

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

January 2020

The following summarizes economic development division activities for January 2020.

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>

Economic Development Activities:

- Marketing: Staff has been communicating with “Business in Focus” to prepare for an updated Groton article to run this spring 2020. The last article ran in 2018. Additionally, staff has been planning for a more proactive effort in attracting new retail to Groton to blend with our redevelopment and housing efforts. The national retail market is shrinking and is highly competitive. We are positioning Groton to most accurately tell our unique growth story.
- Mystic Parking: Groton and Stonington continue to meet in discussing Mystic Parking. At the January 21st meeting, it was agreed that there is no one solution and a truly integrated parking management plan is required. Such a plan would comprehensively address the challenges and apply multiple solutions to the complex parking issues.
- Economic Strategies Plan: Staff has advanced the Economic Development Strategies document. This document outlines how numerous strategies are to be integrated and implemented. Several public meetings will be held on February 27 to present the strategy (see multiple locations and times under “Upcoming Meetings of Interest and Key Dates” below).
- Water Taxi Dock at the USS Nautilus: Staff initially prepared the successful grant proposal to secure approximately \$730,000 in Connecticut Port Authority grant funding. Through a partnership with the U.S. Navy, the Subase agreed to bid and manage the design/construction for the new water taxi dock. Received bids were higher than anticipated. As a result, town staff agreed to assume more control over the project including rebidding and project management in an effort to gain more responsive bids and lower costs.
- Opportunity Zone (OZ) Programming: Staff continues to work with partners regarding the promotion of the OZ program. Working with CERC, staff is planning a major OZ meeting for later in March at which investors and property owners can learn about needs and opportunities. Additionally, staff attended a DECD January 22nd meeting at which the final rules for the federal OZ program were discussed. Staff also met with Arcadia Management regarding their interest in establishing an OZ fund in Groton/New London.

Public Property Redevelopment:

- Public Property Redevelopment (Mystic Education Center): There have been ongoing individual, group, and neighborhood meetings between Respler and the community regarding their mixed use redevelopment plans. Given the project is in the beginning stages, all input is valuable to the

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developer so that plans can best address needs and concerns. The proposed “Development Agreement” was presented to the Committee of the Whole on January 28th. Council generally supported the agreement and advanced it to a full vote to be held on February 4th. This agreement formalizes the partnership between the town and developer and addresses project expectations and multiple steps. Respler has a signed Purchase and Sales (P&S) agreement from the state. Additionally, Respler recently secured a lease for the property which now provides immediate site control as the “due diligence” period is completed prior to closing. Environmental testing is being finalized by Respler’s contractors at this time. The town’s consultant (Greenplay) has begun reviewing the Pratt Building to complete building integrity analysis and also propose the best future recreational programming for the public. Most of 2020 will be used to complete the planning, design, engineering, permitting, and programming for the property. Groundbreaking for Phase I will occur in 2021 and will entail preserving and the adaptive reuse of the existing buildings plus needed infrastructure. Subsequent development, primarily residential construction, is planned for after Phase I.

- Public Property Redevelopment (Groton Heights): ThayerMahan’s attorney is finalizing comments on the town’s Purchase and Sales (P&S) agreement and the DECD Brownfields grant agreement. Both agreements will be finalized shortly.
- Public Property Redevelopment (517/529 Gold Star Highway): Staff has been advised that project plans and designs are being advanced. The project will entail the development of approximately 300 apartments on 17.75 acres.
- Public Property Redevelopment (Seeley School): Legal documentation has been completed. The “preferred developer” will be recommended to the Town Council in February including the proposed use.
- Public Property Redevelopment (Colonel Ledyard School): Town and City staff completed first round interviews. We are conducting second round interviews shortly in an effort to select a “preferred developer.”
- Public Property Redevelopment (Pleasant Valley School): Staff has been assisting in finding alternate locations for the existing Robotics Program that exists at the Pleasant Valley School. Marketing for the redevelopment of the property will continue through the spring until RFP issuance.

Economic Development Metrics:

Trade Name Metrics:

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

Social Media Metrics:

- 423 Facebook page followers, negligible change from last month

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** Please follow the Facebook page and share our posts to your network:

<https://www.facebook.com/GrotonEconomicDevelopment/>

- 59 LinkedIn page followers, up 7%

** 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: (January 1 -30) www.exploremoregroton.com

- Total Sessions: 1,028 (817 new/211 returning), up 3%
- Pages per session: 1.84, up 12%
- Total Page Views: 1,890, up 15%
- Average Time Duration: 1 min 19 seconds, up 18%
- 414 subscribers on the Newsletter Mailing List, up 1%

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>)

Upcoming Meetings of Interest and Key Dates:

- 2/3 Beautification Committee – 5:30 p.m. -7:00 p.m. – Groton Senior Center
- 2/24 Beautification Committee – 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. – Groton Public Library
- 2/27 Economic Development Strategic Plan kickoff –
 - 7:45 a.m. – Chelsea Groton Bank – Center Groton Branch
 - 2:00 p.m. – Par 4 Restaurant
 - 6:30 pm – Groton Public Library
- 2/28 Groton Parks Foundation Gala – 6:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. – Hilton Garden Inn

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>

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