/groton/news-and-media/sign-up-for-our-newsletter>)

#### Unemployment Data (Percent %)

Month	Groton	Norwich-New London- Westerly Labor Market Area	Connecticut
January 2020	3.7	4.5	4.4
February 2020	3.6	4.4	4.4
March 2020	3.0	3.8	3.6
April 2020	11.1	13.8	8.0
May 2020	12.6	15.0	9.4
June 2020	11.8	13.3	10.2
July 2020	10.9	12.4	10.3
August 2020	8.6	10.2	8.2
September 2020	8.0	9.1	7.5
October 2020	6.0	6.9	5.8
November 2020	8.0	8.7	7.7
December 2020	7.5	8.5	7.5
January 2021	9.1	9.5	8.5
February 2021	8.7	9.4	8.3
<b>March 2021</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>8.3</b>

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### Key Property Development Updates:

- |                       |                                |  |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| • 0 Casino Road       | Marina                         | Site Plan Submitted  |
| • 15 Water Street     | Restaurant                     | Site Plan Submitted  |
| • Seely School Drive  | Triton Square                  | Demolition continues   |
| • 904 Poquonnock Road | Chelsea Groton<br>Headquarters | Site Plan Submitted  |
| • 647 Long Hill Road  | Popeye's                       | Construction has begun and has<br>included changes to the façade |

Keep up to date on town meetings including agendas, minutes etc. by visiting the Calendar on the town's website here: <http://www.agendasuite.org/iip/groton>

Click here for events going on around Groton: <https://www.exploremoregroton.com/events/?v=list>

Keep up to date on news pertaining to Groton & Economic Development by going to the website here: <http://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/news>