

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

DECEMBER 2020

The following summarizes Economic Development Division activities for December 2020.

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 has been addressing program documentation for the \$150,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) COVID funding for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) stockpiling. Once the agreement is approved, funds can be expended. More federal resources (PPP and EIDL) were made available to businesses as result of federal stimulus legislation. Small businesses are encouraged to work with their financial institutions for the additional PPP funding similar to earlier in 2020. Separate from PPP, the EIDL program is also authorized again and being promoted for small business help <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/disaster-assistance>. Staff continues to use the ExploreMoreGroton Business Assistance web page <https://bit.ly/GrotonBizRecovery> to distribute key government and industry guidance specific to COVID. Lastly, the Long Term Recovery Committee met on Wednesday, December 16th and many updates were provided by state and local leaders.
- Shoreline Menus: Staff was approached by Shoreline Menus <https://shorelinemenus.com/> as an alternative local delivery option for Groton restaurants. EDC and Economic Division staff has been collaborating on this effort. Groton restaurants were emailed in December to gauge interest. Enough responded to warrant scheduling a January Zoom meeting with Shoreline Menus that will be held on January 11, 2021 at 5:00pm. The likely outcome is a late January launch of the Shoreline Menu delivery service for Groton restaurants.
- Naviretail Local Business Analysis: Naviretail and staff polled the community regarding what new retail establishments were desired in the future. Additionally, the third round of existing business interviews was initiated. First and second phase results to date are found at this link. <https://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/news/p/item/30633/covid19-impacts-update-groton-businesssurvey-results>
- Groton Marketing: Staff worked with Business Facilities Magazine to create this article where Groton is spotlighted as the second community in the article. <https://businessfacilities.com/2020/12/quality-of-life-working-where-you-want-to-live/> Additionally, staff represented Groton at RECon New York annual retail event sponsored by the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) on December 9th and 10th. Groton has participated for multiple consecutive years to promote Groton to investors.
- Mystic Parking Study: Groton held the third Mystic Parking Study meeting on December 16th with John Burke as the parking consultant. This meeting focused on parking counts and likely locations for improved parking efficiency including on-road parking options.
- RTM Economic Development Update: Staff provided an economic development update to the RTM on December 9th. Focus was on development projects including projected increases in tax

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revenue to Groton. You can view the presentation here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PLp4s6RQGCh5Ri4F9Tq8RaCh0g-yI1Z7PB&v=1ysR-RGm4VM&feature=youtu.be> beginning at 34:50.

- **Industrial Property Interest:** Staff continues to respond to state and private interests regarding industrially-zoned properties in Groton. DECD and Advanced CT have been working with local staff in promoting such properties to national interests for projects. Groton's favorable transportation, land value, location, and existing economic base are attractive to companies seeking expansion.

Public Property Redevelopment:

- **Public Property Redevelopment (Mystic Education Center):** The "Mystic River Bluffs" project is advancing. See the link for more project information <https://resplrhomes.com/mystic-river-bluffs/>. The zoning district draft, specifically a Plan presentation, was addressed by the Planning & Zoning Commission on December 29th. Cost estimating for the Pratt Building redevelopment is ongoing specific to the renovation of the building and future public recreation facility use. Greenplay/Pirie and the Groton Parks/Recreation Department completed a Pratt Building presentation that will occur before the Town Council on January 5th. CT DAS has inquired about the project schedule since they desire to complete the sale of the state property in 2021.
- **Public Property Redevelopment (Groton Heights):** The Purchase and Sales (P&S) agreement and the DECD Brownfields grant agreement are still pending. ThayerMahan has grown from three to over 50 employees in three years. They are committed to the project in making this their future world headquarters.
- **Public Property Redevelopment (517/529 Gold Star Highway):** Staff has been working with the national developer on the final option/purchase agreement. This will be forwarded to the Town Council for approval early in 2021. The project proposes the development of approximately 300 apartments on 17.75 acres encompassing four lots (two town owned and two private owned).
- **Public Property Redevelopment (Seely School):** The property was officially sold to the DonMar Development team in December. Construction for the "Triton Square" project will begin early 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. See this project page. <https://www.seelyschool.com/>
- **Public Property Redevelopment (Colonel Ledyard School):** Staff worked to finalize the draft purchase agreement. This will be forwarded to the COW by February. Bellsite, LLC (Bill Bellock) is the preferred developer and 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.

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- Public Property Redevelopment (Pleasant Valley School): Staff and the Review Committee met on December 22nd to review the submitted proposals. Short-listed developers will receive first interviews by late January 2021. Subsequent interviews will occur focused on the objective of determining a “preferred developer” for recommendation to the Town Council.

Economic Development Metrics:

Trade Name Metrics:

- There were 3 trade name certificates this month in the Town of Groton.

Social Media Metrics:

- 675 Facebook followers, a ten percent increase
** Please follow the Facebook page and share our posts to your network:
<https://www.facebook.com/GrotonEconomicDevelopment/>
- 70 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: (November 23 – December 22) www.exploremoregroton.com

- Total Sessions: 979 (828 new/151 returning), decrease 31 percent
- Pages per session: 1.74, increase 13 percent
- Total Page Views: 1,371, decrease 22 percent
- Average Time Duration: 1 min 8 seconds, increase 15 percent
- 483 subscribers on the Newsletter Mailing List, negligible change
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

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Key Property Development Updates:

- | | | |
|------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|
| • 3 Water Street | The Standard | Construction is ongoing |
| • 531 Route 12 | Cardinal Honda | Addition and remodel ongoing |
| • 425 Goldstar Highway | Girard Nissan | 1st phase of remodel ongoing |
| • Seely School Drive | Triton Square | Wetlands application was approved |

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>