

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

November 2022

The following summarizes Economic Development Division activities for November 2022.

Additional news specific to Groton Economic Development is found here:

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

Economic Development Activities:

- American Recovery Plan (ARPA) Programming: Staff addressed ARPA projects at the November 15th COW meeting. The process to date was discussed including the top 20 prioritized projects as scored by the Long Term Recovery Committee (LTRC). These are a part of the 53 ARPA applications that were submitted valued at over \$7 million. The COW discussion involved the future steps for awards including gaining more information from applicants.
- CT “Communities Challenge” Grant: Staff was advised that Groton is a finalist for CT “Community Challenge Grant” funding. Groton staff has fielded numerous communications from CT DECD regarding Groton’s \$9.8 million proposal for Poquonnock Bridge Village which is positive news. Groton Housing Authority, Rodgers Development Company, and The Barn are involved as well as some public projects. Awardees should be notified shortly.
https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/Business-Development/05_Funding_Opportunities/CT-Communities-Challenge-Grant
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): Staff continues communications with CT Department of Housing (DOH) regarding grant funding for Grasso Gardens. \$2 million in grant funding has been sought. In addition, staff is working with the state (CHFA) on an additional \$3 million request for the same project.
- CT “Community Investment Fund” (CIF) Grant: Staff presented three project concepts for CIF grant consideration to the COW on November 15th. COW supported staff’s recommended projects including: Thames Valley Council for Community Action (TVCCA) early childhood facility, former Groton Heights School environmental remediation, and former Pleasant Valley School building demolition and site preparation. The Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) was released on November 1st seeking “transformational” development projects. Proposals are due to the State of CT on January 6th. The Town of Groton is an eligible entity for this state program. Only select municipalities can submit grant applications.
https://portal.ct.gov/CommunityInvestmentFund?language=en_US
- Representative Town Meeting (RTM) Presentation: Staff provided an Economic Development Update to the RTM on November 9th. The presentation highlighted some of the economic challenges facing Groton (inflation, housing shortages, labor shortages, increasing percentages of commuters versus residents, and population loss) as well as opportunity such as the redevelopment of town owned property, redevelopment projects, and grant funding.
- Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) : Staff attended the CCM annual conference on November 1st held at Mohegan Sun. Several workshops were attended by staff on a wide range of topics. These workshops connect members of CT municipalities where they are able to share experiences and discuss current regional, state, and national trends affecting their communities.

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Public Property Redevelopment:

- Public Property Redevelopment (Mystic Education Center): There was no activity in November since the State of CT (DECD) terminated the Purchase and Sales Agreement with Respler Homes, LLC. The Town has also taken steps to terminate the local development agreement. The current property today has over 160,000 square feet of existing building space including a 40,000 indoor recreation facility. Also, the site holds environmentally contaminated land.
- Public Property Redevelopment (Groton Heights): No change in November. ThayerMahan has been completing final internal review and they determined the project faces significant environmental remediation costs. ThayerMahan has grown from three to over 70 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): PJ&A, holder of the option agreement, continues to seek quality developers since A.R. Builders withdrew their project interest. The project had envisioned about 324 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://ctexaminer.com/2022/05/11/groton-council-greenlights-324-unit-apartment-complex-on-former-town-land/>
- Triton Square (former Seely School): No change in November. The project awaits final resolution on the zoning approval appeal. The site plan for multi-family housing has been approved by the Groton Planning & Zoning Commission. Ground breaking is anticipated for a 305-unit multi-family apartment development. Targeted future tenants are both 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): Bellsite, LLC is finalizing development plans for City of Groton Planning & Zoning Commission review. The detailed plans include a total of 65 residential units (multi-family). The next step is to submit the final site plans for City of Groton PZC review. Phase I will modify the existing school building for residential unit development. Phase II will include new buildings and apartments on the rear of the site. <https://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/project-updates>
- Public Property Redevelopment (Pleasant Valley School): No change in November. Staff is anticipating future discussion with the Town Council. Meanwhile, interest in the property has been indicated by the development community.

