

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

JUNE 2021

The following summarizes Economic Development Division activities for June 2021.

Additional news specific to Groton Economic Development is found here:

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

Economic Development Activities:

- American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA): Staff continues to learn and strategize about the federal ARPA funding for the Town of Groton including coordinating documents, webinars, and preparing for future programming. The Long Term Recovery Committee will serve as the primary group deciding on ARPA funding including the meeting on June 30th.
- Marketing/Initiatives: Staff continued to advance the Groton “BlueTech” web page <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/bluetech-company-thayermahan-experiences-meteoric-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 initiated and managed two housing analyses. The first includes 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. A public meeting was held on June 16th. 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 in July and they conclude a strong need for more housing supply to match demand.

Public Property Redevelopment:

- Public Property Redevelopment (Mystic Education Center): Staff presented the history of the project to the Committee of the Whole (COW) on June 8th. Additionally, staff presented to the Planning & Zoning Commission (PZ&C) on June 14th seeking direction on a future zoning amendment for this state property. Although there was no official vote taken during the workshop, the PZ&C signaled to staff no interest in the larger mixed use vision. As a result, the town’s zoning consultant will not be involved in the next steps. Future project steps will involve a regular meeting between the developer and the PZ&C. The developer will make formal project requests at that time. 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>

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- 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>
- Public Property Redevelopment (Seely School): Staff received a Site Plan for project construction in June. “Triton Square” building 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 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 participated in an RTM meeting at which approval was gained to dispose of the Pleasant Valley School property. There was also discussion regarding the need for public recreation space in that neighborhood. Staff will work on finalizing discussions with a preferred developer soon addressing this matter. Thereafter, a developer and project will advance to the Town Council for consideration.
<https://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/project-updates>

Economic Development Metrics:

Trade Name Metrics:

- There were 4 trade name certificates this month in the Town of Groton.

Social Media Metrics:

- 774 Facebook followers, negligible change
** Please follow the Facebook page and share our posts to your network:
<https://www.facebook.com/GrotonEconomicDevelopment/>
- 78 LinkedIn page followers, negligible change from May.
** 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: (May 26 – May 24) www.exploremoregroton.com

- Total Sessions: 1,628 (1,330 new/298 returning), 5 % increase above 12-month average
- Pages per session: 1.67, 2% below 12-month average
- Total Page Views: 2,719, 8% above 12-month average
- Average Time Duration: 1 minute, 20 seconds – 23% above 12-month average
- 512 subscribers on the Newsletter Mailing List, 2% increase from May
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 |

Key Property Development Updates:

- 334 Long Hill Road, Proposed Apartment building, Site Plan Submitted
- 55 Seely School Drive, "Triton Square Apartments", Site Plan Submitted
- 3 Water Street, "The Standard", building nearing full completion, Certificates of Occupancy have been issued for some retail/residential space, "Abbotts Outpost" and "Burgee Mystic" have opened (staff attended the Grand Opening of both Abbotts and Burgee Mystic on June 25th).
- 54 West Main Street, "Bank & Bridge Brew Pub" is now open including outdoor dining
- 255 Route 12, "Pokemoto" is open

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>