

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

JULY 2021

The following summarizes Economic Development Division activities for July 2021.

Additional news specific to Groton Economic Development is found here:

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

Economic Development Activities:

- American Recovery Plan Programming and Long Term Recovery Committee: Staff continues to strategize best approaches for the programming through coordination with the Long Term Recovery Committee. Staff and the Committee are focused on prioritizing funding categories and a community needs assessment including community engagement prior to the selection of individual projects. The Town of Groton has received \$4.6 million separate from other direct funding to the School Administration, City of Groton and Groton Long Point. Such funding can be used for the following national objectives:
 - To respond to the negative impacts of the COVID pandemic, including assistance to households, small businesses, and nonprofits as well as aid to affected industries such as tourism, travel, and hospitality;
 - To respond to workers performing essential work during the COVID-19 public health emergency by providing premium pay to eligible workers;
 - For the provision of government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue due to the COVID-19 public health emergency relative to revenues collected in the most recent full fiscal year prior to the emergency; and
 - To make necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure.
- Marketing/Initiatives: Staff continues to promote the Groton “BlueTech” web page with the latest article featuring an interview with Walker Potts, Executive Director of the Naval and Maritime Consortium, <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/where-next-silicon-valley-groton-connecticut-sam-eisenbeiser-aicp/>. The BlueTech industry sector represents the combination of advanced technology industries that are related to marine uses, including Offshore Wind and Underwater Unmanned Vehicles.
- Groton Housing Studies: Groton staff is managing two housing studies. The first is a “Market Rate Housing” study being completed by Camoin 310 focused on comparing needed new housing units in the supply pipeline to longer term demand. Preliminary results are illustrating the need for more supply even after existing pipeline housing projects are completed. The second is an “Affordable Housing Plan” being completed by RKG. Findings demonstrate strong demand for both lower income housing and also higher income housing. The inventory of middle-income housing is being targeted by both income brackets due to low inventory in both lower and higher income classifications. Both studies will be available later this summer; the findings indicate a strong need for more housing supply to meet current and forecast demand.
- Naviretail: Staff has been coordinating with the national retail consultant to attracting businesses to Groton that are expanding and that match local consumer demands and preferences. Vacant storefronts and properties are being shared nationwide with expanding businesses that would serve Groton’s market.

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- Thames River Innovation Place (TRIP): Staff has been coordinating with TRIP regarding Blue-Tech industry growth. TRIP recently released a Request for Proposals (RFP) soliciting projects for grant funding. A letter of interest is required to TRIP. <https://thamesriverinnovation.org/rfp>
- Connecticut Economic Development Association (CEDAS): Staff has been coordinating with CEDAS in holding their annual meeting in Groton this October. The venue will be at UConn-Avery Point at the Branford House. This is an opportunity to draw more attention to Groton from other parts of CT. More details to follow.

Public Property Redevelopment:

- Public Property Redevelopment (Mystic Education Center): The Planning & Zoning Commission (PZ&C) has signaled to staff no interest in the larger mixed-use vision. Future project steps will involve a regular meeting between the developer and the PZ&C when the developer is prepared to make a formal project request. The Commission is focused on creating the appropriate zoning regulation for the 80+ acres of property with 160,000 square feet of existing building space and environmentally contaminated property. Half the total land area will be redeveloped and half will be protected as public open space. The state, as the property owner, has been closely following this project and inquires about its progress. <https://resplrhomes.com/mystic-river-bluffs/> is the developer's project website.
- Public Property Redevelopment (Groton Heights): Staff is finalizing the option agreement and anticipates forwarding to the Town Council this summer. 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 plan to 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>
- Triton Square (former Seely School): Staff has received a site plan for approval which is anticipated this fall thereby allowing the construction of the new multi-family development. Construction 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/>

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- Public Property Redevelopment (Colonel Ledyard School): Staff participated in the City of Groton's Planning & Zoning Commission zoning amendment hearing on June 15th. Ultimately, the developer, Bellesite, LLC., did gain approval for the amendment thereby allowing increased housing density on the property. The developer is eager to move this multi-family residential project forward. 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 and the Committee of the Whole (COW) held an executive session on July 13th to discuss progress for the sale of the former Pleasant Valley School property. <https://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/project-updates>

Economic Development Metrics:

Trade Name Metrics:

- There were 8 trade name certificates this month in the Town of Groton.

Social Media Metrics:

- 778 Facebook followers, negligible change
** Please follow the Facebook page and share our posts to your network:
<https://www.facebook.com/GrotonEconomicDevelopment/>
- 79 LinkedIn page followers, negligible change from June.
** 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: (June 29-July 28) www.exploremoregroton.com

- Total Sessions: 2,698 (2,258 new/440 returning), 81 pct. above 12-month average
- Pages per session: 1.56, 9 pct. below 12-month average
- Total Page Views: 4,209, 68 pct. above 12-month average
- Average Time Duration: 50 sec, 25 pct. below 12-month average
- 524 subscribers on the Newsletter Mailing List, 2% increase from June
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>)

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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
March 2021	8.8	9.4	8.3
April 2021	8.2	8.7	7.6
May 2021	6.6	6.8	6.0
June 2021	7.0	7.5	7.0

Key Property Development Updates:

- 200 Hazelnut Hill, Little Acorn Preschool (moving from Ledyard), Administrative Site Plan Submitted
- 3 Water Street, Sift leasing space for Adam T. Young Confections (manufacturing only)

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>