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Economic Development Metrics:

Trade Name Metrics:

- There were 5 trade name certificates this month in the Town of Groton.

Social Media Metrics:

- 881 Facebook followers, no change from October.
** Please follow the Facebook page and share our posts to your network:
<https://www.facebook.com/GrotonEconomicDevelopment/>
- 105 LinkedIn page followers, no change from October.
** 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 (Oct 23-Nov 21) www.exploremoregroton.com
 - Total Sessions: 918 (830 new/88 returning), 23 pct. below 12-month avg.
 - Pages per session: 1.49, 18 pct. below 12-month avg.
 - Total Page Views: 1,368, 38 pct. below 12-month avg.
 - Average Time Duration: 42 sec, 32 pct. below 12-month avg.
- There are 616 subscribers on the Newsletter Mailing List, no change from October.
(<http://www.exploremoregroton.com/groton/news-and-media/sign-up-for-our-newsletter>)
- GreaterGroton.com Activity (Oct. 25-Nov. 23, 2022) www.greatergroton.com
 - Total Visits 450
 - Max. Visitors Per Day 25
 - New Registrations 3
 - Engaged Visitors 13
 - Informed Visitors 164
 - Aware Visitors 311
- Top Projects

Project	Engaged Participants	Informed Participants	Aware Participants
Short Term Rentals in Groton	4	54	86
Downtown Mystic Resiliency & Sustainability Plan	2	38	63
American Rescue Plan Act	0	31	55
Parking in Mystic	0	22	47
Cannabis in Groton	0	8	31

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Unemployment Data (Percent %)

	Groton	Norwich-New London- Westerly Labor Market Area	Connecticut
August 2021	5.9	6.6	6.1
September 2021	5.4	6.0	5.4
October 2021	4.9	5.9	5.3
November 2021	4.2	5.3	4.8
December 2021	3.8	5.1	4.4
January 2022	3.8	4.9	4.4
February 2022	4.6	5.7	5.0
March 2022	4.2	4.7	4.3
April 2022	3.6	4.0	3.7
May 2022	3.7	4.2	4.0
June 2022	4.0	4.4	4.1
July 2022	4.0	4.5	4.3
August 2022	3.6	4.5	4.3
September 2022	3.8	4.1	3.9
October 2022	4.2	4.2	4.0

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>

Eastern CT Corridor Rail and Transit Feasibility Study

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETINGS

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) is conducting a legislative study to investigate the feasibility of and market for:

Establishing a **new passenger train station** in the Town of Groton and Stonington Borough

Extending the Shore Line East rail line to the State of Rhode Island

Establishing a **new passenger rail service** from the City of New London to the City of Norwich

Extending bus services in southeastern CT and provide connectivity between such systems and rail lines



NORWICH MEETING

Monday, December 12 6 PM In-person
Kelly STEAM Magnet Middle School Community Room
25 Mahan Drive, Norwich, CT 06360

GROTON MEETING

Thursday, December 15 12 PM In-person
Submarine Force Library & Museum
1 Crystal Lake Road, Groton, CT 06340
Attendees will have free access to tour the library and museum, and the Nautilus Submarine following the meeting

In-person venues will be ADA accessible and accessible by SEAT bus

VIRTUAL MEETING

Thursday, December 15 6:30 PM
Zoom Webinar info on website:
<https://portal.ct.gov/Eastern-CT-Rail>

Stay tuned for a survey in December!



Language assistance can be provided at no cost to the public and efforts will be made to respond to timely requests for assistance. Persons may request assistance by contacting CTDOT's Language Assistance Line at (860) 594-2109, at least 5 business days prior to the meeting. Persons having hearing and/or speech disabilities may dial 711 for the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) and instruct the operator to contact (860) 594-2243.