

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

January 2022

The following summarizes Economic Development Division activities for January 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: Groton has hired Kevin Fitzgerald as its new ARPA Coordinator. Staff reviewed the newly released “Final Rule” provided by the U.S. Treasury. This large document offers lengthy and detailed guidance on how municipalities can invest their funding in conformance with federal rules. Staff met with additional business representatives to understand how ARPA funding can best serve the broader small business environment as an investment to small business resiliency and growth. The public online community engagement platform “Greater Groton” (described below) continues to serve as a part of the ARPA effort and more.
- GreaterGroton.com Public Engagement Tool: Staff continues to work hard to promote theGreaterGroton.com site. Direct mail postcards advertising the site went out to over 13,000 Groton residents during the last week of January. Additionally, Staff launched the budget simulator tool through “Balancing Act”. This tool will allow the public to give input on potential funding allocations. Please register today at www.greatergroton.com to help promote this important tool.
- Exploremoregroton.com Economic Development Website: The exploremoregroton.com website was launched in November of 2017. Included in the contract with the web developer, Golden Shovel, was a website refresh every four years. Staff has been working with Golden Shovel providing them with the updates to the website that we would like done. Staff is looking for a cleaner webpage geared more towards developers and investors. We will be introducing a refreshed exploremoregroton.com website in the coming months.

Public Property Redevelopment:

- Public Property Redevelopment (Mystic Education Center): Groton is planning on entering mediation with Respler Homes with a date scheduled in early March. Additionally, Groton was recently informed that the property will be purchased by a new developer and the project proposal will be substantially modified. This was first made public at the January 25th COW meeting. Also, *The Day* wrote a story [[Link](#)]. It is Groton’s understanding that the developer plans on having a significant public outreach campaign to gain input and to educate the public regarding their identity and intent. The property today has 160,000 square feet of existing building space including a 40,000 indoor recreation facility plus the site holds environmentally contaminated land. Any future redevelopment will preserve half of the 80+ acres as public open space. The state, as the property owner, has been closely following this project and inquiries about its progress.

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- Public Property Redevelopment (Groton Heights): ThayerMahan has been completing final internal review. The goal is to have the agreement before the Town Council by late February. Staff and Town Attorney met with ThayerMahan in November to finalize the legal agreement. 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 has selected A.R. Builders as their regional housing development partner to build on the four parcels. A.R. is both a national builder with a strong regional focus in Connecticut and Rhode Island. A.R. has projects in Groton and New London. The project envisions less than 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): The proposed site plan for multi-family housing has been approved by the Groton Planning & Zoning Commission. Ground breaking is anticipated this winter for a 280-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 presented before the City of Groton’s Planning & Zoning Commission on January 19th. Town staff attended the meeting. The discussion related towards whether the existing building could be expanded by adding a second story. The concept was generally well received by the Commission and the public. A site plan will be submitted to the City for consideration and approval prior to any work. Phase I will modify the existing school building for residential unit development. 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 will be modifying the draft RFP prior to reissuance for solicitations. Meanwhile, interest in the property has been indicated by the development community.

Economic Development Metrics:

Trade Name Metrics:

- There were 10 trade name certificates this month in the Town of Groton.

Social Media Metrics:

- 823 Facebook followers, negligible increase from December.
** Please follow the Facebook page and share our posts to your network:
<https://www.facebook.com/GrotonEconomicDevelopment/>
- 91 LinkedIn page followers, 2% increase from December.
** Please follow the LinkedIn page and share our posts to your network:

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<https://www.linkedin.com/company/groton-economic-development/>

** Please like and SHARE posts on social media to expand the reach!

- Website Metrics (Dec 29-Jan 27) www.exploremoregroton.com
 - Total Sessions: 1045 (897 new/148 returning), 24 pct. below 12-month avg.
 - Pages per session: 1.79, 2 pct. above 12-month avg.
 - Total Page Views: 1,871, 23 pct. below 12-month avg.
 - Average Time Duration: 51 sec, 25 pct. below 12-month avg.
- There are 590 subscribers on the Newsletter Mailing List, up two percent from December. Email addresses collected from meetings and events are being added to the mailing list.
(<http://www.exploremoregroton.com/groton/news-and-media/sign-up-for-our-newsletter>)
- GreaterGroton.com Activity (Jan. 1-30, 2022) www.greatergroton.com
 - Total Visits 558
 - Max. Visitors Per Day 40
 - New Registrations 6
 - Engaged Visitors 76
 - Informed Visitors 187
 - Aware Visitors 367
- Top Projects

Project	Engaged Participants	Informed Participants	Aware Participants
How should Groton spend our Federal Recovery Dollars?	24	67	165
Parking in Mystic	23	71	119
Housing in Groton	30	51	109
Suggestion Box	9	17	25
Small Business Forum	1	6	15

Unemployment Data (Percent %)

	Groton	Norwich-New London-Westerly Labor Market Area	Connecticut
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	6.9	7.5	6.9
July 2021	6.8	7.3	6.9
August 2021	5.9	6.6	6.1
September 2021	5.4	6.0	5.4

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October 2021	4.9	5.9	5.3
November 2021	4.2	5.3	4.8
December 2021	3.8	5.1	4.4

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>